



Convergence

Not long ago, a phone system was the most hi-tech thing in an office. They still work in the same way, through the same lines, to the same exchanges. Seemingly nothing has changed.

But as mobile phones become computers, so computers are controlling office phone networks. It's a convergence of technologies.

Firstly, calls are being routed, not through single lines maybe thousands of miles long, but through the internet, like emails. So calls can be a lot cheaper. And better quality too, since voices are less likely to fade as the distance increases.

Secondly, the office PABX is being replaced by software, often on a standard computer. It means that the functions can be updated easily. So if you want to add a new user or a new facility like music or voice mail or alter the night service, it doesn't mean a new component for the PABX.

Thirdly, because the internet is everywhere now, if you want another office or people working from home, they can be connected in seamlessly, pick up as if they are sitting next to you, and speak to others on the same exchange completely free. Even from abroad.

Converging technologies don't really mean that the old familiar phone systems like ISDN are being integrated into the 21st century. Not at all, they are being replaced wholesale by computerised exchanges and computer networks.

So, not so much a proposal of marriage, more a take-over bid.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Technological_convergence

<http://www.preferredtechnology.com/solutions/voip/index.html>

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