

The Big 2025 Switch

A guide to ISDN & PSTN



WHAT'S OCCURRING?

Openreach has announced it will be switching off its PSTN and ISDN networks in 2025 in favour of IP voice services, with a gradual phase-out of the older systems. At this point, Openreach will cease taking ISDN orders, and all businesses will be forced to find other IP-based options for their business telephony systems.

Did you know?

As of Sept 2023 you will no longer be able to install or add lines to existing ISDN or PSTN services.

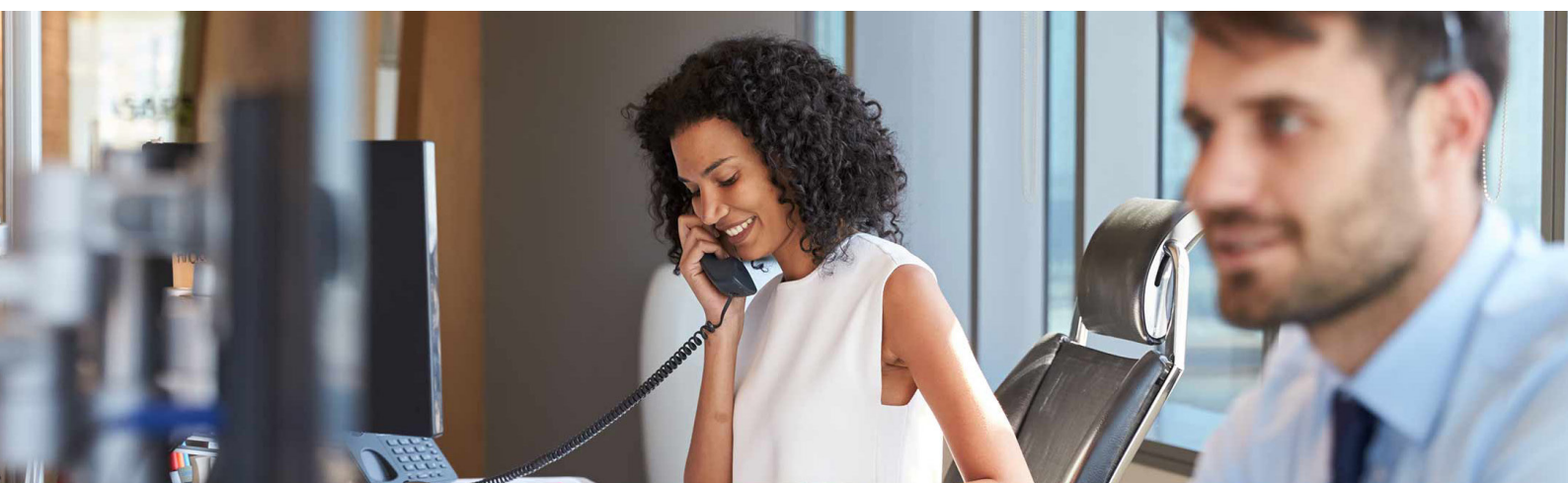
WHAT IS ISDN AND PSTN?

The Public Switched Telephone Network (PSTN) is the familiar landline telephone system originally set up for analogue voice communication, and became the most reliable method of making voice calls and the main carrier for internet activity across the world.

Then came along the Integrated Services Digital Network (ISDN), allowing the digital transmission of voice, video and other services simultaneously, using the traditional PSTN network.



Did You Know? Over the last five years ISDN channels have declined in use by 30%.



WHY ARE THEY BEING PHASED OUT?

In short, these legacy systems are now deemed out of date, as are the associated maintenance and running costs. Despite having been updated radically over the decades since their inception, these lines are still essentially the same in setup and design as the original phone lines of the 1800s. And with all other fields of technology advancing at light speed around us, it makes sense that our telecoms systems are also updated.

According to Ofcom, in 2017 there were over two million businesses still with an ISDN connection in the UK, all of which will be affected by the planned switch off in the coming years. A 2018 survey has also shown that a quarter of the UK's businesses are still unaware that the switch off is even taking place.

