

How Does a Pilot Number Work and Why Do You Need It?



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No business can survive without communicating with consumers and suppliers regularly. This has become much simpler with advances in technology and the Internet.

Nowadays, telecommunication solutions such as Primary Rate Interface (PRI) and Voice-over-Internet Protocol (VoIP) provide seamless voice, data, and video traffic between networks and users. When you use your phone to call a company, these technologies work in the background to give you an error-free experience.

To make it hassle-free for consumers, companies often provide only a few numbers to contact them. Calls are then routed to the relevant person or department. This is where the concept of a **pilot number** comes in. Let's explore this in more detail.

The Essential Role of A Pilot Number

How can businesses make it possible for callers to reach the department or individual they need without fuss? They use what is known as a hunt group. A hunt group links users together on a phone system. It can be configured in different ways. For instance, a human resources hunt group will ring all the human resources staff in any given order. An accounts hunt group will connect to the accounts department, and so on.

A **pilot number** is the one number assigned to route calls to hunt groups. A company can have one or more pilot numbers. It depends on the size and the number of hunt groups.

For example: When someone calls the pilot number, they can be answered by an auto-attendant. The automated system presents keyboard menus to choose from. Once the appropriate option is selected, the call is routed to the relevant hunt group.

A pilot number linked to an automated system can play a vital role in quicker communication. It can also do away with the need for a human receptionist. Moreover, it reduces wait time and promotes efficiency.

How Pilot Numbers Can Be Used

Since hunt groups can be set up in various ways, pilot numbers, too, have many uses. Much depends on the company's size, the number of departments it has, and the reasons why consumers need to call them. For example, let's take the hospitality industry. In a hotel, it's critical to have seamless communication channels, both internal and external.

A pilot number can work as a connection to a hotel's digital phone operator. There could be one such number or more, each one assigned to a different task or group. One pilot number can connect to emergency services. Another one can link to booking issues. One more number can be used for business areas, such as conference rooms. It's all up to the number of hotel departments. The system can be set up so that multiple phones ring, or only one, or a voicemail box is activated once the pilot number is called. It can depend on the nature of the hunt group.

Another common use is simply linking the pilot number to the different departments within the company. After dialing the number, the caller will be presented with a choice of which department the call should be routed to.

A good example would be that of an insurance company. In this case, the main departments will be claims, finance, legal, marketing, and underwriting. Depending on the nature of the company, there could also be separate sections for auto insurance, health insurance, life insurance, etc. There could be separate pilot numbers for each department or one number for each category of insurance for such a company. When someone calls a specific pilot number, there could be a range of automated choices. These can direct the call to the specific department. The phone can ring in a predetermined order within the department, or only for a few people, or all at once. There should also be options for voicemail, emergencies, and after-hours calls.

The same principles work with a bank. Here, there could be divisions such as retail banking, corporate banking, credit cards, investments, and more. One or more pilot numbers can go directly to these departments. Automated instructions lead to the relevant person picking up the call at the other end.

Privacy and the Human Touch

Be it an insurance company, or a bank, or any other enterprise, a pilot number can also provide privacy. There can be cases where the identity and details of the caller need to be concealed. At such times, the network can be configured, so that the number of the person who is calling the pilot number is masked.

Another factor to keep in mind when designing hunt groups and pilot numbers is the human touch. Some companies can prefer human interactions with callers at all levels. For instance, restaurants and supermarkets can find that this approach adds value. For them, the pilot number can link to a receptionist, who then transfers the call to the relevant person.

What to Look For When Setting Up Pilot Numbers

As we've seen, pilot numbers are an essential business tool for consumer and employee engagement. They can be put to a variety of uses, depending on the nature and size of the company.

When setting up pilot numbers and hunt groups, the crucial points to look out for should be:

Connectivity

The main idea is to streamline internal and external phone connectivity with pilot numbers. The points to keep in mind are the number of departments to be linked, which one should be treated separately, the expected call volume, and the response time.

Reachability

A pilot number's role is to make reaching out to a company a reliable and error-free process. Important

factors include the level of automation needed, the role of receptionists, and the time taken to answer.

Flexibility

As a business grows and the volume of calls increases, the telephone system needs to keep pace. Scalability and flexibility are essential aspects. At all times, the pilot numbers you provide to consumers should perform their role of seamless communication. There should be no needless delays because of expansion and re-orientation.

Businesses nowadays have various telephony options that make the role of pilot numbers even more valuable. Digital technology is leading to several enhancements and advantages, provided by techniques such as [PRI](#) and [VoIP](#).

There are [many cost-efficient and time-saving solutions](#). These can give businesses quality, portability, and superior internal and external linkages. A wise choice can turn any telephone system from a costly burden into a beneficial asset.

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