



Empowering digital workspace

A photograph of a man in a dark suit standing on a rooftop, looking out over a vibrant city skyline at sunset. The skyline includes the London Eye, the River Thames, and various illuminated buildings. The sky is filled with soft, colorful clouds.

ARE YOU READY?

THE ISDN & PSTN  
SWITCH OFF IS  
COMING

5 reasons why your business  
should move to the cloud

# WHAT IS THE ISDN SWITCH OFF? HOW DOES THIS AFFECT YOUR BUSINESS?

**In 2015, BT announced that their ISDN and PSTN lines were due to be switched off by 2025, marking the biggest change in our communications systems in over a century.**

The Public Switch Telephone Network is considered as “traditional telephony” as it allows calls to be made over copper or fibre telephone lines using analogue signaling.

Over the last decade, broadband services have increased in reliability and quality and the PSTN has now evolved to support this change to an almost completely digital network thus making traditional fixed line telephony using analogue services for calls and lines, obsolete.

Therefore, the priority for the future is to maintain a fibre-first, high availability network. PSTN and ISDN are aging technologies, becoming harder to maintain particularly in an era where communication is key and the already high demand for fast technology is increasing.

Whilst BT have given 10 years notice for the switch-off, many businesses are not engaging quickly enough to establish a plan for transition to the new communications solutions, and whilst the final switch off is not until 2025, the reality is that even this year, in many areas, you will no longer be able to access ISDN and PSTN services. This is leaving businesses incapacitated.

Espria has reviewed how legacy systems are now placing businesses at risk. If your business is included in this, you should be moving to the cloud now, and exploring the right questions to be asking your communications solutions provider to ensure your business remains highly productive and efficient for the future.





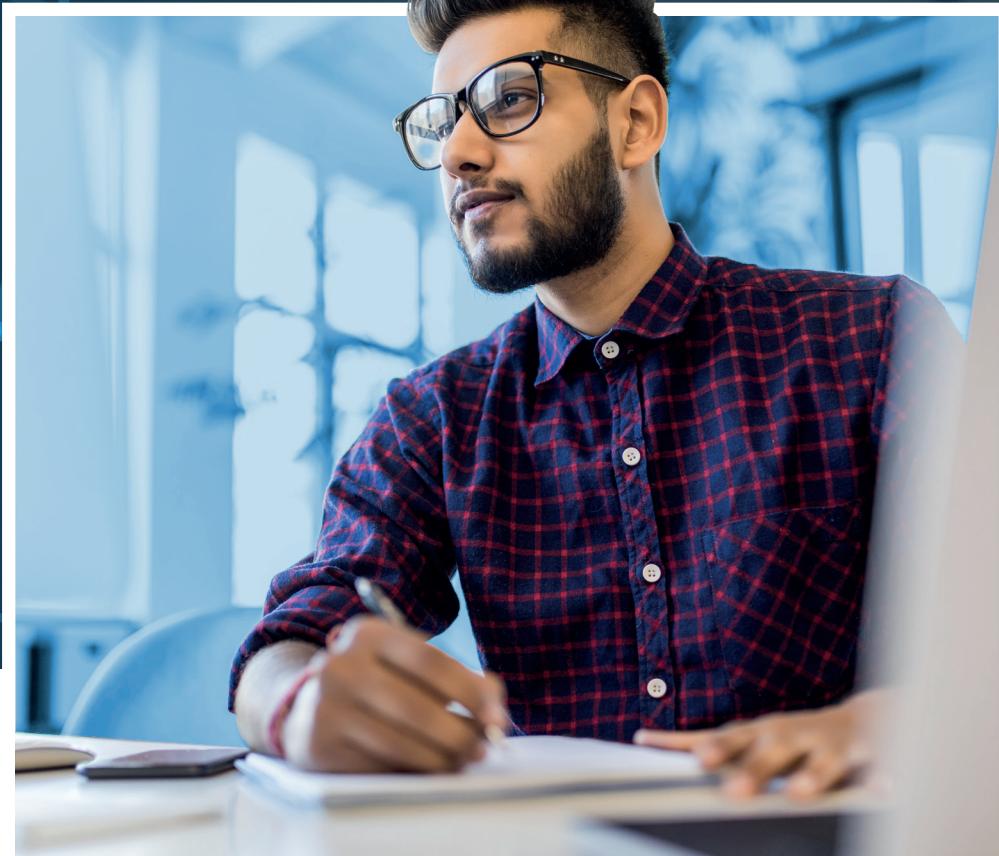
## LEGACY SYSTEMS PUT BUSINESSES AT RISK – HERE'S HOW

Your traditional legacy systems have worked well for you – you have probably paid for it, so we know there will be incentive to stick with the system you have. Changing your communications systems is a significant undertaking and whilst it may feel safer to stick with what you have, the reality is, it may be a far greater risk to continue to use a potentially out of date, on-premise system, that is underperforming for your business.

