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Microsoft Teams Direct Routing

The Buyer's Guide to Cloud Voice Enablement



Why you should read this guide?

Phone System with Direct Routing is now generally available for Microsoft Teams and it's generating buzz in the market. It also has IT leaders asking, "**What does this mean for my business?**" The objective of this ebook is to provide answers and insights to help you determine if Microsoft Phone System with Teams is the right solution for enterprise communication at your organization.



What is Microsoft Phone System for Teams?

It's important to first establish the baseline for this discussion. Microsoft Teams provides the hub for teamwork within Office 365. A key component of Microsoft Teams is **the ability to make/receive phone calls via Microsoft Phone System.**

Microsoft Phone System requires calling plans in order to make/receive calls. There are two options for calling plans with Microsoft Phone System in Teams:

- Microsoft Calling Plans
- Direct Routing

When you pair Microsoft Calling Plans and/ or Direct Routing with Microsoft Phone System, **the result is a full enterprise calling experience within Office 365 on a global scale.**



Office 365



Microsoft Teams



Teams Cloud Voice

(Phone System Replacement)

Arkadin
Calling
plans in 25
countries

Microsoft
Calling
plans in 11
countries

Bring your
own carrier



What does the Microsoft Teams Direct Routing announcement mean for your organization?

Short answer. It depends on several factors.

Long answer. Every organization is unique, and the Direct Routing announcement for Microsoft Teams will impact each organization in different ways. We analyzed our customer conversations over the last 90 days and here are common characteristics for organizations currently demonstrating an above-average interest in Teams / Phone System / Direct Routing:

Component	Current Environment
Voice Environment	Aging PBX (held together with duct tape) / Multiple disparate PBXs (because of M&A activities) / Upcoming PBX refresh or maintenance renewal / Lync or Skype for Business deployed on-premise.
Workplace Apps	Office 365 has been in place for multiple years / Now evaluating upgrade to E5 (from E3) in process of deploying Office 365.
Online Meetings	Third-party apps for external meetings (e.g. Webex, GoTo, Zoom) / Using Skype for Business for internal meetings (already have a familiarity with it).
Cloud Strategy	Strategic decision to move apps out of the data center into the cloud / Have made significant investments in Office 365, Azure and other cloud apps.
IT Resources	Limited on-staff resources & expertise / Preference to outsource to a managed services provider (vs. managing in-house).
Compelling Events	Office moves / Contract consolidation (across multiple vendors) / Data centers being turned down.
Global Footprint	Both domestic and international organizations have shown interest: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Global organizations are keen to standardize on one platform to simplify management/support for local offices and traveling execs • Domestic organizations seem driven to improve user experience, reduce number of vendors to manage, and increase capabilities within Office 365

What is Direct Routing for Microsoft Teams?

Direct Routing is a new capability launched by Microsoft in June 2018, which enables customers to bring their own telecom services into the Microsoft Cloud for Microsoft Phone System, in Teams.

Prior to this announcement, the only option for telecom services with Microsoft Teams was Microsoft calling plans.

Direct Routing is important because it provides a solution for organizations to leverage preferred telecom rates and take advantage of the many benefits of Microsoft Phone System with Teams.

What components are required for Microsoft Teams Direct Routing?

For an organization to enable Direct Routing, the following components are required:

- Office 365 enterprise subscription (E1, E3 or E5)
- Microsoft Phone System Add-On (with E1, E3)
- Session Border Controllers (SBCs) from approved Microsoft SBC vendor list
- SIP trunks from your telecom/voice provider

The key piece of the Direct Routing infrastructure is the SBCs. Depending on your on- staff expertise and/or preference on in-house vs. outsourced IT, the SBCs can be deployed in two ways.

