



White paper

How to set up an informal call center for a small business



Professional low-cost call center is possible



Customer expectations have evolved. Small businesses are expected to deliver quick, seamless, and professional customer service across multiple channels. Yet, many smaller companies assume that setting up a call center is expensive, complicated, and designed only for larger businesses.

The reality is different. Cloud-based telephony and VoIP solutions have leveled the playing field, giving small businesses access to powerful tools once reserved for enterprises, at a fraction of the cost.

What is an informal call center?

An informal call center is a lightweight, low-cost, and flexible setup designed for small businesses. Unlike full-scale call centers, which often require dedicated offices, hardware, and large teams, informal call centers leverage cloud-based VoIP systems and distributed teams.

In this guide, we'll show you how to:

- Plan your call center setup without overspending.
- Choose affordable technology that fits your needs.
- Optimize workflows and scale effortlessly as your business grows.

86%

Of customers say they're willing to pay more for a better customer experience.

Source: PwC

Planning your call center setup



Before investing in technology, lay the foundation for success. A well-planned setup avoids wasted costs and ensures your call center aligns with your business goals.

Key call center planning steps

- 1 Define your goals:** Are you focused on customer support, sales campaigns, or both?
- 2 Estimate call volumes:** Understand average call loads, peak hours, and seasonal spikes.
- 3 Decide on your structure:**
 - Remote team – Agents working from anywhere.
 - On-site team – Centralized office-based call handling.
 - Hybrid model – Best of both worlds.
- 4 Set a realistic budget:** Consider both upfront costs (hardware, software, numbers) and ongoing costs (subscriptions, training).



Pro tip: Keep scalability in mind from day one to avoid changing solutions later.

Choosing affordable tools and technology



Cloud technology makes setting up a small-business call center **faster, cheaper, and smarter** than ever before.

Cost-effective solutions



Cloud-based VoIP

Forget bulky PBX hardware. With cloud-based VoIP, all you need is an internet connection to manage calls seamlessly.



Virtual phone numbers

Give your business a local presence anywhere instantly.



Smart integrations

Sync your call center with CRM, helpdesk, and ticketing systems.



IVR & automation

Route calls automatically to the right person or department, even with a small team.



Analytics dashboard

Monitor performance, call volume, and agent productivity.

82%

Of small businesses that adopt VoIP solutions report lower monthly communication costs compared to traditional systems.

Source: Tech.co

Optimizing for efficiency and business growth



Setting up an informal call center is only the beginning. The real value comes from how well you manage and optimize it.

Optimizing means more than just answering calls quickly; it's about ensuring your agents have the right tools, training, and workflows to handle customers efficiently and consistently.

- 1 Train your team:** Equip agents with call-handling skills and scripts.
- 2 Streamline workflows:** Automate repetitive tasks like call routing or logging.
- 3 Use data to improve performance:**
 - Measure average call handling times
 - Track missed calls
 - Monitor customer satisfaction ratings
- 4 Plan for growth:** Add users, numbers, or integrations easily as demand grows.

57%

Higher customer satisfaction scores are reported by companies that train agents effectively compared to those that don't.

Source: Salesforce

Common mistakes to avoid



Even with the right tools and setup, small businesses sometimes stumble when managing their call centers.

These mistakes may seem minor at first, but they can hurt efficiency, frustrate customers, and damage your business in the long run.

Here are some of the most common pitfalls to avoid

- 1 Paying for features you don't need:** Paying for complex features you won't use increases costs and slows operations.
- 2 Ignoring analytics:** Without tracking call data, you miss opportunities to improve efficiency and customer experience.
- 3 Failing to plan for peak demand:** Not preparing for call spikes leads to dropped calls, frustrated customers, and lost revenue.
- 4 Neglecting agent training:** Untrained agents deliver inconsistent service and undermine your brand's professionalism.

67%

Of customers hang up after an unsatisfactory call experience, and **80% won't call back.**

Source: Zendesk

Conclusion & Next steps

Setting up an informal call center for your small business doesn't have to be expensive or complex. With cloud-based VoIP solutions, you can create a professional, scalable, and cost-effective customer experience in just a few steps.

Ready to make communication seamless?

With VoIPstudio, you get an advanced communication platform, accessible to businesses of all sizes.

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