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Making the right move

Whilst moving house can be one of life's most stressful events, moving office is an equally stressful event for all involved. But with careful planning this can be mitigated, giving a 'blank slate' with which to help businesses improve their infrastructure and continue to thrive.

Moving office can present the same challenges as setting up in the first place, in no small part due to the technical considerations. The key to moving successfully is to use a comprehensive plan that will guide the process and set up the foundations for the company's future in the new office. Failing to fully plan for an office move can have dire consequences. Worst-case scenario, the business effectively comes to halt as it struggles to re-establish key systems and consequently loses money and reputation in the eyes of its clients and partners – which is simply not acceptable.

It's therefore vital to deploy a comprehensive plan that will guide the process and set up the foundations for the company's future in the new office. The plan should encompass all aspects of IT and communications. It should cover

broad areas such as ISP, servers, PCs, laptops, printers, phone systems, and IP-based services. Major parts of the network, such as servers (especially in the case of email or web servers) and the phone system need particular consideration.

However, sometimes the smallest things cause headaches, such as updating the address on web pages and email signatures, or making sure there are enough power points and network connections in the new office.

An office move can actually be a good excuse to re-evaluate your office systems and invest in new solutions – one example being the telephone system. Although traditional systems are usually highly reliable, there is little redundancy, so failure will usually take the entire system down. A new unified communications network offers greater failsafes and will utilise the same cabling infrastructure as your computer network, so no additional cabling is required – potentially saving up to £100 per user in cabling costs alone.

Undoubtedly, moving office is a time-consuming and complicated task. Despite potential problems it is more productive to view it as an opportunity to make sure the infrastructure is well organised. However, it is vital to understand how crucial comprehensive planning is to the operation and it is worth getting professional help for key stages. Essentially the old adage applies: 'if you fail to plan, you plan to fail'.