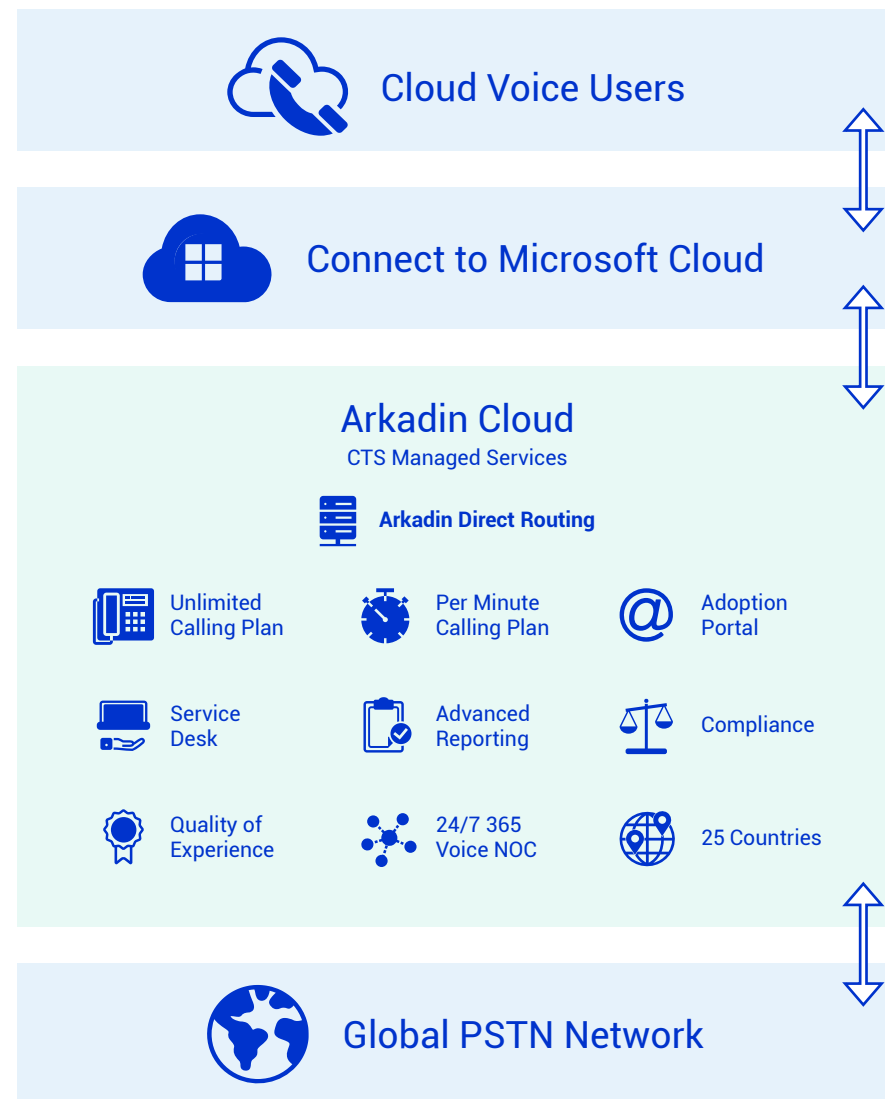


What are the approved deployment approaches for Microsoft Teams Direct Routing?

Partner-Hosted Approach

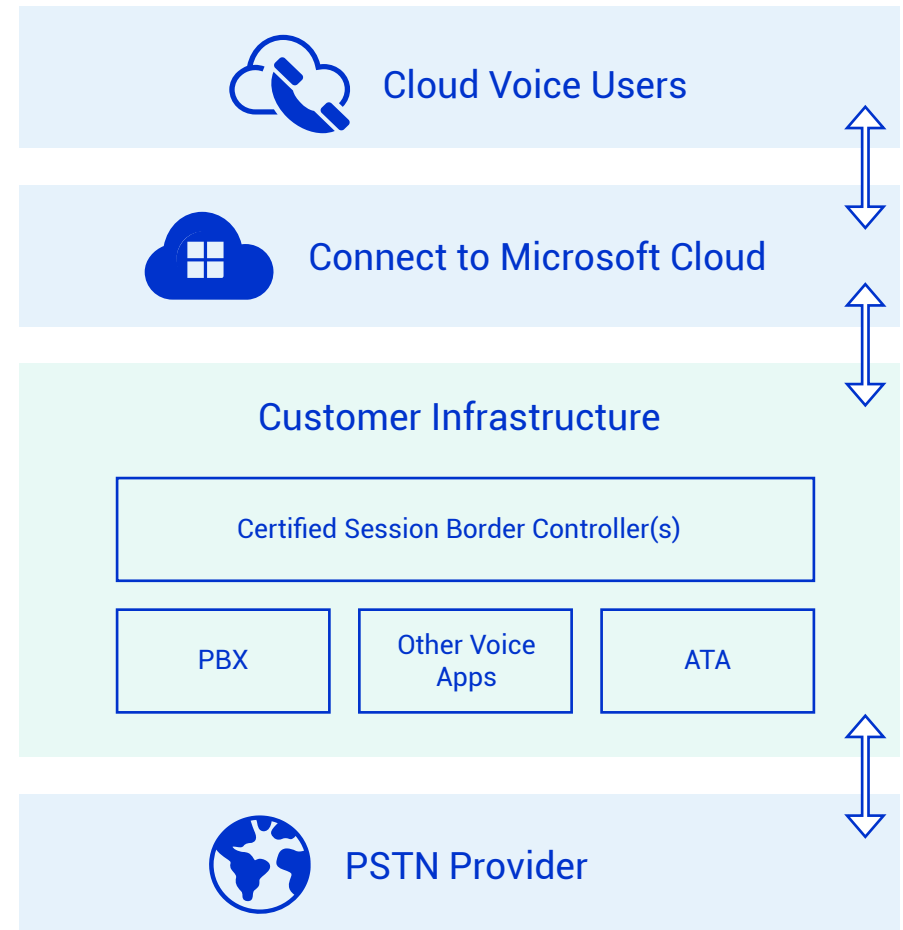
- For organizations that have, or want to start, embracing cloud-based services, the partner-hosted scenario is the correct approach.
- SBCs are hosted within the partner cloud by Arkadin, and management/uptime/quality of experience is the responsibility of the partner.

