

Save 100's On Your Phone Bill

The Savvy Consumer's Guide To Voip

By David Jaeger



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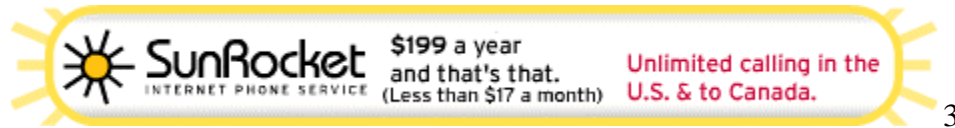


Table of Contents:

(1) Introduction

(2) Part 1: The Basics of Digital Telephony

History

2 Types of Voip-Business and Residential

Digital vs. Traditional Phones Comparison

(3) Part 2: Practical Details

The 4 Qualities to compare Voip Providers on:

Required Equipment:

Voip as your first line?

Advantages of Voip as a second line:

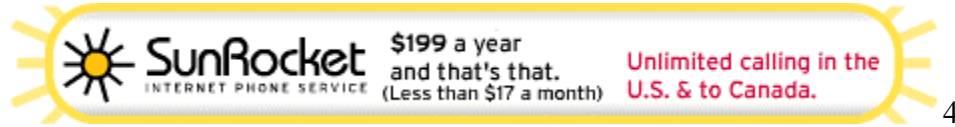
Compare the 2 Largest Voip Providers

(4) Recommended Resources

(5) Bonus: "Am I really saving money with Voip worksheet"

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Introduction:

Dear Reader,

My name is David Jaeger; I am the author of this book, and also the owner of www.shouldIgetVoip.com. As you can see, I am very involved in Voip. I hope you will benefit from my personal hobby and interest.

The goal of this book is to show you around the basics of Voip (Voice over Internet Protocol – digital phone service) , and help you decide if getting a digital phone line is the right decision for you. You probably would like to get the best deal that you can, so at the end of this guide there is a section comparing two of the largest Voip operators currently around.

This ebook will educate you about the basics of Voip-no techie language, just simple practical advice.

“Is Voip right for me? Can Voip do something for me better, cheaper, faster or with less hassle?’ Those are the questions that will be addressed. After you are done, I invite you over to my site, www.ShouldIgetVoip.com, and check out the community of people interested in the possibilities of Voip.

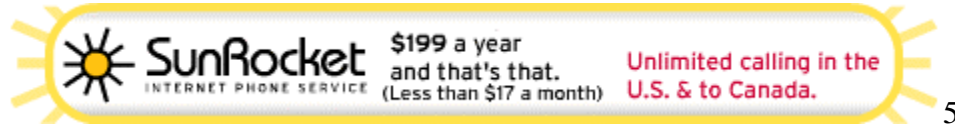
Also, if you haven’t already you might want to take a second and sign up for my Voip newsletter [here](#).

Sincerely,

David Jaeger

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Part 1

Where was Voip Till now? Why didn't I hear of it?

History:

A little history is in order here. Before the bubble of 1999 people thought that the Internet was the wave of the future. (It still is.) Companies were building high capacity data networks thinking that the boom would continue forever. What they did not realize is that there was not enough of a demand for high capacity networks yet. Most households were still running on dial-up!

Many companies that built the networks went bankrupt. However, now, 4 years later, our ability to use the powerful networks is starting to match the capacity. We now have online video, audio, and Voip! It is all thanks to those companies that built the high quality networks six years ago.

In short, having Voip go over these high networks is now affordable because there is such a supply of high capacity Internet lines. Companies like [Vonage](#) and many others have started to jump on it in order to bring cheaper house line rates to the market. Your Voip is built on those bankrupt companies backs, so we can all thank them!

The two types of Voip services: Business and Residential

In addition, there are 2 types of Voip services. There is Voip set up for businesses and those set up for residential.

Businesses have been using it for a while. The reason is that their phone systems were much more complex, and their bills through traditional phone companies were sky-high, so it made a lot of sense to put in the extra expense for the phone systems and Voip plans, because it was cheaper in the end.

