

Vonage Tip #3: Uh oh, the Powers out!

Unlike â??standardâ?• telephone service, Vonage requires that your Phone Adapter be powered and connected to an active broadband connection at all times. Read on to see what can you do to ensure uninterrupted service for those inevitable times when the power goes outâ?¦

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Have you ever noticed that when the power goes out, you can still pick up the phone and make a call? Thatâ??s because standard phone lines are powered by their own electrical systems that are controlled and maintained by the Phone Company. This is a low voltage electrical connection that is separate from your home electrical wiring and service. But what about Vonage? Well, to maintain uninterrupted phone service, you must maintain power to all of your â??Vonage-relatedâ?• equipment such as the Phone Adapter, Routers (if any), and your Cable/DSL modem.

By simply connecting these devices to an inexpensive UPS (Uninterruptible Power Supply) you can ensure that, at least for a while, you will have continued phone service. Typically, UPSâ??s are designed to provide uninterrupted backup power for PCâ??s and related equipment. How much power it provides and how long it will last depends on several factors including the power rating of the UPS and the actual load you are putting on the UPS (the number and types of equipment connected.)

UPS manuafacturers typically rate their UPS devices with â??VAâ?• or â??Volt-Ampsâ?• numbers, for example 350VA, 500VA, etc. This number is calculated based on voltage and amps (or watts.) If your device has an amps rating, multiply the number of amps by 120 (volts.) If the device has a watts rating, multiply the number of watts by by 1.82. So, for example, if one device uses 2 amps (2 x 120 = 240) and another user 100 watts (100 x 1.82 = 182) then the total volt-amps needed would be 422. Basically, you add up the total power requirements for all devices and then purchase a UPS that is rated at least at the number you calculated.

The good news is that home networking devices like Cable Modems, Routers, and the Vonage Phone Adapter have rather low power requriements, so if you were to purchase a UPS typically sized to accommodate a PC and a Monitor, and use it just for your networking devices, you should have lots of extended usage time. Your best bet is to take the time to add up the power requirements for everything for which you want battery backup and then reference the UPS packaging or manufacturerâ??s web site to

determine your best options. Look for â??sizingâ?• information. My recommendation is to connect as few devices as you can. This will enable you to either purchase a smaller UPS or it will give you much longer backup power when the power goes out.

Like so many â??cutting edgeâ?• gadgets and services, Vonage VoIP requires a bit more â??user participationâ?• in some areas to make it work best. Some may view it as a burden, but it really just provides more choice for the user. Obviously, if you donâ??t care if you have a phone connection if the power goes out, then you can save some money. But if itâ??s important to you, then you need to take the time to provide the best backup methods.

Finally, to what extent you provide backup power again is purely your choice. Some people have provided solar backup power. Some use generators, and others use simple, inexpensive UPSâ??s.

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