There are **two approved approaches** to Microsoft Teams Direct Routing:
Partner-Hosted & Customer-Deployed



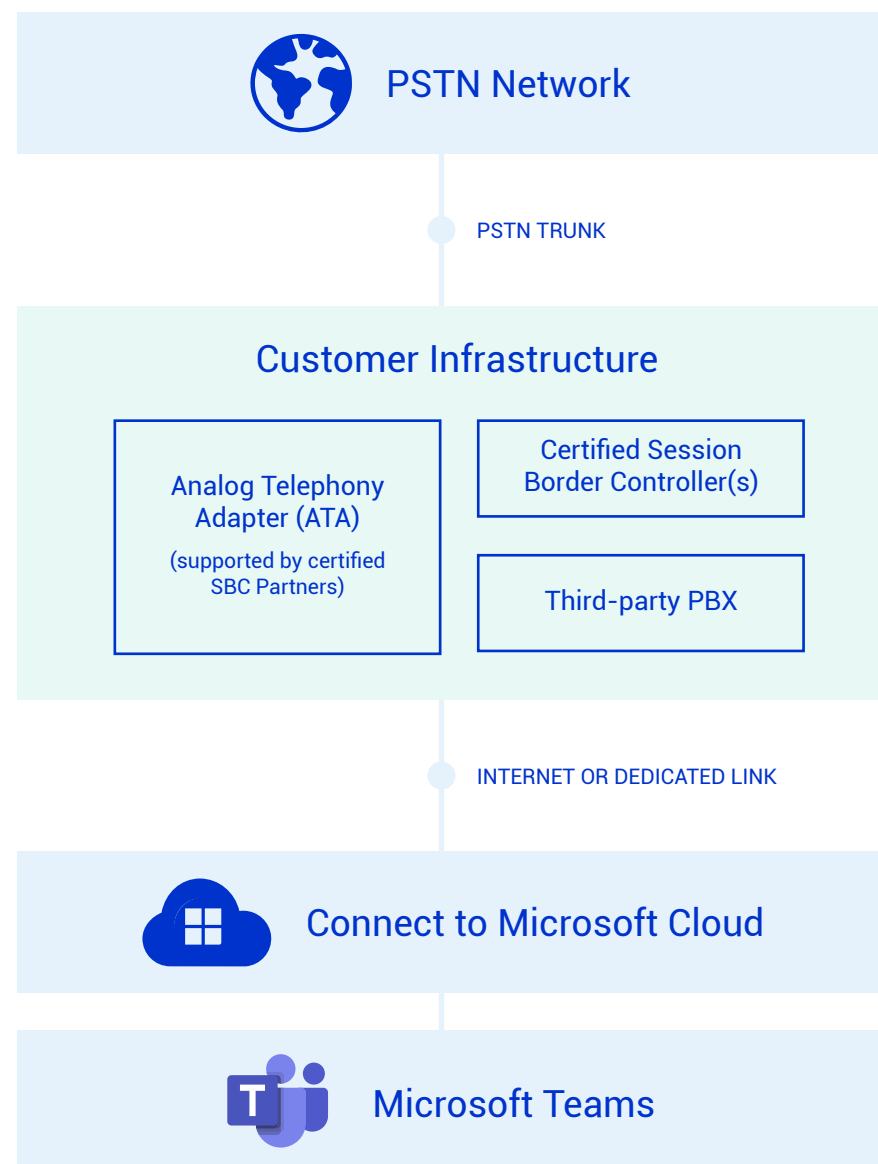
Customer-Deployed Approach

- For organizations that have the in-house expertise and/or prefer to manage voice infrastructure internally, a customer-deployed scenario is the best approach.
- SBCs are deployed within the customer environment (data centers) and the management/quality of experience is the responsibility of the internal IT team.
- As of October 2018, the certified SBCs for this approach are from AudioCodes and Ribbon. We expect additional SBC providers to be certified in the coming months.
- Some organizations require on-premise SBCs and prefer a partner to manage them; Arkadin can support this.



When does it make sense to use Microsoft Teams Direct Routing vs. Microsoft Calling Plans?

- In countries where Microsoft Calling plans are not available
- When customers want to keep their existing telco contract
- For interoperability with third-party systems (e.g. existing PBXs during the migration)
- To connect analog devices into Microsoft Teams (e.g. fax, paging systems, elevator phones)
- More flexible billing options
- When broader coverage than Microsoft Calling Plans is needed (such as Arkadin's 25-country coverage)