Residential Voip though, did not catch on as fast. The reason is because a traditional phone is not that expensive, and the hardware and software costs of setting up a Voip system were too

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expensive. However, now that we have many Voip companies that have already set up the Voip systems, like [Vonage](#) and [Sunrocket](#), the cost of having a line is much cheaper than regular phone lines-and you get quite a few more services boot.

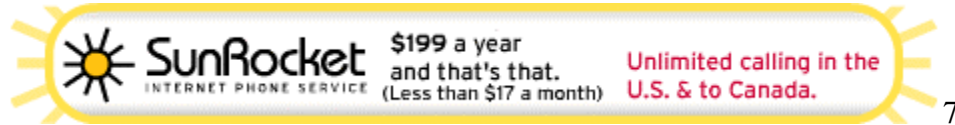
I will not be covering business Voip here. In general business Voip requires an extensive setup, with thousands of dollars of capital investment.

Comparing Traditional Phone lines and Voip Lines:

	Traditional	Voip	Advantage
Cost Per Line	\$25-50/month	\$17-30/month	Voip
Caller Id	\$3/month	free	Voip
Call forwarding	\$3/month	free	Voip
Interstate calling	.05 cents/minute	free	Voip
Canada calls	.17 cents/minute	free	Voip
Other international Destinations	.20-\$1.50/minute	.03-.25 a minute	Voip
emergency calls	can make calls when power is out	can't make calls when local power is out	Traditional

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Part 2:

The 4 Qualities to compare Voip Providers on:

1) Quality of service:

Nowadays, any reputable Residential Voip company will have good voice service. However, there are a lot of companies that have their own private label Voip service. Those services should be checked out before you use them.

Another thing you have to be aware of is if your Internet service is spotty, or you do not have high speed Internet, you will have problems with your Voip line.

2) Price:

If you happen to be looking for the best bargain, than you should be comparing prices on Voip companies. There are a couple of things to be aware of.

“Extra Fees”- One of the main advantages that Internet phone lines have over traditional lines, in addition to being cheaper, is that the government does not regulate them. Therefore there are no additional taxes on you! So if any Voip company tries to “add taxes and fees”, it’s bogus, their trying to get more money.

Termination fees- A lot of Voip companies will try to lock you into service for a year. They have a cancellation fee if you cancel first. So beware. Check the fine print.

3) Features:

In general, all Voip providers have similar features. You should expect as standard caller id, call forwarding, three way calling, and cheap international calling. If any company does not have these features, then you should go on to the next company.

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4) Customer Service/friendliness:

Customer service friendliness is pretty hard to judge up front. How are you supposed to know how friendly the customer service is? There is one easy way though. Check it out on forums and other sites. Here are two sites, www.shouldIGetVoip.com, and www.dslreports.com. Just check there what people have to say. However, I've saved you some of the trouble, and I've put a little review in about two of the largest Voip providers at the end of the book.

Other things you must know when you buy a Voip line:

What equipment is required? "Will I be shelling out a hundred dollars just to get started?"

You are going to need a special modem that costs anywhere from \$20 to \$70. However, most Voip companies are so eager to get your business that they **throw in the modem for free**. Here are other things however, that you **are** going to need in order to have a Voip line.

Internet Connection- You are going to need a high-speed Internet connection like dsl or cable.

Modem- In addition to whatever modem you already have for your high-speed Internet, you will also need a Voip modem. However, most companies will throw it in gratis.

Regular Phone- If you plan on using Voip as your regular phone, you will obviously need regular phones. You can also use it with a computer headset.

A note to the wise: Since you are using a modem, and you only have one modem (unless you buy a second one) you may run into problems if you want to have multiple phones connected to the single modem connection. My advice is that you should buy a cordless phone set that has more than one cordless phone connected to it. This will save you the hassle of trying to connect all the phones to one modem. Besides, those cordless handsets are so much cooler!

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Should I Use Voip as my only house line?

I am going to lay out for you the advantages and disadvantages.

Advantages:

Price: Voip is much cheaper.

