Remote Agents

Setting up a virtual call center with geographically distributed agent teams is very easy. In just a few steps, as described below, remote agents take over queue calls, no matter their location or the phone terminals they use. For instance, remote agents can be prepared to intervene and take incoming calls in case there are no local agents available or when they cannot be physically present in the call center.

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How to set up

Any phone terminal, whether it belongs to a public phone network or a mobile network, can be a remote agent for a VoipNow call queue. However, a remote agent cannot be active in several queues at the same time.

Start the setup by accessing the Queue Agents icon in the management page of the Queue extension. Click the Add Remote Agent icon and fill in the form taking into consideration the explanations below.

1. **Name** and **Agent ID** are mandatory fields. Set a name of your choice and use the public phone number as the Agent ID. VoipNow uses this ID to verify if the agent belongs to the queue.
2. **Require authorization to connect to queue** is not a mandatory option, but if you want to use password authentication login, check this box. This means that the agent needs to dial a PIN code to connect to the queue.
3. **Queue login PIN** and **Confirm queue login PIN** are required if you have enabled the password authentication login. PIN must be numeric, 2 to 10 digits.
4. **Penalty** is a parameter used to differentiate between agents when an incoming call is received. It refers the agents' availability to take the calls and is considered by the call distribution algorithm. The smaller the penalty, the larger the number of calls the agent will be able to take. If you want an agent to take most calls, set its penalty to 0. Default values: 0 to 100.
5. **Registration** can be done in two ways. **Static** registration implies that the agent can only log in from the phone terminal associated to the **Agent phone number** indicated in the following box. **Dynamic** registration means the user can log in to the queue from any phone terminal, any phone number.
6. **Require confirmation on taking calls** prevents agents from missing calls. If the agent is already on a phone call and at the same time is assigned a call from the queue, the caller will not be redirected to voicemail as it normally happens. Instead, the agent is informed about the queue call and allowed to choose whether to take it or not.

How it works

Connection to the queue is done through the Queue Login Center, which needs to have a public number assigned (a DID number).

Here's how a remote agent connects to the queue:

- Remote agent dials the Queue Login Center number.
- Remote agent is required his AgentID and the PIN of the queue he wishes to connect to.
- If authentication is successful (i.e. PIN and AgentID are correct), the Queue Login Center announces the queue that the remote agent has logged in.
- The remote agent is then logged in the queue and treated like a local agent.

At this point, the remote agent is able to receive incoming calls either on a predefined number (if he previously opted for static registration) or any phone number (if he preferred dynamic registration).

Tips and tricks

Since the VoipNow call queue and the remote agent are in different phone networks, call charges can occur because queue calls are forwarded outside the Voipnow server using a (SIP) channel.

Remote Agents are not VoipNow extensions logged directly into the call queue, but public users (such as mobile or landline) logged in using an intermediary authentication leg.

The main advantage is that remote agents can receive inbound calls outside their regular workplace.

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