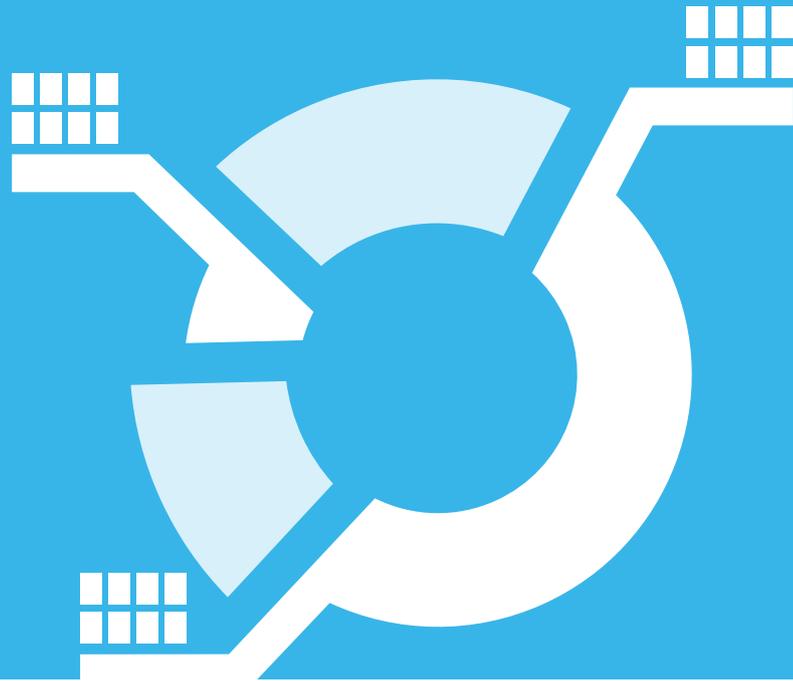# Calculate the long term savings of agile communications

Calculate the long term savings of agile communications

Outdated telephony infrastructure is expensive to maintain and can limit the flexibility of your communications. Discover how next-generation solutions can bring your business back up-to-date.

Expensive inflexibility

Staying competitive can be challenging. Customers are always asking for the best price, staff members are requesting higher pay and more flexibility in their roles and costs from suppliers seem to be forever increasing. In fact, a recent report from consulting firm CBRE states that with customer demands changing rapidly, half of the occupations that exist today will not exist by 2025.

This means businesses must become more agile in order to stay relevant. The right communications solution can help to lower costs and provide flexibility so your staff can remain efficient. For instance, traditional ISDN lines are expensive. Each change that your business requests has a price tag attached and can often take days or even weeks to implement. ISDN-based solutions carry hefty service charges for:

System maintenance
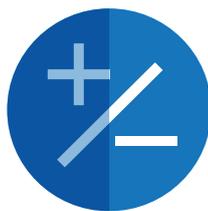
System additions and removals
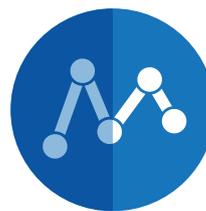
Call flow changes

Priority repair times

In addition, these traditional solutions often involve having multiple providers - creating a time consuming and expensive problem when the solution fails. This article will discuss how to calculate the long term savings of next-generation communications solutions, as well as outlining some key benefits your company could enjoy by migrating your services across to one.

Maintaining outdated technology

ISDN-based systems are becoming increasingly outdated as companies move to IP-based alternatives. Between 2008 and 2013, over one million ISDN lines were decommissioned. This means, as with many products, that as supply goes down costs will inevitably go up.

Keep these potential cost increases in mind when calculating the price of maintaining your ISDN system. Even if you don't have to call a service technician for the next two years, the cost when you do will be substantially higher than it is now.

So what are the alternatives?

You will have two clear options to replace your ISDN lines:

• SIP trunking
• A hosted telephony service

So which next-generation communication system is best for your business?

SIP trunking

If you've recently invested in a phone system or on-site PBX, SIP could be the best solution for your business. Session Initiation Protocol (SIP) trunking uses Voice over IP (VoIP) technology to connect your company's phone system (PBX) using data access pipes. Essentially, this means that your calls are carried over the internet rather than via a phone line. This carries a number of advantages.

Just one connection

SIP trunking enables you to carry your voice and data services over just one connection meaning you'll have a high quality voice and data service as well as making significant cost-savings

Flexibility and scalability

SIP trunking can support business relocations by allowing users to keep the same phone number, no matter where they're located without call forwarding costs. This ensures continuity of business and reduces the costs of having to change any company stationery, listings and advertisements. Not to mention the potential lost business if a customer can't reach you on your original number.
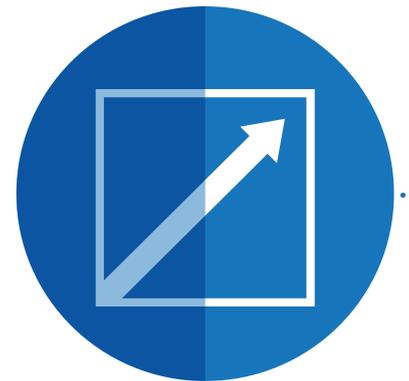
Another great benefit of adopting SIP is the ability to easily scale channels up and down. This means that you'll be able to cater for peak demands on your communications throughout the year.