Disadvantages:

If your Internet connection is down you have no house line- Unlike your house line that does not connect to the power line, your Voip line connects to the internet, and needs to be connected to the power grid. So let's say a power wire near you gets disconnected, you will not have a connected line.

So, you may not care. "Who cares," you might say, "if I have any problems I'll just use my neighbors phone."

If you feel like that, then just skip this paragraph. However, if you are nervous about what will happen in case all the power is out, I would recommend replacing your phone line only if you have a cell phone, that way if the power ever goes out in your house, you always have another way of contacting people.

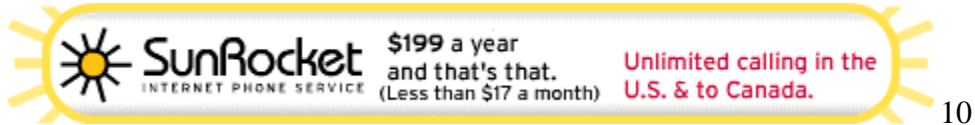
Can't use DSL with your Voip line- DSL runs through your phone connection. If you have no phone line, than how are you going to use DSL? So you must use satellite or cable Internet.

Problem? Not really. Cable generally runs at a minimum of twice as fast as DSL – around 3 mbps. The only thing is, if you are looking at Voip as a budget cost thing, you may end paying more for just for the cable line.

However, recently, the price difference has really dropped. In most places in the US, dsl starts at \$15 a month. It used be that cable ran at \$45 a month- Ouch! Now however, with all the competition from DSL, **cable has dropped to around \$20 a month** (check the resource section at the end of the guide for a place to get cheap cable. Not bad! If the extra

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few dollars it may cost you to run a cable line concerns you, you may want to look carefully at the worksheet at the end of this guide that helps you figure out how much you are saving versus how much extra it will cost you to run a Voip line.

Advantages of Voip as a Second Line:

Cheaper Long Distance- If you are one of those people that have family all over the world, and talk to them constantly, you should definitely consider this. With Voip, you can drop all your calling cards and call direct. It will not only be much simpler, it will be much cheaper. You will want to check the different companies, but most offer free to many countries, and those that cost money are really cheap at a couple of cents a minute.

All the technology advantages like call forwarding, caller id etc.-If you are a technology geek like I can be sometimes then you probably don't even care about the cost. You probably want it just because it's the latest and greatest.

However, if you are cost-conscious, or only buy things if they really do save you time, money or convenience, then you should look at the options that you have with digital phone service. You get free voice mail, you can access from your phone, the website or have them forwarded to your email for free. In addition, there are no long distance charges in the US and Canada, free caller id, call forwarding and extremely cheap international calling. So use the included worksheet and figure out how much Voip is costing/saving for you, and see if it is worth the extra convenience.

Ready to expose the Major Voip Providers for what they really are? OK, here goes...

The 2 providers that are established in the market are: **Sunrocket** and **Vonage**. Let's see the advantage of each.

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Sunrocket: Sunrocket's prices are cheaper than Vonage in general. They have 3 basic plans, and some more advanced ones for those people that call long distance. Their basic plan is \$10 a month. It includes 200 minutes of calling to local and international places- worthwhile if you are just using it as a second line. Their second plan is a monthly plan at \$24.95 a month. This is unlimited Canada and USA calling and very cheap rates to other places. Their best plan is if you pay upfront you can pay just \$199 a year, which comes out to \$16.58 a month- and you can cancel at any point if you are unsatisfied and get the remaining money in your account refunded. Each one of the unlimited plans comes with a \$3 credit towards international calls. They also have some plans that are geared to those people that are going to be using international calling extensively.

Personally, my favorite is Sunrocket. Not only are they the cheapest if you pay upfront, they also have a “no gotcha” policy. In short, this means that they don’t add in any “government fees” – that are not there. They also don’t lock you in to a plan. Even on the \$199 a year plan, you can request a refund on the unused portion.

They also give you a free 5.8 GHz cordless phone!

