How your telecoms provider can make you more agile
Is it time to bring your business communications into the 21st century?

The world is a competitive place. In order to remain effective, businesses need to be able to identify and implement business opportunities wherever they see them.

Today, many businesses are striving to use digital communications technologies to enable their employees to work in a more agile and flexible fashion. Increased agility allows businesses to:

- Better navigate changing and dynamic markets;
- Ensure their employees are working to their potential;
- And maintain excellent relationships with their customers and other relevant third parties.

Legacy infrastructures and systems hinder business agility.

Take the ISDN – which uses the PSTN (that’s just the original telephone network) to transmit voice and other data. Though a fantastic innovation in its day, the ISDN uses essentially the same technology that Alexander Graham Bell used to make the very first telephone call in 1876. Because of the inherent constraints of this technology, the ISDN places hard limits on what businesses can and can’t do.

For example, the ISDN:

- Makes adding additional capacity costly and time-consuming, which prevents businesses from being able to scale their communications in line with changing needs;
- Cannot support new, highly beneficial functionalities such as remote working;
- And allows communications costs to rise quickly due to an inherent lack of cost containment.

Because of issues such as these, it has been announced that the ISDN will be shut down on the Isle of Man in 2020. In the UK, BT have announced similar measures – and most other developed countries are aiming to move away from traditional telephony within the next decade at the latest.

Although the ISDN shutdown may seem like an unwanted and unnecessary development, it’s actually a business opportunity.

Those businesses which embrace the change early not only minimise the amount of disruption the ISDN shut down will cause them, they also equip their business with the tools needed to operate as effectively as possible in today’s digital landscape.

So, what comes after ISDN?

Hosted PBX

You may have heard the term “hosted” being bandied about quite a bit recently. That's because, well – at least in the world of IT – it's kind of a big deal.

In fact, hosted services are revolutionising the way businesses are carrying out internal computing.

In short, hosted services use cloud computing to give businesses instant, direct access to the applications and information they need. However, because these services are delivered over the cloud, businesses which choose hosted services:

- No longer need to invest in and maintain expensive on-site IT equipment;
- Are able to significantly reduce IT management resources;
- Benefit from increased physical security and cybersecurity;
- Receive automatic updates whenever they become available – ensuring their system is always up to date;
- And enjoy inherently scalable and flexible business technologies.

Hosted PBX is the use of cloud computing to deliver business communications services.

In essence, hosted PBX technology uses the internet to deliver the business telephony functions previously provided by a traditional PBX.

However, because hosted PBX technology is delivered via the cloud, businesses which choose it do not have to invest in expensive onsite equipment and will enjoy expert third-party maintenance and management.
What's so good about hosted PBX?

A good hosted PBX solution will deliver absolutely everything you’ve come to expect from your existing business phone system in a more cost-effective way – whilst also giving you access to entirely new functionalities. As such, your hosted PBX solution will include:

- Hunt groups;
- Voicemail;
- On-hold music;
- Audio conferencing;
- Staff training tools – including “listen in” and “call barge” features;
- Call recording;
- Calendar-based answering rules;
- In-depth call reporting and analytics;
- And much more.

Further, because hosted PBX technology uses the internet rather than the ISDN, it’s a future-proof technology.

In addition to traditional PBX features, a hosted PBX offers several completely new functionalities.

Because your phone system will no longer be tied to your physical location, your staff will be able to work from any device (laptop, desktop, smartphone, tablet, etc.) and from anywhere with an internet connection – with full access to your communications system.

This increased flexibility makes it far easier for you to offer staff remote and flexible working options, allowing your business to remain maximally productive in the event of illness, bad weather and any other circumstances that may prevent employees from physically accessing your office.

Hosted PBX systems also deliver guaranteed disaster recovery and business continuity. In the event of any disasters – including flooding, local infrastructure failure, fire and so on – you and your staff will be able to carry on working without interruption.

Stop paying over the odds for redundant technology

For some telecoms providers, old ISDN solutions have become a major cash cow. Many of the businesses still using them have scaled up their solutions to the point that, each month, they are confronted with a huge bill – without knowing that a simple change could both reduce the amount they pay and improve their communications.

Accordingly, some telecoms providers may be advising customers to simply add additional ISDN lines to their solution whenever they need to scale up – or, even worse, are selling traditional PBXs to new businesses.

They continue to do this even though they understand that, in doing so, they are tying their customers to a soon-to-be redundant technology that’s overly expensive and that actively limits their business.

If your telecoms company is giving you this kind of advice, it may be time to look for a new provider – a provider that puts your business interests over their own short-term attempts to maximise profits.

We know that change can be scary. But we also understand that businesses which choose hosted PBX services are putting themselves in a much better position in terms of both preparing for the ISDN shut down and equipping themselves with the technology needed to thrive in today’s digital business environment.

That’s why we’re committed to transitioning businesses to hosted PBX services. Today, it’s possible for businesses of all sizes to benefit from hosted PBX services. However, a lack of knowledge and understanding is currently preventing many of them from doing so.

At Wi-Manx, we understand that we can only flourish when our customers do. For this reason, we will never recommend outdated communications solutions and we will always create a tailored solution to match your exact business requirements. This ensures that you never pay for services you don’t require, and that your business enjoys the very best communications technology.