Is Direct Routing available with Microsoft Teams only?

As of July 2018, Direct Routing is only available with Microsoft Teams. For organizations using Skype for Business online, the Direct Routing equivalent is Cloud Connector Edition (CCE). CCE can be deployed in the customer data center or in a partner-hosted model, enabling customers to bring their own telecom/voice services to Skype for Business Online.

A common question we've been asked is, "Will Direct Routing be available with Skype for Business Online any time soon?" The answer (as of today): it's not on the official roadmap and Microsoft is laser-focused on Teams. We don't see this as an option coming soon, if ever.

Can organizations deploy both Microsoft Calling Plans & Direct Routing?

Yes. It is possible (and supported) to configure users for both Microsoft Calling Plans and Direct Routing. This approach provides the flexibility to control the path a call takes based on the destination phone number dialed.

An advantage of this approach is the SBC can be located locally in-country, so calls will be delivered as local calls.

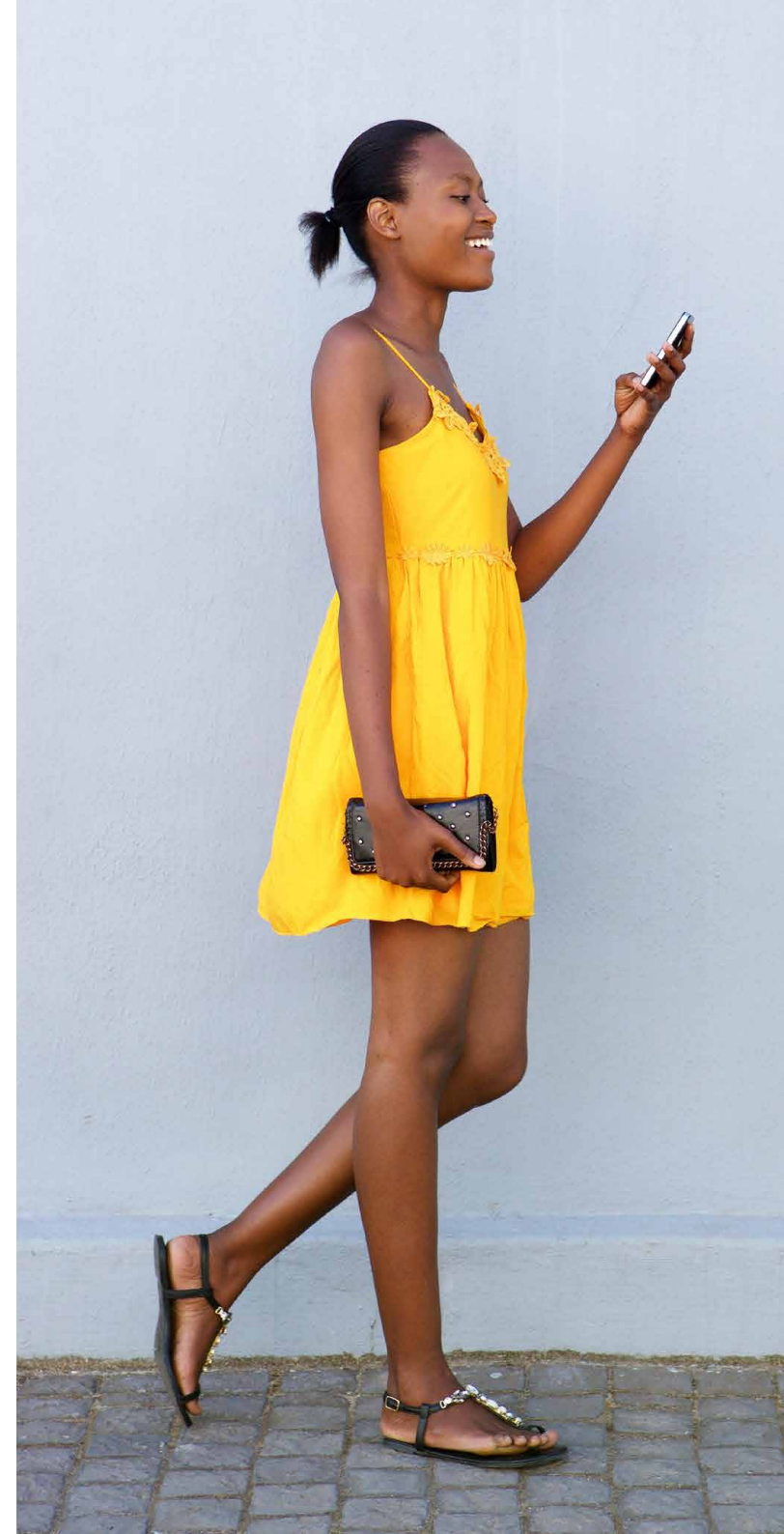
Is Microsoft Teams 'ready for prime-time' as an enterprise voice platform?