However, as much as I would like them to be, they are not perfect. I have done my own research on forums, and there are some problems- as could be expected. One of them is number portability. If you change service providers, you have a right to transfer your old number. A couple of people on forums said they had real problems with it. However, it is not really Sunrocket’s fault. Your old phone service company is just taking their time. In addition, Vonage has the same problem.

The other problem is the customer service. Evidently, their customer service is located in India. As you can expect, if you are having problems that the India tech can’t figure out, it takes a little longer to get the American service – or “tier three support”. If you do have problems, please go to my forum at www.shouldigetvoip.com, and ask for help.

People have also reported having problems trying to do a fax through Sunrocket. Vonage on the other hand works perfectly fine.

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All in all, the fact that they don't play gimmicks with their billing, and still offer such a great deal is their real winning feature. They are my number one suggestion.

Vonage: [Vonage](#) is the real big player in the field. You always hear them advertising. Their price is really competitive at \$24.95 a month. However, when you get into the nitty gritty, it is a little more expensive than that. They add in a \$1 "emergency service fee" to "cover their costs". So it isn't \$24.95 anymore. Also, they have an activation fee plus a cancellation fee. So I personally prefer [Sunrocket](#)'s "No Gotcha" policy.

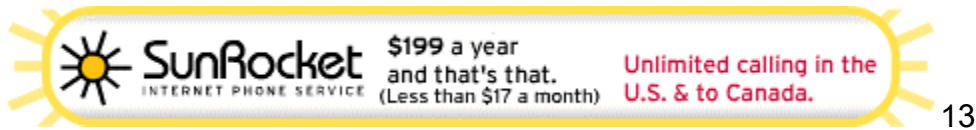
However, they have just added free unlimited calling to many countries. If you really call European countries a lot than they may be more viable.

Another advantage that you get with Vonage is that they have plans that are geared to small business offices.

In short, if you need the faxing capabilities, call Europe often enough, or are a small business, you may prefer to use Vonage. Otherwise, I would suggest [Sunrocket](#).

In addition, [Sunrocket](#) has an international plan- for \$299 a year, which adds up to about \$27 a month. So if you are a serious international user, their plan is better than Vonage.

Recommended Resource



Recommended Resources:

Voip Forums: <http://www.shouldigetvoip.com/> my personal website on Voip

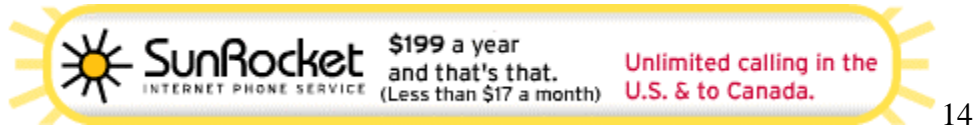
www.dslreports.com a good place to see what other people experienced with Voip.

Voip Providers: #1 [Sunrocket](#)- I like their simple billing and payment plans.

#2 [Vonage](#)- they have a better international plan. If you are calling to Europe a lot it would be worthwhile to compare Vonage to Sunrocket.

Find the High Speed Internet for you: (They have an amazing comparison engine which shows you the plans available for you.)www.broadbandnational.com

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Special Bonus- Just for you!

Voip Worksheet:

Fill in the worksheet with the information that you know. If you only have dial up access, or you are using DSL and would like to replace main phone line with an Internet line, you will have to get an alternate high-speed Internet line – either cable or satellite. You can check our resources page for high-speed Internet providers.

Important: Remember- if you are planning on making the digital phone line your only phone line, then you can't use DSL

Current Phone Line:	Voip Set Up:
Monthly Phone Bill:	Monthly Phone Bill:
First Line _____	First line (if applicable) _____
Second Line: _____	Voip Line: _____
Current Internet Access Fee: _____	With Voip Internet Access Fee _____
Current Total: _____	Future Total: _____

Conclusion

I hope this book gave you the information you were looking for. I would love to hear any comments from you. Email me at SavvyConsumers@shouldigetvoip.com, or post your comments on our forum at www.shouldigetvoip.com

Sincerely,

David Jaeger

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