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What's Wrong With Designer Phone Colors?

PRINT

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By Matt Brunk

I've argued too many times with too many manufacturers about providing business telephones in color choices. Stop and think about just the cost of the "station" or telephone set itself.

Recently I read why women buy black high heeled shoes. They want to look slim, sexy and feel great. Why didn't I know that before? What I did know is that ladies, especially those in charge of running the many SMB offices want good looking telephones with the right color to match the office décor and sometimes white and black just doesn't work.



Brian Riggs wrote about **Avaya's pink inserts** on the One-X and the social good that they are promoting and doing. **Vodavi** for several years manufactured a key system with phone colors available in white, black, beige, gray, burgundy and Bermuda green. Nortel hawked dolphin gray, ash and charcoal sets with their systems. Several years ago Pingtel had those colorful SIP phones that were – artistic? **XBlue Networks** offers titanium metallic, red mahogany, vivid xblue, charcoal and a wild "champions."

Several years ago I spoke with GE plastics and they told me virtually any color could be made and that was for 3Com's NBX line- you can have any color you want so long as it's black. White was discontinued early on and a guy in Philly ended up with a shipping container of white plastics for the NBX phones. I even spoke with a painter- yes there are professional phone painters! He would take the skins of the white NBX phones and custom paint them for my customers.

In 2002, **Ishmael** wrote that one of the top five reasons customers didn't buy IP-PBXs was because the phones were ugly. Then, just several weeks ago I mentioned that **Bank of America customers** are often impressed with the "cool looking" Cisco telephones. What I failed to mention is manufacturers need to provide cool looking colorful business telephones that work and function extremely well.

Many years back the old Northern Telecom filled one of my orders and they had a company in Washington make beautiful metallic adhesive logos of the company getting the phones. They made an impression.

Even further back- there were those 2500/2554 beauties "Baby Blue" phones from ITT. They made them for the Bell companies. They were rare finds. I only ever had two and I gave one to my mother (a retired RN) and the other to some chicky babe nurse (LPN) that just had to have one – big mistake!

Any sports franchise you'd think would have their colors and team logo on the phones. Corporations spend big bucks developing and marketing their logos and company icons. Why not extend them to

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the phones? Phones do have skins (Phone Skins) so why not do something creative? I'm surprised or maybe I'm bored with present day business telephone color and style selections. In either case- never ask me to sell any ugly phone let alone a cool looking one that doesn't function well. Why not give the customers what they want? Maybe the guy over at Apple can rustle up some Tangerine, Blueberry, Grape, Kiwi, Blue Stream, Purple Sage, Volcanic Orange...

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