



Switching to Real-Time IP Fax Makes Sense for Healthcare Providers

If you work in the healthcare industry in any capacity, you know that fax remains the most trusted and secure document delivery method available. However, many current fax infrastructures are unreliable or outdated, resulting in slow fax transmission, mishandled documents and protected patient data being exposed to unauthorized access.

With fax remaining the dominant form of communication for medical providers, converting to Internet Protocol (IP) fax may be one of the most valuable uses of your time and effort. This year, especially, it is critical to take advantage of the numerous benefits T.38 real-time IP fax offers. Here are three reasons to make the change now:

COVID-19 Fallout

Last year, COVID-19 presented unique issues within the healthcare industry with the demand for rapid turnaround of healthcare records. As we move forward, it remains critical that healthcare organizations look to find solutions that will allow them to integrate with a variety of health systems, creating a vital bridge between paper and digital processes.

For many healthcare organizations, that vital bridge is T.38 IP fax.

T.38 real-time IP fax addresses the needs of busier-than-ever healthcare offices by capitalizing on the advantages of the internet for faster, more reliable, and scalable document transmission. T.38 real-time IP fax is faster and more reliable because it transmits in real time, without using a “middleman” fax server to store and forward data along the way. With real-time fax, the sender knows immediately that the fax arrived safely. You never need to wait for a final confirmation, because the data goes directly from sending server to receiving server with immediate, accurate confirmation.

The real-time nature of T.38 IP fax, incidentally, ensures HIPAA compliance, since it protects health information from privacy breaches and security risks. In addition, real-time IP fax solutions transfer data digitally from any faxing system to another. These fax systems can easily be integrated with the sender’s and recipient’s electronic health record (EHR) systems.

As we continue to navigate healthcare during COVID, the flexibility and scalability provided by IP fax will be more important than ever. Adding lines – whether one or 100 – is easy and inexpensive compared with legacy systems, so you can adjust quickly when volumes increase. You can customize your experience to mimic your current workflow, connecting the T.38 fax trunks to your existing fax devices to send and receive similar to your legacy system, or configuring the fax servers to emulate the desktop fax experience for some or all users.

Cost Savings

The downtime and performance issues caused by an outdated faxing infrastructure can hamper your healthcare organization and result in reductions in revenue and overall patient care. These legacy fax services cost your organization money, and IP fax could cut those costs in half.

First, depending on your plan, you pay lower or no long-distance charges with IP fax – no small factor if you are a high-volume office sending dozens or hundreds of faxes a day. With analog systems, you are also paying to maintain legacy fax equipment, like fax boards, needed for connectivity. And as local carriers begin to phase out their fax lines, you may soon find yourself scrambling for a solution without the time to shop around for a smart, affordable alternative. Converting to IP fax allows you to cut your losses now and take your time to find the right service provider for your needs.

Additionally, outdated fax systems may be costing you through missed or delayed referrals due to transmission issues. That gap in communication could delay care, putting patients at risk. It also could cost your organization in substantial lost revenue if patients get tired of waiting and choose another provider or decide to forego the treatment altogether. Depending on your organization's area of specialty, that could add up to thousands – even hundreds of thousands – of dollars in missed income this year alone. Clearly, making do with unreliable fax services takes a big bite out of the bottom line.

Higher-Quality Care

According to The Joint Commission, 80% of serious medical errors involve miscommunication between caregivers during the transfer of patients. That includes miscommunications due to missed or delayed faxes containing patient referrals, records, prescriptions, or other sensitive data. Those communication breakdowns can have serious impacts on quality of care.

Additionally, Telehealth is a continually growing trend in the healthcare industry. Many patients are taking advantage of remote visits to avoid travelling long distances, while many independent healthcare practices are allowing their doctors and support staff to work from home. These practices must develop new solutions to efficiently provide the same or better level of care as was traditionally with in-person visits, and equip remote medical staff with the right technology for transferring patient data when needed.

Real-time IP fax provides highly reliable and secure messaging that transmits in real-time and provides page-by-page confirmation as the message is safely received. This means T.38 real-time IP fax can meet HIPAA standards for safety. It's simply the best and most reliable technology available to transmit data safely from one caregiver to the next.

Making the Switch

You may need some time to consider your IP fax options, but when you decide to make the leap, the rest is easy. Conversion can take place overnight, with zero downtime or office disruption. Some offices require an analog telephone adapter, but your provider may include that in their offering.

For the bigger picture of how IP fax benefits the healthcare setting, download our free eBook: [How IP Fax Solves Health Providers' Five Most Pressing Technology Challenges](#).

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