



Get switched on to the **switch-off.**

How businesses can prepare for the PSTN/ISDN switch-off.

Organisations face a unique set of challenges when it comes to investing in technology. It's a fine balance between managing costs, empowering academic research and collaboration, and delivering excellent tuition and experiences.

When it comes to comms, the pace of change is increasing. We've seen a huge shift to remote work and study, and the need to be flexible, fast. Customers are using different methods of contact from WhatsApp to social media and SMS – and these are just some of the channels businesses must be familiar with in order to 'be where their customers are'.

And now, there's another rapidly approaching change that business need to plan for: the PSTN/ISDN switch-off. This ebook is designed to help businesses of all sizes navigate this major change to communications.



PSTN/ISDN switch-off: What you need to know.

If you're thinking "hang on a minute, what's ISDN?" then don't worry, we're here to help.

PSTN:

Public Switched Telephone Network. This is a basic phone line like you might have at home. It works by using underground copper wires between homes, businesses and switching centres.

ISDN:

Integrated Services Digital Network. This uses PSTN to operate, but digitises the traditional, analogue network. This provides multiple lines for the business and allows voice, video, data and other network services to be sent.

What's happening?

In 2015, BT announced that their PSTN/ISDN lines would be completely switched off in 2025. Both technologies are becoming outdated, and unable to handle the volume, speed and quality of data in today's increasingly digital world.

It's worth noting that these lines can carry more than just voice calls. If your business uses analogue lines for things like door entry systems, emergency alarms, lifts or payment terminals, then you'll need to think about upgrading these too.

There are over 3 million active ISDN users, which is why such a long notice period has been set – but crunch time is fast approaching.



Why the switch-off?

1.

PSTN/ISDN technology is outdated. PSTN was introduced in the 1800s, and ISDN back in the 1980s. The network has remained relatively unchanged and is not fit for the future.

2.

Broadband internet connection speeds are a lot faster – and often cheaper.

3.

ISDN ties businesses to a physical location and offers little flexibility.

4.

BT want to invest in their more modern technology – like VoIP – so decided it didn't make financial sense to continue maintaining the PSTN/ISDN infrastructure.

How do I know if I've got PSTN/ISDN?

The easiest way is to check your bill. It should mention "ISDN", "DASS" or something similar. Alternatively, speak to your communications provider and they'll be able to tell you.

The time-line.

2015

2021 to 2023

2025

BT announces the decision to switch PSTN/ISDN off.

A phased 'stop-sell' of new PSTN/ISDN lines between these dates.

PSTN/ISDN switch-off.



So what's next?



The good news is there are plenty of options out there if you're still using PSTN/ISDN in your business. And, chances are, if you're affected by the switch-off, it's about time to upgrade your communications anyway.

So, what can you replace PSTN/ISDN with?

Simply put, your calls can now be made and received using your internet connection. So you'll need a phone system that uses internet protocol (IP), such as VoIP or SIP. You may need to upgrade some of your hardware too, as your "lines" will be different. Alternatively, you can do all of this in the cloud – essentially hosting your phone system remotely.

Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP)

VoIP is a broad term, used in reference to any phone call made over the internet instead of traditional telephone lines. VoIP relies on data connectivity to transmit voice packets instead of the public switched telephone network (PSTN).

Session Initiation Protocol (SIP)

SIP is a subset of VoIP, and is a protocol used to 'initiate, maintain, and terminate' multimedia communication sessions in VoIP applications. As broadband infrastructure has improved over the years, this has become an increasingly viable option.

Unified Communications (UC)

UC is a term used to describe the integration of business communications services – voice, video, messaging, email, presence, mobility, etc. These services can be integrated with your networks, applications and systems to provide a better experience.

Which is right for your business?

Well, that depends. As everyone has different requirements, it's hard to give a one-size-fits-all answer. The best choice is to work with a provider who can help you navigate the complexity of the IT and connectivity options, making sure your business is upgrading to a system that's fit-for-purpose and future-proof.

VoIP cuts through the complexity.

If this feels a bit daunting, we get it.

But this communications cloud has a silver lining. VoIP solutions can deliver numerous benefits to your business. Take a look below...



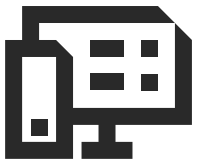
Huge savings.

Cut your line rental, call charges and infrastructure costs dramatically. Whatever system your business is using right now, switching could save you significant amounts of money.



Improved customer experience.

By moving to a digital phone system, you'll get access to loads of new features — conferencing, presence, social media integration, and more. That means you can deliver even better experiences to your customers and your staff, too.



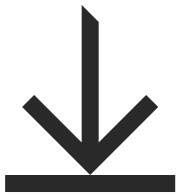
Greater flexibility.

You'll be able to access your systems on any device — laptop, mobile, tablet — from anywhere. So if the business has to close, remote lessons and meetings can still go ahead via video or conference call.



