



SoundPoint® IP Frequently Asked Questions

What is the relationship between Circa and Polycom?

As announced on April 2, 2001, Polycom has acquired Circa Communications Ltd.

What does the SoundPoint IP cost?

Pricing for the SoundPoint IP will be announced at its official launch in Summer 2001. It's capable of delivering quality business class features at a very competitive price.

What platform does it work with?

The SoundPoint IP is in interoperability testing with a growing list of partner's platforms. Formal announcements will be made in the near future.

Where can I purchase the SoundPoint IP?

SoundPoint IP will be available through authorized VARs and Service Providers that provide network communications solutions.

How does Polycom work with application developers?

Polycom is creating an applications developers program that will provide a cooperative environment to encourage the creation of better, integrated applications and new telephony features.

Is it compatible with Cisco® Call Manager?

Polycom and Circa are members of Cisco's AVVID program and will be consolidating their efforts to be interoperable with Cisco Call Manager.

What protocols will be supported?

The SoundPoint IP is capable of supporting any standards-based protocol available today and in the foreseeable future. H.323 with H.450 supplementary services and MGCP with feature phone extensions will be available in Q3 2001. We are also working on Megaco, H.323 Annex L and SIP versions of the phone as well as Cisco Skinny Client Control Protocol (Skinny).

Does the phone have a different hardware design for each protocol?

The hardware/software platform is designed to be flexible with “drop-in” protocol stack capabilities. As a result, the SoundPoint IP can support various standards-based protocols with a downloadable firmware upgrade and no changes to the hardware.

Do you support SIP?

We are planning to implement SIP in the second half of 2001.

How does an IP phone call a regular phone?

The IP phone call data packets are routed to a gateway, which then transports that call over the Public Switched Telephone Network (PSTN). This task is completely transparent to the user.

Does the SoundPoint IP work with other IP phones on the network?

The SoundPoint IP is designed to be open-standards compliant. While this may depend on the network protocol employed, we currently interoperate with a number of other manufacturers’ IP telephones and gateways. We are working to expand this interoperability list as quickly as possible.

Are the Ethernet ports switched?

The dual Ethernet ports allow an office PC and the telephone to share a single network cable drop. The Texas Instruments® Orion chip used in the SoundPoint IP forwards all the packets from the PC port to the network and from the network port to the PC. In addition, all packets originating with the telephone are sent to both ports. Those packets that are destined for the telephone and that appear on either port are also forwarded to the telephone’s media access controller.

Any packets originating from the phone are given priority within the packet buffers to ensure that they are delivered to the network ahead of data from the PC port.

How is the SoundPoint IP powered?

The SoundPoint IP comes with a custom network cable, which allows power from an AC wall adapter to be applied to the unused wire pairs in a CAT 5 cable, combining the network and power connections. This reduces the wiring required to the desktop to a maximum of two if there is a PC plugged into the second Ethernet port on the phone.

The IEEE 802.3af working group is developing a standard for providing power via MDI, which will be implemented in the phone once it is approved. This will allow the phone to be powered with a standard CAT 5 cable connected to an IEEE 802.3af capable network. Polycom is also developing a cable assembly that will support Cisco Inline Powering.

Where do I plug the SoundPoint IP in?

This is a Voice over IP (VoIP) phone. It plugs directly to your Ethernet network.

What about QOS?

Polycom assures QOS by using a packet forwarding engine that assigns priority to all IP phone related traffic. The SoundPoint IP ensures that the voice and signaling packets generated by the telephone have priority over the packets generated by a PC.

Is there a DSP in the phone?

Yes, the SoundPoint IP is based on the Texas Instruments Orion chip that contains a DSP and ARM processor. This chip is designed specifically for VoIP telephones.

What headsets do you support?

The headset interface supports Plantronics® and GN Netcom® headsets. These plug directly into a jack in the back of the phone.

What Codecs are supported?

G.711u/A law, G.723.1 and G.729a (Annex B)

What are soft keys?

The function of the soft keys located directly below the display change with what the user is trying to do. For example, while checking voicemail, the keys may be redefined via display-based labels to provide functions such as play, previous, next, delete, etc.

How does a network administrator manage the SoundPoint IP phones on a network?

The phone configuration is designed to be server provisioned with a minimal amount of phone-based set-up required. We are working very closely with platform vendors to ensure that the system management tools provide the capability of configuring the SoundPoint IP from the server with advanced tools.

How many call appearances can you view?

Depending on the services provided by the system vendor, you could view up to 3 call appearances at any one time on the display. In most cases, this capability will be driven by applications and the ability to retrieve calls from larger hold queues and parking orbits. Added call appearances can be supplied through the use of the display and scroll keys for the stimulus versions of the phone. This will be of interest in some applications (i.e.: education rooms or call centers)