Consider seasonal trends that will affect how many staff you need, where and when. If, for example, you hire in a number of temporary staff during busy seasonal periods, you won't need to pay for the lines you don't need at other times. University clearing and event ticketing are good examples of this.

If you were to try and do this with your existing ISDN lines you may face the following challenges:

- **Slow installation** - ISDN can take in excess of three weeks to install

- **Cost inefficiencies** - You will likely be forced to order the lines in specific increments (such as four or eight lines) regardless of your requirements

- **Costly installation** - you might be hit with an additional installation charge

- **Lengthy contracts** - removing capacity will not be as easy as adding it. It's likely you'll find yourself locked into a new, expensive contract for any additional lines added

Business continuity and disaster recovery

Should your communications be lost for any reason, SIP trunking can automatically divert calls to another location. What's more, if you combine your SIP solution with inbound call management you can have complete control over where your calls are routed and can make changes any time, wherever you are.

How much would it cost your business if your communications were down for a day, a week or even longer?
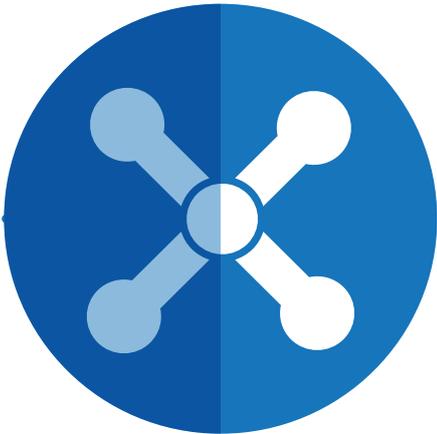
Hosted phone system

If you are looking for a complete phone system that also saves you money, hosting your phone system in the cloud can offer your business a number of benefits.

No more maintenance

One of the key benefits of introducing a hosted phone system is that you will no longer have an on-premise PBX to maintain. Furthermore, most systems will also allow you to make changes via an online portal yourself, quickly and easily.
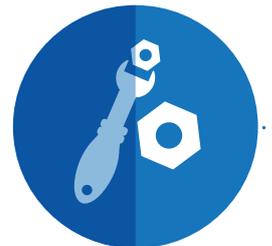
Think about how much time you currently spend on maintaining your communication systems and what value-add activities you could spend that time on instead.

Simplicity and savings

With traditional ISDN hardware, your company could have many different providers to make it all work:
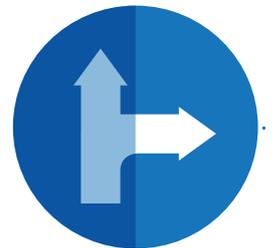
- ISDN service provider
- PBX support provider
- Mobile provider

However, with a hosted phone service you can have just one provider and one point of contact for all queries and support.

Keep the cost of your time in mind when calculating the savings you can achieve by updating your telephony services.

Becoming agile

Moving to a hosted telephony solution can introduce many additional features. Often these features allow staff greater flexibility in the way that they do their jobs. Features that increase flexibility include:

- **Call twinning** - employees can have their mobile phone (or another phone line) ring at the same time as their office number

- **Mobile working** - employees can access their calls from any location, at any time on any device whilst still giving the impression that they are answering an office phone

- **Multi-site deployment -** ideal for organisations with multiple sites and homeworkers as one system can cater for all requirements

By implementing a solution that supports your staff's flexible working you'll maintain productivity levels whether your staff are in the office or not.
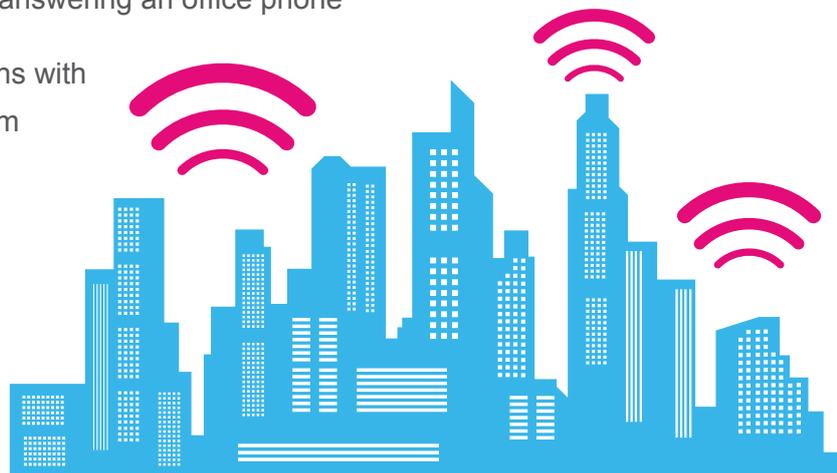
When your employees are free to work on their terms, they become happier - creating very large cost savings.

According to Oxford Economics, the average cost of losing an unhappy employee in the UK is £30,614. By ditching outdated, antiquated ISDN technology, not only will you save money on your communications costs you'll also increase employee morale and improve the flexibility of your company communications.

So how can I calculate the savings of agile communications?

By replacing your traditional ISDN lines you are:

- Protecting your business from expensive, ongoing maintenance costs
- Only paying for lines that you need, when you need them
- Protecting your communications during a disaster situation with effective business continuity features

There is no denying that moving away from traditional ISDN will benefit your business. Now's the time to review your own requirements and decide whether SIP trunking or hosted telephony is the right choice for your business.

Find out how a converged solution can provide further savings in our free eGuide:

Convert to Converged

Download your free eGuide