TELNET
WORLDWIDE

THE DIGITAL
TRANSFORMATION
GUIDE

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Introduction

Moving your legacy PBX to the cloud is a task you don't want to take lightly. That's why we created this in depth guide, to guide you along your journey to cloud communications.

Welcome to Your Cloud Migration Learning Journey!

Between antiquated hardware, software support issues and outdated security, holding onto your legacy phone system is leaving your organization vulnerable — to breaches, outages and obsolescence.

In order to prepare for tomorrow, you have to start today. Migrating your legacy PBX to the cloud is a project you can't ignore — or continue to postpone. That's why we've created this in-depth guide to help guide your organization through the process.

It's time to embark on your digital transformation and join us on the journey to cloud communications.

The Cloud Is Calling

Industry-altering technologies have been transforming markets for decades. You don't have to look much farther than some of your favorite applications for proof; think about the impact Spotify, Uber and Airbnb have had on the music, taxi and hotel industries. It's simply the nature of emerging technologies to eclipse the previous version.

The business phone system is no different. Innovations in cloud technology have organizations trading in their premise-based hardware systems for cloud hosted services. And when you consider current cultural trends — the adoption of personal devices for professional purposes and the boom of the remote workforce, for instance — is it really any surprise?

As business phone systems upgrade from analog to digital, cloud migration becomes more of a necessity than a trend. Organizations that don't heed the call will inevitably face a slow, but sure decline. Legacy systems are heading toward an unavoidable end-of-life, and you need to start future-proofing your operations.

The path from legacy land to the cloud awaits. If you're ready to begin the journey, let's get started.

Get Familiar with the Route

It would be unwise to begin your migration without a plan in place. You've got to know where you're going and how you're getting there. Let's get the basics down before we embark.

What is a legacy system?

If you're reading this guide, this is likely your point of departure. **A legacy system is outdated hardware or software that's become a barrier to your digital transformation.** Legacy technologies are difficult to support, impossible to update and resistant to integration with other, newer systems.

Despite all that baggage, these legacy systems are unfortunately still critical to your business operations. After all, it's not like you can just shut the phones down for a day. This is the crumbling village you're trying to leave behind.

What is cloud communications?

This is the destination we're shooting for! In the simplest terms, **cloud communications is an internet-powered service, where your data storage, applications and switching are managed entirely by your service provider.**

It's more than just the latest VoIP solution. It's an entirely new way to build, deploy and manage modern communications.

What is digital transformation?

If legacy systems are what we're leaving behind, and cloud communications is where we're headed, digital transformation is how we get there. **Digital transformation is the process of fully integrating all the technologies across your business operations.** We're talking about data analytics, collaboration platforms, project management tools and UCaaS. They all come together to unify your workflows.

Digital transformation will enhance the way your organization operates, communicates and collaborates. You'll be able to deliver more value to your customers and team members. The organizations that have embraced digital transformation and adopted cloud communications have not only simplified and unified the way they work, but have improved productivity and profitability as well.

Why now?

You may be wondering what the rush is. *We've been getting along just fine. Maybe we've had to find some workarounds... but is this digital transformation business really worth the hassle right now?*

The truth is that the digital transformation has been in progress since the worldwide web hit the scenes back in the eighties. Even emails were groundbreaking at one point. Imagine! All of the sudden having the ability to send and receive virtual mail from someone across the globe in a matter of seconds. Preposterous!

We've come a long way since then, but the need to keep up with the latest technology trends hasn't changed. You may not see the benefit of cloud communications quite yet, but there's no doubt your competitors do. Can your organization really afford to start lagging?

In the next chapter, we'll dive into all the ways your legacy system is getting in the way of your organization's potential success in today's marketplace.

YOU
ARE
HERE

FINAL DESTINATION
CLOUD COMMUNICATIONS

Living in Legacy Land

So many businesses are caught in an intense game of tug-of-war, pulled between the needs of the future and the familiarity of the systems they already have. It's the battle between legacy systems and cloud communications.

We hate to be the one to tell you, but being stuck in the middle isn't a neutral position. It's not just keeping your business from where you want it to be, it's actively pushing you backwards. Look at all the ways legacy technology is hindering your organization:

It's not scalable.

You've just closed out the most successful year your business has ever had, and you've been presented the opportunity to expand. But don't start celebrating yet. You better be prepared to spend a lot of time and money setting up another on-premise PBX if you're still hanging onto your legacy system. Growing your business isn't easy when you're living in legacy land.

If it's flexibility and scalability you're hoping for, you're going to have to make the transition to the cloud.

It's limited.

Legacy systems prevent your business from taking advantage of the advanced features of a cloud-based solution. You're stuck with whatever features came out of the box, and it's on you to implement whatever software upgrades have since been released. Frankly, this lack of innovation puts you at risk of dwindling long-term profitability and losing your competitive advantage in the market.

