

Digium Switchvox

Digium

Digium is one of the new companies of the late 1990s that turned the telecommunications industry on its head. The company created Asterisk — the world’s most popular open source call manager. Asterisk, freely available from Digium’s Web servers, powers an extraordinary number of telecommunications products and services around the globe. Asterisk is used for business, education and government sites and also powers service providers and carriers.

Digium remains the sponsor of the open source Asterisk Project. The company maintains its formal releases and both contributes and evaluates improvements to Asterisk. Digium also offers a commercial unified communications solutions. There is the business edition of Asterisk, and for organizations seeking a more comprehensive packaged solution for real-time communications, Digium offers Switchvox.

Digium Switchvox

Switchvox, initially developed by Four Loop Technologies, combined the Linux operating system, Asterisk and a graphical user interface into a comprehensive, friendly and powerful phone system. The solution offered the power of Asterisk without the complexity. Digium acquired Switchvox in 2007 and has made ongoing and significant improvements to its capabilities and distribution ever since.

Switchvox and Asterisk are different sides of the Asterisk coin appealing to different groups. Asterisk is a powerful toolset while Switchvox is a comprehensive all-in-one appliance.

Switchvox is the only commercial-grade unified communications solution that benefits from crowd-sourced innovation. Digium leverages the strengths of Asterisk without curtailing its capabilities. Digium backs Switchvox with impressive support including a growing channel of distributors and resellers, factory direct options, and even the ability to remotely service deployed systems.

Excerpts from the Full Report



“Switchvox combines many of the benefits and advantages of open source with the support and high touch associated with commercial products. It stands out as a highly versatile and economical UC platform, with exceptional value.”

“Many competitive brands that offer comparable functionality do so for a separate fee. In contrast, the Switchvox solution is both powerful and economical.”

“Switchvox is an impressive and exceptional solution that is highly innovative, powerful, and economical.”

“A huge portion of SIP carriers and third-party endpoint manufacturers test and certify interoperability with Asterisk/Switchvox.”



Switchvox offers SMB users an impressive balance of enterprise features, value, and simplicity; and does so with standards based technologies. The platform scores well on the TalkingPointz UC Web, with very strong scores in Voice Features, Clients/Endpoints, Contact Center, IM/Presence, Mobility, and Messaging. The solution is also simplistic to purchase as it bundles most features into a single user license. Switchvox offers rich APIs and leverages SIP, HTML, and Java creating a solution that can be integrated with business applications. With new Digium branded phones Switchvox offers impressive value and flexibility. The setup and administrative processes are intuitive, simple, and robust. Nearly all the features of Switchvox, including Switchboard its rich desktop client, are included in its standard SMB user license. The solution deserves careful consideration by SMB prospective clients.

Switchvox can be purchased directly from Digium, but Digium stresses and encourages sales through its authorized dealer channel. There are three types of authorized dealers: Affiliate, Registered and Select channel partners. A Certified Switchvox Partner is Digium's most advanced designation for Switchvox representing a Registered or Select Channel partner with additional certifications.

Strengths

- Switchvox is a powerful yet intuitive platform optimized for SMB unified communications. The solution offers a very strong competitive value with rich features at a low price. As the solution bundles nearly all features into its standard user option, there are few extras or gotchas.
- Leveraging the Asterisk engine ensures ongoing innovation.
- Strong mobility features including mobile clients and FMC for no additional charge.
- Switchvox is a pure IP solution with broad compatibility among carriers and endpoints.
- Switchvox SMB includes a robust contact center with queues, IVRs and interactive reporting.
- A broad set of APIs enables integration with other business applications.
- The new Digium-branded IP/SIP phones dramatically simplify provisioning/installation and also offer the user intuitive phone-based features. Both of these are common weaknesses for competitive IP/SIP solutions.

Weaknesses

- Switchvox branding is sometimes overshadowed by Asterisk. These are very different solutions, and will appeal to very different organizations.
- Multiple implementations of Switchvox SMB cannot be managed as a single system.
- Switchvox SMB offers strong audio conferencing features, but is not suitable for multipoint video conferencing or Web conferencing. However, those services are easily obtained a la carte.