The longer you keep your legacy communications, the greater the risks and cost which include:

- Security – A compromised PBX system can lead to unwanted calls targeted at end-users and can be extremely costly
- System outages and unplanned downtime can harm your business, reputation, and profitability
- High upgrade costs associated with keeping server environments up to date
- Inability to replace critical components as dated technology reaches end of life
- Attrition of in-house expertise required to maintain legacy infrastructure
- Losing ground to competitors with superior communications capabilities – just imagine what your outdated communications say about your business.

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**Communication technology is changing rapidly and the most potentially damaging issue with your legacy system is that it can't keep pace with soaring demand for innovative communications.** Expectations are such that communications should be easy to use and have feature rich components.

Attempting to wrestle new functionality from your old system is costly and operationally challenging. Whilst the next generation on-premises converged communication systems are more adaptable than their predecessors, they are equally costly with the potential to spend millions. When compared with cloud communications, they are extortionately expensive and do not provide the agile, uncomplicated advantages a cloud system can offer.

Increasingly, businesses are embracing cloud communications not only for their unified communications, that provide voice, messaging, video and collaboration; but also through productivity, driving business applications that support your workflows.

In 2018 a Market Analysis Research Report concluded that cloud Communication platforms would continue to experience strong growth with an average CAGR of 26.8% from 2016 to 2021. Known for scalability, adaptability, reliability and efficiency of cost, Cloud communications, can also be called VoIP – (Voice over IP). It can accommodate the widest range of communication needs, including Unified Communications, business phone services, collaboration, contact centres and mobility.



## 5 REASONS WHY YOU SHOULD MOVE TO THE CLOUD

Leaving your PBX behind and entrusting your communications to the cloud is critical and we have pulled together 5 of the most critical reasons for the move.



# ERADICATE INEFFICIENT MULTI-VENDOR COMMUNICATIONS WHICH MAKE YOUR BUSINESS DISJOINTED

**Legacy communications systems often involve multiple vendors with separate solutions for each capability.**

Typically a system might include a PBX for core call control and different solutions for services such as instant messaging (IM), directory/presence, web collaboration, video conferencing, and contact centre solutions.

Even if your business hopes to centralise communications; one vendor will still need to deploy individual solutions, such as WebEx and Jabber. Disjointed capabilities such as these can have a crippling effect on productivity and efficacy.

**For example:**

On-premise solutions offer little, or no cross-platform integration. As a result, your teams will encounter inconsistent experiences from each solution requiring multiple passwords.

Multi-vendor systems offer complexities that include deployment, management and maintenance.

Slow response times from disjointed communications also can have a negative impact on your customers' experience and thus their satisfaction, eventually affecting your revenue.

As you are tied to your supplier to manage the legacy infrastructure, your business faces the prospect of having to pay more to replace any elements that fail.

Implementing Cloud Communications eliminates the issues surrounding integration, deployment and multi-vendor contracts by providing a consolidated solution with the latest technology. Consolidated Unified Communications benefit your teams through multiple tools including free phone, local and international calls such as SD-WAN (software-defined networking) and MPLS (Multiprotocol Label Switching). In essence, Cloud Communications providers enable the simplification of your business vendor management including receiving just one monthly bill.

## SCALABLE COMMUNICATIONS THAT SUPPORT YOUR BUSINESS GROWTH

**Your traditional communications platforms are too rigid to accommodate growth.** If your business is undergoing a merger or acquisition, you relocate, grow your teams or become an international business; Cloud Communications will support you in any way that your business needs. A traditional PBX does not offer this option making scaling your growth complicated, exceedingly slow, expensive and requiring a vast amount of equipment.

If you still have a traditional communications system, then consider how labour intensive it is to add a new team member, and how easily that would be replicated in another office, in another location and potentially another company. Cloud VoIP enables your business to deploy new lines and phones whenever you need them, quickly and easily.

The cloud only requires an internet connection. There is no need for phone wires or a hardware infrastructure. Your business is relieved from complexities as your solutions are remote in the cloud. Regardless of your office locations, the cloud will ensure simple communications that serve your teams quickly, securely and efficiently. Also, as Cloud VoIP provides many capabilities, you can scale as and when you need, including phone systems, contact centres, Unified Communications, conferencing and/or mobile capability at once, or incrementally, as needed.

*Cloud VoIP gives businesses the flexibility to efficiently and quickly adjust communications capacity to precisely match the needs of your enterprise at all times.*

# COMMUNICATIONS FEATURES THAT SUPPORT YOUR BUSINESS AND ALLOW IT TO THRIVE

Connectivity has expanded dramatically in recent years, even more so during the pandemic, meaning that PBX systems no longer have the capacity to support the type of communications needed today. Recent research by Deloitte indicated that the mobile workforce comprises 40% of workers in the UK and this figure is probably expanding as following the pandemic, we consider how we work in the future.

If your business has a PBX system, then implementing a BYOD (Bring Your Own Device) strategy will be exceedingly challenging as call forwarding and voicemail notification to mobile devices is often not possible with legacy systems.

