
HOW TO CHOOSE AN IPHONE AUDIO CONFERENCING APP

Top 5 features to look for

WEB 2.0 FEATURES ENHANCE CONVENTIONAL OPTIONS

By Michael McKibben

1.	2.	3.	4.	5.
Call Now!	i-Integration	Many PINs	Web 2.0	Privacy



Audio conferencing is one of those vital business services where looks can be deceiving. Most services use out-dated equipment with features that haven't improved in more than a decade or more.

More than a dozen services now offer iPhone apps, but most are little more than a web page tied to an ancient piece of equipment. The lure is often some form of "free conferencing." Many simply arbitrage local access numbers—essentially using participants' iPhones as roaming devices to find local numbers to avoid toll-free charges. While interesting, this approach has many moving parts and places the burden of connecting audio conferences on the users themselves. The hidden costs of these "free" minutes are incalculable.

iPhone users should look for the following five (5) features in their audio conferencing app:

1. Call Now!

This feature empowers you to set up a conference call by simply selecting participants from your Contacts and tapping Call Now! For the first time in the 30 years of audio conferencing, a conference call can be initiated without having to send out PINs and dial-in numbers; the participants are actually called directly. For example, your partners are meeting over a weekend on an important project and need to go over the latest drafts right now—there's no time to schedule a conventional audio conference.

2. i-Integration

A well-engineered iPhone audio conferencing app will be a seamless integration of the power of the iPhone with the service itself. Two obvious connections are selection of contacts from your iPhone Contacts and the automatic integration of your scheduled calls with your iPhone Calendar. Apps that do not fully integrate native iPhone features are under-engineered and should be avoided. For example, the Calendar reminder should allow you to simply click the dial-in number and enter the PIN for you automatically.

3. Many PINs

Many/most audio conferencing services offer only one "meet me" PIN that you can reuse. However, users are forced to use the same PIN over and over again for different groups and subjects. Each use of your one PIN increases the risk of compromise where the wrong people dial in to your conference call without

your permission—simply because they had your PIN from an earlier call. A well-engineered iPhone audio conferencing app will allow you to manage multiple PINs. For example, a member of the media who participated last month in your conference call should not be able to dial in secretly to your confidential board meeting about the planned merger. This happens more often than one would expect when users of single PIN systems get busy.

4. Web 2.0

Web 2.0 audio conferencing brings many data-related services to the game. Plain old, conventional audio conferencing is tied to the physical switch that is bridging the call. On the other hand, Web 2.0 audio conferencing lets you manage your call in a variety of ways, depending upon your requirements. User conveniences like account management, call management, group contact lists, call reports and call histories are the kinds of data-related services that separate Web 2.0 from conventional. Your iPhone audio conferencing app should seamlessly integrate a powerful user experience with the power of the global telecommunications network.

5. Privacy

Your iPhone app should give you privacy choices since not all conference calls have the same requirements. Some calls are public in nature, like a community organization, while others are sensitive. Your iPhone app should give you the choice of a single-PIN or a two-PIN conference. A single-PIN conference can be used where privacy is not as important, or a host need not be present to start a call, whereas a two-PIN conference can be used for subject-matter privacy matters. Some PINs you may want to use over and over whereas others will be used only once then deleted. Your iPhone audio conferencing app should enable you to manage the privacy of your conference calls easily and flexibly.

Audio conferencing customers have historically had few feature choices other than “plain vanilla.” Selecting the right iPhone audio conferencing app can greatly improve productivity.

To learn more, Google “Web 2.0 audio conferencing”.

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Michael McKibben is Founder & Chairman of Leader Technologies®, supplier of Leader Phone® [audio conferencing](#) services. Leader's [teleconferencing](#) innovations include patented Web 2.0 technologies including Leader Phone® iPhone Audio Conferencing App with Call Now! Leader Phone® was first introduced in 2001 and has customers in most industry sectors as well as education and government. After Hurricane Katrina, the State of Louisiana relied upon Leader Phone® as the only working communication system available to first responders for life saving and disaster recovery. U.S. Patent No. 7,925,246 and pending.

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