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Preventing Fraudulent Calls

Fraudulent calling is in the news. With hackers sending unauthorized calls over phone systems, companies and organizations incur millions of dollars in expense.

Hosted PBX Customers

If you administer your system, you are responsible for fraudulent calls.

If you change passwords, be sure to use strong passwords with at least 7 characters with a mix of upper- and lower-case letters, numbers, and special characters.

Do not allow users to take actions that enable fraudulent calling. One example (among many) is if a user's phone is set to forward to a fraudulent destination.

SIP Customers

Please be sure to check with your phone system vendor or dealer for additional actions you can take with your specific phone system.

- Set your phone system so that it accepts connections only from on-site phones and specific IP addresses.
- Use strong passwords and MD5 authentication or public/private keys.
- Set passwords to eight characters in length, with at least one capital letter, at least one number, and at least one of these special characters (if allowed by your phone system).
- Configure SIP proxies and firewalls with access lists to prevent access from unauthorized IP address blocks.
- Change usernames and passwords for connected devices when a user leaves or becomes de-authorized.
- Change passwords routinely on remote connected accounts.
- Review call records regularly to be sure that traffic is what is expected from normal business use.
- Check with your insurance provider to make sure you will be covered in the event of fraud.
- Do not share SIP account passwords and device configuration passwords with anyone.
- Do not allow external users to redial from the phone system.
- Do not allow external access to the management portal of the phone system.
- Secure other services on the phone system. HTTP, FTP, and SSH are commonly exploited and should be tightly restricted.
- Phone systems should be behind firewalls, and SIP proxy services should be used to pass traffic between external and internal systems.