



We worked with both Digicon and Communications Electronics to get a comprehensive understanding of both products and found that all-in-all they are in most of the Mission critical aspects comparable. We will address the more technical aspects further in this document.

Support:

There are some differences in the area of Support. Communications Electronics has been very responsive to all of our requests for information and were very well prepared to offer the information during their presentation. We found Digicon to be somewhat less responsive to our queries and they seemed to be less interested in presenting their system to us. We were also able to work directly with Vonexus and found them to be extremely responsive to requests for information. It is our position that the service received as a prospective customer tends to be what you get when you are a customer. As such, we have to lean strongly in favor of Communications Electronics.

Technical considerations:

The technical aspect of both products is a grey area. We therefore are going to focus on the Top Ten list as they best reflect a customer's needs. We omitted some of the line items as they were addressed in other sections.

1. Expansion and Cost of additional features and units.

Soft Phones

Digicon: \$150 per License

Communications Electronics: \$100 for .Net clients and an additional \$40 Per License for the Outlook plug-in.

Desk Units: This is one of the more noticeable differences in the two systems. In addition to the actual phone.

Digicon: There are several things that need to come into place for each additional user. Each user will need an open IP port on the Shore Tel switch and an open port on the POE switch as well as a license for the extension, \$140 for an extension without voicemail \$200 for an extension with voicemail

Communications Electronics: The client does not pay for extra extensions, but only for the total number of available simultaneous connections. Voicemail is handled through Exchange Server. Each connection is an additional \$12.

2. Annual / Monthly Costs and maintenance Costs

Other than carrier costs (not included in the Digicon Quote) there are no monthly costs for either system. Support for the first year is built into both quotes.

Digicon: Software support is \$6,231 a year. Hardware is listed at \$4,823 a year.

Communications Electronics: Have 2 offerings for support:

- A. Bulk time 39 hours for \$3,900 this time rolls over from year to year. Similar to the MWT bulk time system.
- B. 16% of the cost of the system for hardware and software this includes 1 major software and one minor software upgrade. A major upgrade being a new revision and a minor being more like a patch.

3. Integration with existing hardware.

This does not have a clear cut answer. Based on the fact that you are planning to implement Exchange at the same time as the phone system they both have the same compatibility. However the Vonexus system with its inclusion of Exchange and the inclusion of the active directory integration seems to have less potential for integration problems.

4. Exchange Server:

We have reviewed both quoted servers and feel that they are not adequate for medium client requirements. We have asked the vendors to provide new specifications more in line with mid-sized client requirements. We expect that this will add \$1,000 to \$2,000 to the total cost of the systems

Digicon: Treats the servers as a separate issue as their system does not directly integrate with Exchange. It is a separate quote.

Communications Electronics: Includes both deployment and configuration of Exchange in quote.

5. System Redundancy:

Both systems provide for an excellent level of system redundancy with analog lines.

Digicon: System does provide redundancy for the individual sites and a fundamental degree of inter site redundancy but the client loses most of the functionality of the system and there is no redundancy for remote users.

Communications Electronics: Server not only has analog lines for redundancy but they have a heartbeat server option that allows the client to keep almost all functionality. In addition the client can add a backup server to any location or off site data center.

6. Analog lines:

Both systems include the option for up to 6 to 10 analog lines as ether backup or other services.

7. International calls.

There are no real differences in regards to this other than pricing. Pricing of international rates seems to be more a function of provider than the system itself.

For satellite calling both providers expressed that this has everything to do with the client's satellite provider.

8. Training:

Both vendors provide several options for training including on-site classroom training for admin and users, web-based.

Digicon offers pre-recorded training offerings.

Communications Electronics: Software includes a comprehensive help system integrated into the software.

Wrap up:

From the research we have done, it is our position that the Vonexus solution offers more options for future expandability, systems integration, support for remote users, and system and software support. It also has the added value of the software deployment and integration as part of the deployment package. They are also working directly with Microsoft on the development of the VOIP integration and support for the up and coming Microsoft releases.

As Vonexus's solution is a primarily software-based system, this gives them the ability to be very responsive to changes to the Windows environment without the need to worry about hardware compatibility. Their system also offers the advantage of having all off-the-shelf components. This simplifies future expandability by not locking the client into one brand of hardware.

The Digicon Shore Tel system is an excellent product and would be a good fit if the client did not have the need for a system that addresses need for support of remote users. A major concern also seems to be system scalability, and the Shore Tel system seems very cumbersome in this area.