

Livingston, Karin A

From: Johnson, David W
Sent: Wednesday, May 13, 2015 3:43 PM
To: Livingston, Karin A
Subject: Re;Lync, Please forward to Business Admins

Good Morning Business Administrators;

It is with great satisfaction that I announce the completion of the rollout of MS Lync as our telephone and Unified Communications solution. We started the migration in 2012 with the goal of migrating over 7,000 existing users of ROLM and CISCO telephones to Microsoft Lync. Not only did we hit our goal, we also deployed to new buildings and a growing population of faculty and staff.

As originally planned and announced at the outset, UIT will no longer purchase phone devices for colleges/departments. One of the reasons for going to Lync was to provide flexibility and cost savings in the selection of audio and video devices rather than being limited to telephone handsets. Lync can support many options for phones including traditional desktop phone designs, wireless headsets, speakerphones, cameras and speakers, even call forwarding to a cell phone. Colleges and departments now have the flexibility to customize a solution to each individual based upon their needs. UIT has partnered with Cougar Byte to provide a variety of Lync optimized phones and accessories that colleges and departments can purchase for new employees or to replace existing devices. A list of supported and tested phones can be found at <http://www.uh.edu/infotech/services/lync/phones/>.

Flexibility in audio devices via Lync was only one element of the strategy to improve efficiency and effectiveness. In 2012 we froze the rates that departments pay for telecommunications and did away with monthly billing. Eliminating monthly billing, including long distance, not only reduced the overall costs for departments, it also eliminated the cumbersome process of reviewing long distance bills and processing monthly transfers estimated to cost the University \$172,000 in staff time each year. The flexibility of Lync also allowed us to remove the charges for telephone installation, telephone moves, telephone hardware, and account modifications as these functions can now be performed by automated processes or by the user themselves. For example: the telephones installed during the migration are yours to move or redeploy as needed.

The efficiency of the self-service of Lync is a critical strategy moving forward. The telecommunications charges, now fixed at 2012 levels, not only support telephone services but maintain the data network and provide internet service to the University. Although budget remains unchanged, the network usage continues to grow at a staggering rate with a 500% increase in the number of users on the network in the last 3 years, substantial new construction, and dramatic increases in bandwidth consumption. Self-service allows scarce IT resources to be focused on maintaining and improving infrastructure rather than installing and configuring phones.

This move to Lync has been a very exciting project and is opening doors to new ways of working and teaching. The project has put the University of Houston ahead of the curve and in front of our peers. Today, every computer can be a phone, videoconferencing system, or collaboration suite. To learn more about Lync's advanced features and capabilities please contact the Lync team at lyncteam@uh.edu or contact Omar Farooq at ofarooq@uh.edu for a demonstration.

If you have any questions please feel free to contact me directly via email or at 832-842-4900. If you'd prefer, we could use Lync to Instant Message, videoconference, collaborate, conference call, or schedule a meeting through Microsoft Exchange. We certainly have plenty of options now.

Sincerely,

David Johnson

David W. Johnson
Executive Director of Technology Services and Support
University of Houston
832-842-4900