Overwhelmingly yes... and it will continue to get better and better over time. By the end of calendar year 2018, Microsoft Teams is at feature parity with Skype for Business Online for enterprise voice features (based on the current Microsoft Roadmap). As we move into 2019, the next wave of capabilities will be released within Microsoft Cloud Voice Services purpose-built for Microsoft Teams.

In our experience working with organizations making the move to Teams Voice today, IT leaders are surprised and impressed with how many cloud voice capabilities are already available today in Teams.

Here's a list of the common features that we get asked about, as well as their availability status:

Coming Very Soon	Currently Generally Available		
Call Park	Blind Transfer	E911 Support	Safe Transfer
Group Call Pickup	Call Blocking	Extension Dialing	Speed Dial
Location-based Routing	Call Forwarding	Forward to Group	Simultaneous Ringing
Shared Line Appearance	Call Queues	Hold	Voicemail to Text
	Caller ID Masking	Multi-Call Handling	Translate user input to standard phone format Voicemail
	Distinctive Ring	Organizational	Suggested Contacts
	Direct Routing (Hybrid Connection to Teams)	Out-of-Office Support	Transfer to PSTN CALL
	Boss and Delegate Support	Enable Existing Calling Plan Support	
	1:1 to Group Call Escalation with Teams, Sfb and PSTN participants	Do Not Disturb Breakthrough	



So what does this mean for your organization?

We've covered a lot of ground in this ebook and now it's time to figure out what it means for your organization. Of course, this largely depends on your specific situation:

- How many phone systems are you currently managing and how old are those?
- Have you deployed Office 365?
- Do you outsource your IT needs or do you have a DIY approach?
- Do you have global offices? Do you need local support?
- When are your telecom/SIP contracts up for renewal?
- Do you have an office move planned in the next 12 months?
- Do you have complex voice requirements? (e.g. analog devices, contact center, fax)

With an in-depth discussion about these and many other factors, it's possible to provide a comprehensive recommendation for your organization.

Arkadin is standing by to discuss your organization's situation and requirements, and help you take the next steps in your Microsoft Teams / Microsoft Phone System journey.

So what does this mean for your organization?

Arkadin Direct Routing for Microsoft Teams empowers organizations to deploy local calling plans in 90+ countries via Microsoft Calling Plans, Arkadin Calling Plans and via Bring Your Own Carrier.

[Learn more about our newly launched offer here.](#)

[Click here to schedule a Microsoft Teams Direct Routing briefing.](#)

