



Computer Instruments

Legacy IVR Replacement Cost: What the Quote Really Includes

What a replacement quote leaves to your team, and what to ask before you sign

ARTICLE • OCTOBER 2026

ARTICLE

Legacy IVR Replacement Cost: What the Quote Really Includes

What a replacement quote leaves to your team, and what to ask before you sign

By Computer Instruments · Published October 30, 2026 · 5 minute read

Overview

A legacy IVR replacement quote leads with the platform: a license count, a per-agent or per-minute rate, and an implementation fee. That total is what goes to finance for approval.

What the quote leaves out is your own team's time. People in IT and operations will spend part of every week on the switch for months, and those hours almost never make it into the business case.

When we wrote [The Hidden Cost of Legacy IVR](#), the migration quote was one of the five hidden costs we found, and the one most likely to push an upgrade into next year's budget. If you have a quote on your desk now, or you're expecting one, go through it with the list below.

Start with the Scope Line

Many legacy IVRs were sold together with a PBX, and they only run on that PBX. So if you ask a vendor for a better caller experience, the proposal may come back with a new phone platform, a new carrier contract, and new handsets or softphones. Check the first page for this. If the phone system is in scope, you're pricing a whole phone system replacement, and every cost below grows with it.

Look at the pricing model while you're on that page. A per-agent rate, a per-minute rate, and a per-concurrent-call rate can look about the same on paper, so run each one against your call volume in your busiest month before you compare quotes.

What a Legacy IVR Replacement Asks of Your Team

Mapping your call flows

Every menu, routing rule, holiday schedule, and recorded prompt has to be rebuilt on the new platform. First, though, someone has to work out what the current ones do.

Few organizations have an up-to-date map. The menus were set up years ago and edited many times since, often by people who no longer work there. So the job starts with someone calling each of your numbers, pressing every option, and writing down where it goes. If you have 20 locations with their own hours, that's 20 schedules to re-enter by hand.

If professional services is billed hourly, ask the vendor how many hours they've set aside for this step.

Rebuilding integrations

If your IVR reads out an account balance or takes a payment, it's connected to another system, such as your billing platform or payment processor. Each of those connections has to be rebuilt for the new platform and tested with real data.

Payments need the most care, since the new flow has to be tested end to end with your processor before it handles a real card. Older custom integrations add another step. If nobody wrote down how one was built, someone has to figure that out before it can be rebuilt.

Moving your numbers

Your main numbers, location lines, and toll-free numbers all have to move to the new platform. Under FCC rules, a carrier has one business day to complete a simple port and four business days for a port that isn't simple.¹ With dozens of numbers spread across several carriers, you'll be scheduling a series of ports and planning the cutover around them. Toll-free numbers follow their own process, called a change of Responsible Organization (RespOrg).

Paying for two systems

You can't switch off the old IVR the day the new contract starts. For several months you'll pay the old maintenance contract and the new subscription at the same time. Any change in that window, like a holiday closure or a location changing its hours, has to be made in both systems.

Training

While calls keep coming in, agents learn a new desktop and new transfer steps. Supervisors get new reports, and because the new platform may calculate abandonment or handle time differently, this year's figures won't line up neatly with last year's. Whoever runs the system has a new admin console to learn as well.

Cutover

Cutover happens over a weekend or overnight, with a plan to roll back if it fails. Expect the first week to turn up a few problems that testing missed, like one location's calls landing in the wrong queue or a prompt still announcing last year's holiday hours. Set aside staff time to test every call path before go-live, and to keep a close eye on that first week.

What a Pilot on Your Current Phone System Needs

There's a less daunting way to start. When you add conversational AI to the phone system you already run, your PBX, carrier, and numbers stay where they are. Nothing gets ported, and nobody gives up a weekend to a cutover.

A pilot needs four things from you:

- **One or two call types to start with.** [The Hidden Cost of Legacy IVR](#) has a ten-minute exercise that ranks your call types by volume and by how routine they are.
- **The answers callers want.** The AI Concierge answers from your own content, such as your website, hours, and policies.
- **Hand-off rules.** Which calls go to a person, and which team picks them up.
- **A few numbers to judge it by.** The same paper's [staged-rollout section](#) lists the four we track.

If the pilot works, you add more call types one at a time. If it doesn't, you switch it off, and your phone system is set up the way it was before.

Questions to Ask Before You Sign

Put these to any vendor quoting a replacement

- ☐ Does this replace our phone system, or only the IVR?
- ☐ Who maps our existing call flows, and is that time in the quote?
- ☐ Which integrations are included, and which are billed separately?
- ☐ How many of our numbers are porting, and what's the plan for toll-free?
- ☐ How long will we run both systems, and who pays for the overlap?
- ☐ Is professional services a fixed bid or hourly?
- ☐ What happens if cutover goes wrong?

If the answers describe a bigger project than you planned for, it helps to know what your current setup is costing you each month. [The Hidden Cost of Legacy IVR](#) walks through how to put a figure on it, and its calculator runs the numbers for your call volume.

Computer Instruments has been building IVR and voice automation since 1979, and the AI Concierge is how we add conversational AI to the phone system you already run. [Book a 20-minute demo](#) and hear it answer a call.

Sources

1. Code of Federal Regulations, “47 CFR § 52.35, Porting Intervals,” paragraphs (a) and (d): one business day for a simple wireline or intermodal port, four business days for a non-simple port.