These businesses need to be made aware of the upcoming changes so they can begin the necessary switch to IP-based services such as SIP and VoIP to avoid finding themselves without a phone system.

Did You Know? 25% of businesses in the UK are unaware of the ISDN switch off.

WHAT IS SIP AND VOIP?

Session Initiation Protocol (SIP) is a protocol used in Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP), and allows users to make voice and video calls on a global scale using computer and mobile devices with an internet connection.

The biggest and most noticeable difference between traditional ISDN and SIP networks for businesses is the flexibility of not being tied down to a fixed line at a fixed location, allowing you to have the ability to mobilise your business communications. These VoIP communication systems are also often referred to as cloud-based telephony systems.

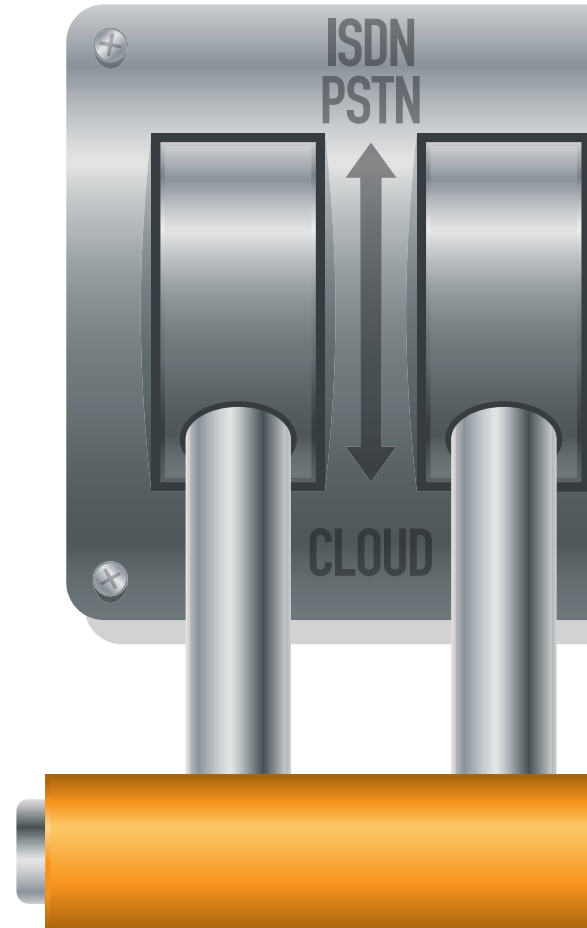
Did You Know? As SIP delivers voice via the internet, rather than traditional copper lines, this can help to reduce the cost of your calls and increase flexibility as you're no longer restricted to fixed lines.

FUTURE-PROOFING: LIFE AFTER THE SWITCH OFF

Organisations switching to a cloud-based system can save on costs as well as providing a range of extra features. However, you will need to look at whether your existing internet connection is up to the job.

The benefits to your business of implementing the right data connection go beyond cost efficiencies and speedy web browsing. This increased speed, reliability and reduced latency enables you to take full advantage of bandwidth-intensive and real time applications in the cloud. You need Ethernet solutions that provides dedicated internet access with guaranteed speeds and service level agreements that offer rapid response times.

Moving to an IP allows you to embrace the latest collaboration tools, enabling a mobile workforce to help you work smarter.



WHAT TO LOOK FOR

Look carefully at each provider and the levels of service on offer. Remember that the explosion in VoIP services in recent years has brought about a proliferation of suppliers, so do make sure the supplier can cater for all of your business' needs. Ensure you have a quality data connection for uninterrupted calls, as well as a quality of service (QoS). A good VoIP supplier will be able to take care of the porting process for you and should be able to manage the entire process of switching from ISDN to IP, so that you and your business don't experience any loss in service during the changeover.

Although the Openreach ISDN end of life is in 2025, if you currently have a traditional ISDN/PSTN based system, now is a good time to look into the alternative.

Questions? Call our expert team on 0800 011 6559