

A Bunch of Gateway Reviews

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One of the hardest things to find in VoIP hardware is a good low cost FXO gateway. The FXS gateways and ATA™s are easy to locate. Finding an equivalent FXO has been a never ending task. I have tested Patton, Audiocodes, Linksys/Cisco, and Grandstream gateways.

The Patton products are just way too complicated – someone needs to go back and put an easy mode on these things.

The price is just a bit high for every situation I have encountered in deploying them. The Audiocodes are not as expensive as the Patton products but they also have their own strengths and weakness. It takes a lot of effort to fully utilize or understand the full routing potential of these products. Once you master the configuration you can do all sorts of cool stuff. I have been able to deploy these products in a number of locations. They can work very well with Asterisk if you can match up the right version numbers (for both the gateway and Asterisk.)

The Linksys/Cisco SPA400 has been a real price gem for me. For locations that need a couple of FXO ports and money is an issue you can't go wrong this device. Note that I have specifically tested a certain firmware version for my deployments. This product is intended to work with the LVS9000 but can be configured to work with Asterisk. The sound quality is good – not great. Good enough for the low end installations.

The Grandstream FXO gateways are a piece of junk – not worth a single penny because they cannot be deployed anywhere. I have tested with the current firmware and they continue to break what was working or cannot fix the long list of outstanding bugs.

How many tries does it take guys to fix the caller-id issues? You Grandstream owners should know that you are missing many calls – hope you are not using these devices for your business. Finally the best for last – I have purchased a Welltech 3804A because this Taiwanese company said they supported Asterisk. The price was right, the features were good, and the sound quality was actually very good. The main problem with this gateway is that it can't detect a dial tone. This kind of limits the use for this anywhere with multiple lines and hunt group configurations.

Welltech's latest gateways do support dial tone – I just wished I knew about this little issue prior. What gets me though is not dial tone aspect but that I was able to brick this product with configuration changes. At some point all the FXO ports went amber, I reset the device to factory defaults and it never came back!

So much for confidence in this company's products. I am currently testing the Cisco SPA8800 which is a 4 port FXS and 4 port FXO. Everything looks good so far but I can't make a recommendation if this product is ready for any clients yet.

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