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O1 Communications gets back into phone business

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Five years after selling its retail phone operation, **O1 Communications** Inc. is getting back into the business.

O1 Communications [sold its customers, data center and local exchange](#) telephone business to Sacramento-based TelePacific Communications in 2010.

A five-year non-compete clause has now expired. In the interim, the El Dorado Hills-based company has operated as a wholesale network carrier.

O1 will continue with its wholesale business, said [Brad Jenkins](#), co-founder and president of O1. And it will resume serving retail customers using cloud-based telephone service for office and cell phones.

While O1 was out of the retail business of offering telephone service to small and medium businesses, economics and technology have changed greatly, Jenkins said. What used to require installing equipment and connectivity can now be done with cloud-based applications, greatly reducing cost.

The company's new offering, called O1 Phone VoiceStream, allows users easily work between desk and cell phones seamlessly. A cell call can even be transferred during a call to a cell phone -- and visa versa -- with a single button, he said.

The company hired three salespeople and two technicians to launch the business in the Sacramento region, with a plan to grow it statewide, said Jenkins, who is a member of the Sacramento Kings ownership group.

Mark Anderson covers technology, agriculture, banking and finance, venture capital, energy, mining and hospitality for the Sacramento Business Journal.