



Microsoft Teams Integration

Microsoft Teams offers an unprecedented feature set for office communication. The integration with document processing, emails and a huge amount of software for the Windows ecosystem make Teams a productivity tool that works very well for most organizations.

However in many business environments connectivity to standard VoIP devices can be challenging. There are two cases to consider:

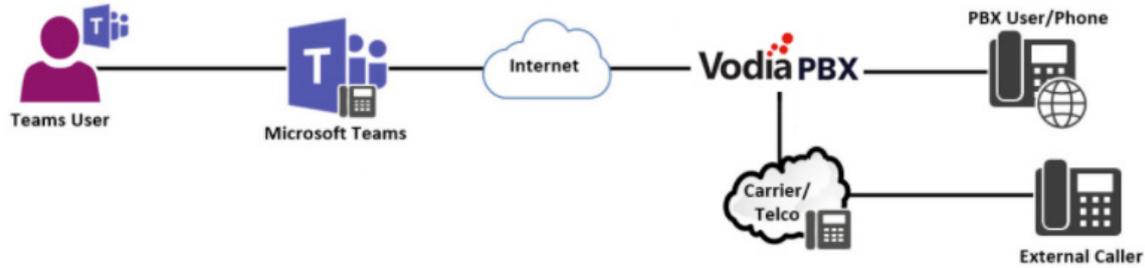
Users that don't have a Teams account in the company should be able to call Teams extensions, receive calls from Teams extensions and transfer between other extensions. Especially in companies with a large number of non-office workers like factories, transportation operators or retail chains, users can benefit from the possibility to mix and match office and non-office users.

Users that would like to have a desktop phone which is not certified with Teams along with the Teams softphones. This phone should ring along with the Teams devices as a call comes in, and it should be possible to make outbound calls from either device.

The Vodia PBX supports a large range of VoIP devices, DECT phones, door phones, analog adapters (ATA). In many deployments, companies will be able to keep their existing VoIP phones, allowing cost savings for the rollout and purchase of new devices. For users with cell phones, installing the free Vodia app is a simple way to connect those users. Companies can combine "best of both worlds" to address large requirements both from the Teams side as well as from the classical PBX side.

The PBX can be run on premises, operated by the company itself, or it can be run in a multi-tenant environment as a service, so that companies do not have to operate the PBX themselves. This especially makes sense when Office 365 is being used.

Microsoft Teams Direct Routing With Vodia



Simple Setup

The Vodia PBX makes the setup as simple as possible. For the PBX, connecting to Teams uses the built-in SBC of the Vodia PBX. There is a drop-down for Teams trunks that will ask for the necessary information like domain name and set the trunk up within seconds. The PBX will attempt to fetch the required X.509-certificate from a cloud service, so that in most cases there are no additional costs for certificates, and certificates are automatically renewed. Alternatively, certificates can be uploaded.

Extensions can be marked as Teams extensions, which will trigger sending a call to Teams when the extension is called:

- This works for direct calls to the extension, but also for calls coming from hunt groups and ACD groups.
- If there are other devices registered to that extension, they will ring in parallel. This includes the Vodia app for iOS and Android.
- If needed, users can also be called on their cell phone using their PSTN, which makes them available on mobile phones without the need to install an app.

When a Teams extension calls a number that is not within the group, it sends the call to the PBX. If possible, the PBX will terminate the call to an internal resource; otherwise it will route the call to the public network (PSTN).

PSTN termination can be done using a large number of SIP trunk providers. When more than one trunk is used, the PBX can route calls according to rules. This helps to reduce termination costs, for example for domestic and international calls or calls to cell phones. There are many ways to report the call records inside and outside of the PBX. If needed external accounting software can be deployed.

If needed, the PBX can indicate the user's location for emergency calls. Administrators can keep the user locations in the PBX. When a user is calling an emergency number, the PBX can notify staff about this important event by email, SMS and/or overhead paging with information about the user and the location that was associated with the user. Location can be synchronized with some SIP trunk providers, such as Bandwidth.

Other features of the Vodia PBX easily become accessible for Teams users. This includes overhead paging, where users can play live and recorded messages. The plug-and-play feature of the PBX makes it easy to install devices from e.g. CyberData for this purpose.

Requirements

There is a step-by-step instruction available on the Vodia documentation page that helps customers to set up the Teams side as well. For this, the administrator needs to enter a few commands into a shell that instructs Teams to send and receive calls from the PBX. For that, the PBX needs to be accessible over the public Internet; however firewall rules can make sure that only the Microsoft servers have access to the PBX. The PBX can be run on a private IP address in that case.

Offering the Teams integration is a great opportunity for providers of Vodia hosted PBX. It reduces the time for customers to set the integration up. Companies using the service don't need internal resources to operate the integration. Especially when PSTN termination is required, using a Vodia hosted PBX provider dramatically reduces the complexity of the solution while offering all benefits of the integration.

The Teams integration is available for hosted PBX editions and for the enterprise editions starting with version 65. It works on standard servers running CentOS, Debian, Windows or MacOS operating systems and it also does work on the embedded versions such as the Vodia IO and IOP.