

HIPCOM COMPLETES BT WHOLESALE IP EXCHANGE INTERCONNECT

Hosted IP Telephony provider Hipcom announces that they have successfully completed testing with BT Wholesale's IP Exchange service and is now terminating live traffic. The company sees this as a significant milestone in the growth of IP telephony in the UK and for the service it provides to customers.

Hipcom is one of the very first companies to join the new platform. IP Exchange is crucial to the growth of the IP voice market as it overcomes many of the technical, contractual and investment obstacles that have until now, hindered growth. Hipcom is now able to offer this new service to all of its resellers wishing to connect to number ranges beyond their own network, but without the need for complex interoperability agreements. Hipcom is fully committed to the IP Exchange platform as a key development in enabling the growth of VoIP services.

IP Exchange is BT Wholesale's answer to the increasing need for interoperability between the different communications technologies that are currently in use. It allows any provider of VoIP services to offer their customers the ability to make calls to PSTN, international and mobile numbers that originate as IP calls. And also to other IP networks. It therefore provides the essential gateway between a communications providers own soft switch and the other traditional and IP networks.

IP Exchange also supports the delivery of 999 calls and allows VoIP providers in the UK to meet their obligations under the recent Ofcom ruling.

"We are delighted that Hipcom have joined our new Platform" says Fabienne Dischamps, BT Wholesale's General Manager for Voice Interconnect. "The future of telecommunications will be based on IP. Next Generation Networks will be all-IP. That is the clear trend, but interoperability remains a significant and important requirement. We created IP Exchange to let Voice over IP communications providers provide their customers with access to and from the PSTN. Calls are handed over to BT using IP. This eliminates the need to invest in expensive IP to PSTN conversion gateways. IP Exchange will enable our customers' end users to place voice calls and video calls through their broadband service connection to fixed lines and to mobile and other IP networks. IP Exchange is a real one-stop shop in the run-up to full next generation networking."

James Brind, Hipcom CTO commented that "Hipcom shares BT's vision of the 21CN. Hipcom's next generation Hosted IP telephony platform, launched in 2005, is an IP/SIP network with no TDM. This allows us to simply overlay our Hosted Voice Services onto BT's IP Exchange giving resellers direct access in two forms – Hipcom managed termination, or via Hipcom's Hosted Exchange (HEX). HEX allows a reseller to maintain direct carrier relationships for all of their Hosted IP Telephony traffic." This appeals to those resellers who terminate large quantities of minutes and wish to retain control of the relationship with the carrier.

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Notes for editors:

About Hipcom

Hipcom specialises in the provisioning of high-quality Hosted IP Telephony solutions, sold through a network of channel partners in the UK and supported by a range of carefully selected strategic partnerships with leading VoIP vendor's world wide.

Hipcom are at the forefront of the industry, producing innovative Hosted IP Telephony solutions created specifically for the UK Reseller Channel. Their platform provides carrier grade enterprise telephony features allowing partners to enter this rapidly growing market, secure new business and provide customers with advanced, feature rich telephony services.

About BT Wholesale

BT Wholesale is a member of the BT Group plc: the holding company for an integrated group of businesses that provide voice and data services in the UK, elsewhere in Europe and around the world, each with its own distinct, well-defined role and all operating within a regulated environment.

BT Wholesale provides communications companies with the wholesale services, products and solutions they need beyond network access in order to operate, serve their customers and develop their markets and reach.

About IP Exchange

For more information about IP Exchange visit the BT Wholesale website:
<http://www.btwholesale-engage.com/IPExchangegatewayinteroperability.aspx>

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