

Intercom Calling

Intercom

You can use sipXconfig to configure phones to answer calls automatically (without user intervention). This functionality is referred to in sipXconfig as Intercom feature. Intercom is supported only for devices that can be configured to automatically answer incoming calls. The intercom call can be initiated from any phone.

Configuration

To configure intercom create a group that contains all the phones for which you want intercom enabled. You can use the usual methods of adding phones to the group (Devices->Phones drop-down, Edit Phone screen).

Once you have all the phones added to a group, go to the Intercom configuration screen (Features->Intercom).

The screenshot shows the 'Intercom' configuration page. It has a dark blue header with the word 'Intercom' in white. The main content area is light gray and contains several form fields: 'Enabled' with a checked checkbox, 'Groups' with a text box containing 'polycom', 'Intercom prefix' with a text box containing '*76', and 'Ring time' with a text box containing '5'. Below the 'Groups' field is a small text box with the instruction: 'List of phone groups for which Intercom will be enabled. Use spaces to separate multiple group names.' Below the 'Intercom prefix' field is a small text box with the instruction: 'Prefix that has to be dialed before the extension in order for the phone to answer the call automatically.' Below the 'Ring time' field is a small text box with the instruction: 'Specifies how long (in seconds) the phone is going to ring before automatically answering. Entering 0 results in the phone answering the call immediately without ringing.' There is an 'Apply' button at the bottom left. On the right side, there is a 'Quick Links' section with links for 'Phones' and 'Dial Plans', and an 'Existing Groups:' section with a 'New Groups:' sub-section. The 'New Groups:' section contains the text: 'You can create new groups simply by adding the new group name to the Groups form value.' At the bottom right, there is a note: 'Intercom is supported only for devices that can be configured to automatically answer incoming calls. The intercom call can be initiated from any phone.'

Groups

You need to explicitly enable the intercom feature. The only parameter that you have to configure is the name of the group(s) that you want intercom functionality enabled for. If you have more than one such group use spaces to separate multiple group names. Group edit box has autocomplete functionality enabled - you only need to type the first character of the group name and select the name from the drop-down list.

Intercom prefix

You can leave the default prefix (*76) or configure a different prefix for intercom. Prefix is the way of distinguishing between a standard call and an intercom call. If you want to reach extension 200 and dial just 200 - the phone will ring normally. If you dial *76200 instead your call will be automatically picked up by the phone.

Ring time

You can decide how long the phone should ring before the call is picked up automatically by modifying the Ring setting. By default, phones will ring for 5 seconds before an intercom call is picked up automatically. Even if you configure 0 seconds Ring time, the phone will usually have an audible and visible signal that the call has been picked up automatically. In case of Polycom phones you can configure that using sipXconfig in the Advanced section of Sound Effects screen in phone configuration.

Applying configuration

Once the Intercom configuration is applied you need to restart affected services and generate profiles for all the affected phones. Quick Links on the Intercom screen allow you to navigate to the required pages. The easiest way to reprovision the intercom phones is selecting intercom group name from the filter on the Devices->Phones screen and using "select all" checkbox before pressing the Generate Profiles button.

Advanced

- Intercom is a phone feature and not a user feature. If a user has accounts (lines) on more than one phone, dialing the intercom prefix and the user's extension will fork the call to all those phones. However only the phones in intercom-enabled group will attempt automatic pick-up and of course only one of those phones will ultimately establish connection. Because of this, Intercom is not suitable for "shared" users.
- You can manually configure other phone types as Intercom phones if they support Alert-info header. Press Advanced Settings to display and optionally change the value of Alert-info parameter. sipXconfig will use that value when generating dial rule corresponding to configured Intercom prefix.
- If you have multiple sipXcom clusters and you wish to allow Intercom to work between them, ensure that the 'Alert Info' value is the same on both systems.

