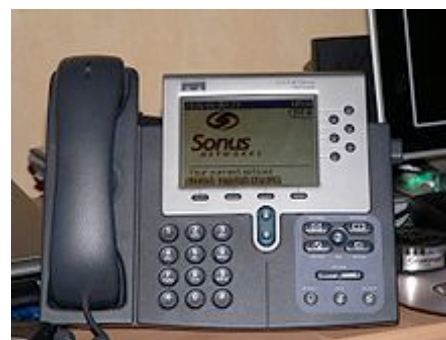


Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) is a general term for a family of transmission technologies for delivery of **voice communications** over **IP networks** such as the **Internet** or other **packet-switched networks**. Other terms frequently encountered and synonymous with VoIP are *IP telephony*, *Internet telephony*, *voice over broadband (VoBB)*, *broadband telephony*, and *broadband phone*.



Cisco VoIP phone

Internet telephony refers to communications services — voice, facsimile, and/or voice-messaging applications — that are transported via the Internet, rather than the **public switched telephone network (PSTN)**.

The basic steps involved in originating an Internet telephone call are conversion of the analog voice signal to digital format and compression/translation of the signal into **Internet protocol (IP)** packets for transmission over the Internet; the process is reversed at the receiving end.

VoIP systems employ session control protocols to control the set-up and tear-down of calls as well as **audio codecs** which encode speech allowing transmission over an IP network as **digital audio** via an **audio stream**. Codec use is varied between different implementations of VoIP (and often a range of codecs are used); some implementations rely on **narrowband** and **compressed speech**, while others support **high fidelity stereo** codecs.