

Small firms harness the savings on telephone bills through new partnership

Submitted by: SmallBiz

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VarTec Telecom Europe Ltd has entered into partnership with Smallbiz.uk.com - the UK's leading online small business support company.

VarTec's newly created division, VarTec In Person, (VIP) will support the telephony needs of small British firms. VarTec In Person allows small businesses to take advantage of low national and international telephone rates by signing up for the service on the Internet.

The VIP service utilises Carrier Pre-Selection (CPS). Therefore instead of tapping in a pre-fix number or installing additional equipment, small business customers can now stipulate that their calls be carried by VIP network and thus make dialling out on an alternative network hassle free.

The VIP products consist of flat-rate offerings. Any business, no matter how small, can take advantage of the savings.

VarTec In Person has built its offering around ease of use, simplicity and highly competitive rates. VIP benefits include a free-to-call, 24-hour, award-winning call centre and simple, clear monthly billing. With a large residential customer base established across Europe, VarTec in Person is now poised to make a real difference to the amount British small businesses spend on telephony.

Smallbiz UK users have expressed the need for an affordable, easy-to-understand telephone offering, and VarTec In Person Head of Sales, Robert Johnson, believes that the partnership is a perfect fit: "Making telephony as efficient and cost-effective as possible is absolutely crucial to small firms, especially in the current economic climate. Small businesses don't have the time to seek the best possible deals and most are still served by BT on outdated or overpriced tariffs. This new service allows them to harness the power of the Internet as a tool for getting a great product quickly and easily, whilst concentrating on running their business."

The partnership between Smallbiz UK and VarTec In Person will also give small firms, using the award-winning site, convenient access to a 'Small Business Advice' area - offering services ranging from business news and advice to online seminars and directories.

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VarTec In Person Notes to editors: <http://www.vartec.co.uk>

VarTec® Telecom Europe Ltd. holds a license from the government for the provision of telecommunications services throughout the United Kingdom. VarTec Telecom Europe Ltd is the European subsidiary of one of the world's largest privately owned telecom companies, with annual revenues approaching \$2 Billion. VarTec Telecom Inc. was founded in Dallas, Texas in 1989 and has grown to be one of the largest providers of telecommunications services in the USA. It has achieved this through a combination of high-quality service and extremely competitive pricing. The European arm of the business was launched in 1999 and headquarters were set up in central Northampton. In Europe, VarTec now employs more than 350 people and operates an award-winning Customer Service Centre. VarTec Telecom Europe Ltd has designed products that are aimed at providing residential customers with fast, effective and, above all, cheaper use of the telephone.

Smallbiz UK notes to editors: <http://www.smallbiz.uk.com>

Smallbiz UK Limited was established in November, 1999 to create a small business web portal - located at www.smallbiz.uk.com and promoted under the slogan "big ideas for small firms". Smallbiz UK now operates business support Web sites and micro-sites for a variety of organisations dealing with British small firms.

The strategic intent of Smallbiz UK is:

'To become an invaluable and trusted business tool for British small businesses, providing convenient access to relevant resources that enhance their performance.'

Smallbiz UK Limited is completely independent and is backed by a small group of private investors, enabling the company to retain control over strategic direction and reflecting the company's

"shirt-sleeves" approach to managing its business.