Higher resiliency.

An automatic backup and failover means you'll always stay connected, and your data can be backed up regularly.



Quick and easy installation.

In most cases, physical lines don't need to be installed, so you can get up and running quickly.





Next steps.

To ensure your business is ready for the future, follow the steps below to make your transition away from PSTN/ISDN as seamless as possible.

1. Check your systems.

The first step is to check which of your current communications solutions need to be replaced. Review your existing handsets, internet connections and phone lines. If you're unsure, the easiest way to find out is by asking your current provider or checking your bill.

2. Create a plan.

If you've identified any lines using PSTN/ISDN, then you'll need to start creating a plan. Think about the requirements for your business.

How do your customers want to be able to contact you? Do any of your staff work from home? Will your broadband need an upgrade? Is your current hardware VoIP compatible?

Then, consider your timelines. How long is this going to take — planning, procuring, deploying and testing? When's the best time to allocate and use budget? Which approach will have the least impact on your customers?

It's also important to plan for how you'll maintain this system and how you'll train staff to use it. Do you have the resource and knowledge to do this in-house? Or do you need to consider help from an external party?

3. Choose the right tech.

Once you've got a plan, you'll need to start moving on it. There are three key categories to consider here:

- + **Broadband:** When your business is switching to internet-based communications, there's a chance you may need to upgrade your broadband to an enterprise-grade connection. This will ensure it can handle your future voice, video and other data needs – as well increasing on-site internet usage.
- + **VoIP/SIP/UC:** It's probably wise to discuss your requirements with a specialist provider to make sure you're getting the best value, ROI and benefit to your business. You'll need to consider things like where you want your calling services hosted (on-premise or in the cloud) what features you need, and how this will all be deployed.
- + **Hardware:** A lot of the time, you can simply use your existing hardware, like phone handsets, by merging them with your new communications system. Sometimes, however, this isn't possible and you may need to replace some or all of your current setup.

4. Don't go it alone.

Last but certainly not least – consider working with a specialist from the beginning. It'll make the first three steps much easier and reduce the chances of encountering any unexpected roadblocks down the line. They'll also be able to help you make the most of the benefits this new system will bring – helping you save money, deliver better customer experiences, and improve performance.



How Kyocera can help.

Whatever your business needs as a result of the PSTN/ISDN switch-off, we have a wide range of options to suit.

We'll help you every step of the way – from understanding what needs changing, to finding innovative new ways to deliver better experiences, using our experienced team to deploy and manage your new solution.



SIP, VoIP and UC solutions.

For both on-premise and cloud-hosted options.



Enterprise-grade broadband .

Capable of handling all of your businesses internet-based communications securely.



Mobile phones and tariffs.

Set up the right applications so you can work, collaborate and communicate on the go.



Contact Centre Features.

Such as the ability to manage omnichannel communications in one place (voice, email, social media, SMS, etc.), and call recording.



Hardware.

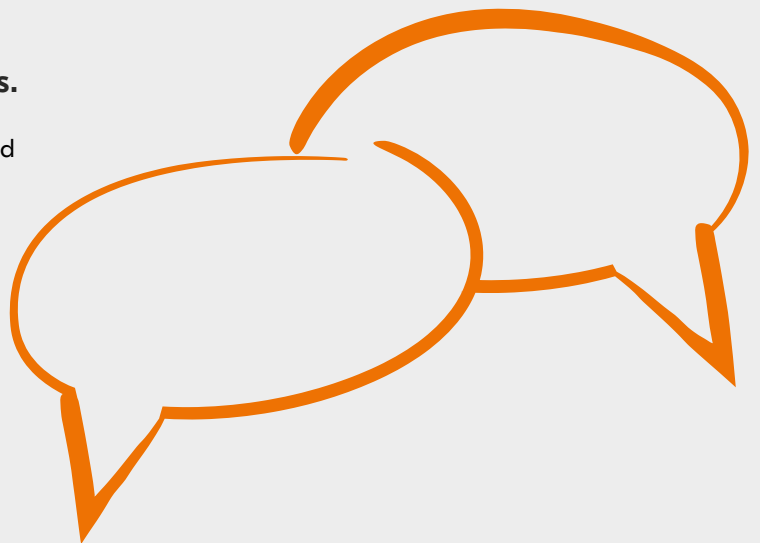
Including phone handsets and video conferencing equipment.



Collaboration tools.

Like Microsoft Teams and more.

[Find out more](#)



Don't let the deadline catch you out.

Discover how Kyocera can help your business or organisation navigate the PSTN/ISDN switch-off.

[Get started](#)



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KYOCERA Document Solutions (U.K.) Limited
Eldon Court
75-77 London Road
Reading
Berkshire RG1 5BS
Tel: 03330 151855
Fax: 0118 931 1108
e: info@duk.kyocera.com



kyoceradocumentsolutions.co.uk