Not to mention the fact that you'll be unable to support remote work. If your employees need to be sitting at their desks to answer the phones, how are you going to provide the type of flexibility expected by the next generation of employees? You're going to end up losing out on competitive talent.

It's distracting your resources.

There's more to worry about than just implementation. Legacy hardware requires regular maintenance and software upgrades to remain feasible. How much of your IT resources are you willing to dedicate to basic operations and regular maintenance? Wouldn't you rather have them focused on the kind of research and development that can *enhance* your operations?

Plus, now you've got to make sure you have the skills on staff (with the proper training and certifications) to maintain the system.

It's expensive.

Implementing a legacy system is a huge up-front capital expense. Think of all the hardware you'll need to purchase! But it's not just implementation that pulls from your pocketbook. It's the ongoing costs of maintaining the system that is the real kicker.

Hardware fails and degrades as it ages. All the costs of equipment maintenance, repairs and replacements fall squarely on your shoulders. Not to mention the proper power, cooling and rack space for servers. Is that really the kind of financial burden you want to take on?

If your business is dependent on a legacy phone system, you're not getting the flexibility, functionality or value you need to succeed. What you're getting in return for your hard-earned money is costly hardware, constant maintenance and an operational headache.

You don't just want to survive. You want to thrive. Your only option in this digital landscape is to leave your outdated system and move to the cloud.

Besides, there's a lot happening behind the scenes in the telecom industry you may not even be aware of. And they're going to have major impacts on your business if you're not prepared. Jump to the next chapter to find out more.
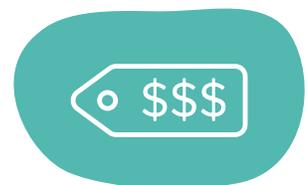
What's Going on Behind the Scenes

The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) is a key character in the world of telecom. They're the entity that regulates communication in all 50 states, and last year, they issued orders that are going to massively impact businesses with legacy systems.

As the orders go into effect through 2022, you can expect one of two things to happen:

1. The price of your T1s will increase substantially (like by 300%)
2. Your provider will no longer provide your service due to the cost increase

This spells disaster for organizations that can't shoulder that kind of expense. Remember when we said digital transformation is becoming a necessity, rather than a trend? This is what we meant.

A Little History

Prior to the mid-nineties, local phone territories had been protected from competition and were exclusively served by monopoly providers. Fortunately, Congress realized that healthy competition would never exist if new providers had to take on the extraordinary costs of building their own wireline networks across the country.

And so, in 1996, Congress passed historic legislation that allowed competition in these territories. The ruling permitted new entrants to lease elements of a network from the well-established companies.

But as years passed, competitive providers increasingly built their own transmission facilities between population centers. The FCC responded by increasing restrictions on their ability to lease such facilities from incumbent providers.

How We Got Here

In order to understand the change that's occurred, you need to know the term "last mile" facility. Last mile facilities are the wires and cables that run from a local phone office (there's one located in every service territory) to each customer's business or home.

In 2019, the FCC issued new orders that will severely limit the ability of competing providers to continue accessing the incumbent's last mile facilities. These orders will be carried out gradually through August 22, 2022.

An Expense You Can't Afford

As these changes occur, competitive voice providers like us will need to either build replacement connections or purchase these connections from third parties in order to continue providing these legacy services.

As you can imagine, these options are expensive not only for the providers, but also for end consumers like you. So what can you do about it? Well, we're glad you asked! It's time to explore the possibilities of the cloud.

The Case for the Cloud

You've seen how the foundation of legacy technology is crumbling. It's costly, and it makes little sense in today's hyper-connected world. But we're not alarmists — there are actually more reasons *for* the cloud than *against* legacy systems. Let us show you:

Cost Savings

Switching to the cloud allows you to eliminate the requirement for outdated physical hardware, the need for extra IT resources and the cost of continuous maintenance. You can now reduce your IT budget, or redirect allocations toward research and development.

Constant Connectivity

With remote work becoming a staple of the modern business model, staying connected from anywhere, on any device, is vital. The capabilities of the cloud allow your teams to access everything they need — instant file sharing, business calls from mobile devices, group chats for lunch recommendations... It's safe and reliable access from anywhere.

Faster Deployment

With legacy technology, it can take weeks, months or years to develop a strategy for communication infrastructure. And that's not including implementation. With cloud communications, you simplify and expedite the deployment process. Cloud systems can be implemented in days, with software updates pushed through automatically. The exhausting installation process is a thing of the past.

Unlimited Scalability

Corporate growth should be exciting, not something to stress over! If your company is expanding, your communication infrastructure needs to be flexible enough to evolve with it. Cloud communications systems allow you to add new phone lines easily because everything is customizable. In most cases, you can just hop onto a user-friendly, web-based portal and change, update or add lines as you need them. There's no need to deal with the hassle of calling a provider to make changes on your behalf or purchasing lines in fixed increments.