When considering other communications tools that are important to today's work-force, other useful features such as video conferencing become almost impossible to implement. For example, would your sales and support teams benefit from communications that provide them with built in web dialling capabilities? If you attempted to implement this on a traditional system it would be exceedingly expensive as your provider would need to customise the existing system. Plus, implementing these features on your PBX would tie these capabilities to the system, thus limiting your business as well as increasing your costs.

*Cloud communications provide and support your teams with the features they and their clients need now and for the future.*

Cloud communications support versatility and agility, providing the tools your teams need to be more productive and effective. Highly sophisticated cloud features including mobile collaboration, CRM integrations, hot desking and monitoring are both accessible and easy to use.

Seamless, continuous communications are guaranteed with Cloud VoIP. For example: if a team member wishes to contact a colleague, they will be able to locate, check availability and click to chat, link to call or even collaborate. Unlike PBX systems, the deployment of new features is simple, requiring little or no IT assistance as well as supporting BYOD, thus removing IT costs.

# OBTAİN ESSENTIAL INSIGHT INTO YOUR BUSINESS COMMUNICATIONS

**It's imperative for the growth of your business, that you have the capacity to analyse your operations.** This not only supports your growth, but ultimately will give you a view on your customers' experience too. However, a PBX system has little or no reporting and the fragmented patchwork systems makes it exceedingly difficult to perform analysis of any benefit.

If your business cannot access relevant, timely data then you lack critical insight and accountability. In contrast, Cloud Communications have a whole spectrum of reporting and analytics, providing the cohesive view you need.

Transparency and visibility eliminate the guesswork from your business performance analyses, giving you valuable real-time information to support informed decision making.

The capacity to create interactive, versatile dashboards allows you to create custom reports, track active calls, individual team members' performance, call queues, unreturned calls and other valuable insights in order to strategically plan improvements and implement either training, or new policies.

*Insights gleaned  
from your Cloud  
Communications  
give you invaluable  
information  
to support your  
view of business.*



# STABLE, CONSISTENT COMMUNICATIONS EVEN WHEN DISASTERS OCCUR

We've examined many of the shortcomings of PBX traditional communications, but the most serious issue is the lack of disaster recovery and business continuity. On-premise communications were not designed to provide the continuity that your business needs and in the event of a disaster, your business could be left without communications, meaning down-time for your teams and loss of service to your customers!

There are many situations that could effect your PBX system resulting in a lack of service. For example, aged components might fail and need replacing: construction projects could affect your systems, and transportation strikes or customs issues as a result of Brexit, might delay the supply of vital components. Servicing costs could have severe implications as they can escalate into tens of thousands of pounds. Along with this, failures in communications disrupt your employees' productivity and your customers' experience which could damage your brand and reputation.

Consistent availability, business continuity and disaster recovery are all services that you can be assured of with the implementation of Cloud VoIP. There is no single point of failure within cloud services, unlike a traditional on-premise solution.

Cloud Communications are hosted within geographically dispersed data centres. This means that if a server fails in one location, the connection is maintained by another mirrored server elsewhere for seamless service.

Disasters such as fires, earthquakes or extreme weather, have a negligible impact on your business - calls in the cloud can be transferred automatically and rerouted to mobile phones. So regardless of the situation, your teams can connect and communicate with your business number supporting your operations and eliminating any potential harm.

*You are always connected with cloud communications.*

Further, if your head office goes offline, then the cloud can connect to the internet remotely – with the use of web browser, desktop and mobile apps from home or any other offices.

# QUESTIONS TO HELP YOU ASSESS CLOUD COMMUNICATIONS PROVIDERS

**It is evident that Cloud Communications provide businesses with superior service over traditional on-premise solutions.** However, you need to carefully consider the provider you choose. With the ISDN and PSTN switch off imminent, you will need a provider who offers you support beyond the functionality of Cloud VoIP. Consider these 8 questions so that you can ensure the Cloud Communications provider you choose is right for your business.

## IMPLEMENTATION:

-  What is their average time to implement a new cloud system?

## SECURITY AND COMPLIANCE:

-  How do they ensure the security of your communications? Do they have third-party validated compliance with standards such as cyber essentials PCI-DSS, FISMA, HIPAA?

## RELIABILITY:

-  Can they offer a service level agreement (SLA) for a minimum of 99.99% uptime with financial backing?

## SEAMLESS COMMUNICATIONS:

-  Are they able to provide the end-to-end communication capabilities that you need across phones, contact centre, unified communications, conferencing and mobility?

## CALL QUALITY:

-  Can they guarantee a minimum call quality? You should be expecting a score of 3.0 MOS (mean opinion score) over the public internet or over MPLS?

## GLOBAL COVERAGE:

-  Check the locations of their data centres and whether they provide geographical redundancy. Can you access local, free phones, or international? If you have teams travelling internationally, check how the calls are routed; can they ensure optimum quality and low lag time?

## APPLICATION INTEGRATION:

-  Do they offer out-of-the-box integrations with CRM and other business productivity tools?

## ANALYTICS:

-  Do they offer more than just Call Detail Records? Do their analytics tools include interactive dashboards?



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