

Internet telephony

Level

Intermediate and above

Tasks

Discussing reactions to an advertisement for a service offering telephone calls over the Internet

Skimming six letters / emails with views on Internet telephony

Creating sentences with collocations taken from the reading texts

Planning for and holding a meeting to discuss more cost-effective ways of making international calls

How to use the lesson

- 1 Ask students to estimate how much time they spend on the telephone per day. Find out who phones abroad and if these calls are expensive. Hand out the worksheet and ask students for their reactions to the advert. Would anyone contact this company for further details? Does anyone use the Internet to make calls?

Teachers note: *VoIP* stands for *Voice over Internet protocol*.

- 2 Tell students to skim the correspondence (letters and e-mails) to a business magazine on Internet telecommunications. Ask them to decide if the letters or e-mails are positive, negative or neutral about VoIP.

Answers

Positive: 2, 4, 6

Negative: 3, 5

I mentions a positive point (saves money) and negative points (quality etc)

- 3 Students read the letters and e-mails again. Ask students to list the pros and cons of switching to VoIP.

Answers

Pros: saves money / can save on hotel call rates / some software is easy to install / easy to use

Cons: quality / reliability / risk of hackers / risk of viruses / caller and receiver must be at their computer

With MSN – only one person can speak at once

(Competition among providers could cause confusion, but could also keep prices low)

- 4 Ask students to create sentences about their own companies and their telephone system using some of the collocations.
- 5 Students work in small groups to prepare for a class meeting to discuss ways of reducing the costs of making international calls. If they have access to the Internet, students could research VoIP providers such as Skype or Vonage. Once each group has collated their ideas, hold the meeting and vote for the best solution in the class.

Related websites

Send your students these websites, or just take a look yourself.

<http://www.skype.com/>

<http://www.iptel.org/info/>

<http://www.voip.org.uk/jargon.php>

<http://www.vonage.com/>