Simple and Clear Pricing

With legacy systems, add-ons and updates can result in the numbers on your invoice doubling. In order to support the latest features, you have to modify almost everything by adding hardware, software, licensing and on and on...

When you make the switch to cloud communications, all the features your business needs to stay up-to-date will be automatically integrated into the system. So ditch the confusing add-ons for simple and clear pricing.

As you can see, there are more than enough reasons for your business to adopt a cloud-based system today! So now what? Let's get into your cloud migration options in the next chapter.
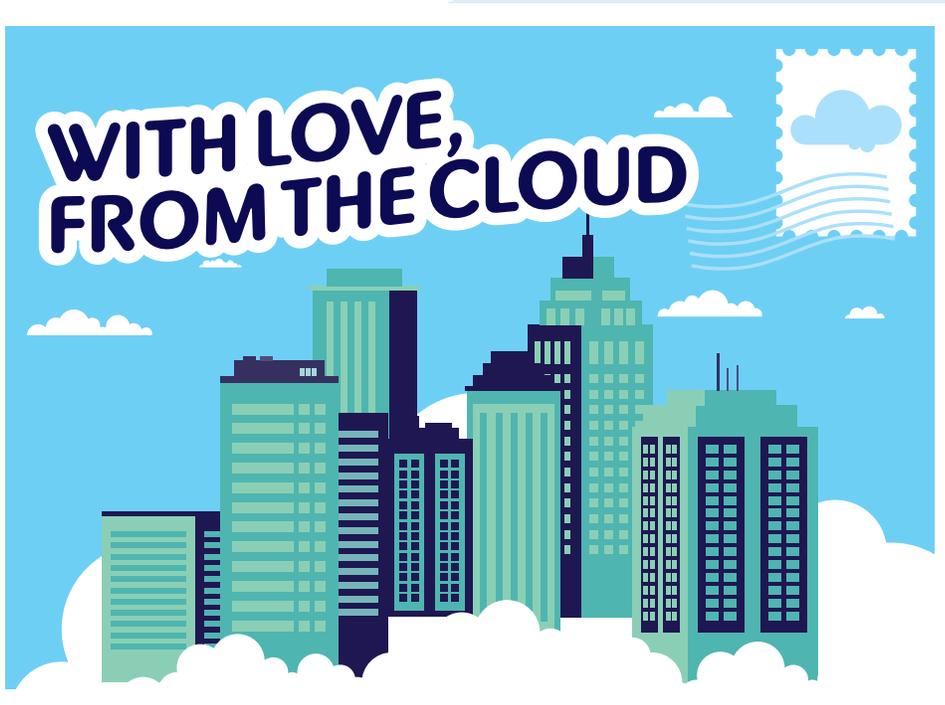
Pick Your Path

Obviously, moving your voice infrastructure from copper to the cloud is a good investment. But what does this actually look like in practice? The reality is that the transition to the cloud won't look the same for every organization. There's more than one solution to your legacy woes, depending on your level of commitment. Let's get into some of the most popular options:

TelNet UC with Cisco Webex

Need one secure place to call, message, meet and get work done?

If your organization places a high value on virtual meetings, leveraging a solution like Webex is probably your best bet. Cisco is the market leader in virtual conferencing, and they've gone to great lengths to develop this platform into an industry-leading, enterprise-grade tool. Our UC solution with Cisco Webex brings together TelNet's trusted calling service and Webex's meeting and messaging capabilities for the ultimate, all-in-one communication application. Empower your teams to work from anywhere, on any device, without missing a beat.

After all, the secret to achieving the best business outcomes is an engaged and collaborative workforce.

Direct Routing for Microsoft Teams

Already a Microsoft 365 subscriber or Teams user?

Looking to make the most of your Microsoft investment? We've got great news! There's an add-on solution that allows you to enable inbound and outbound PSTN calling within the Teams platform. It's called Direct Routing. Get all the features of a Cloud PBX with the all-in-one convenience of Microsoft Teams. Direct Routing enables the kind of full-feature calling you'd expect from a Cloud PBX: transfers, music on hold, parking, voicemail, conference calling, call routing and more. And because it's fully integrated with Microsoft 365, adding voice to Teams creates a single hub for teamwork where you can chat, meet, call and collaborate all in one place.

It's basically the perfect way to move all your voice functions to the cloud and enhance your favorite collaboration platform!

Cloud PBX

Ready to make the switch to the cloud entirely?

You're completely ready to put legacy technology behind you and let go of the uncertainties and expenses that come with on-prem hardware. Great! Welcome to the Cloud PBX and hassle-free voice service.

When you opt for a hosted solution like TelNet Cloud PBX, you don't have to put up a large capital investment in easily outdated equipment; you save up front, and every step of the way. Retiring your legacy PBX means handing over upkeep, support and maintenance to us. You'll actually be able to direct your IT resources toward more worthy endeavors, rather than routine feature upgrades, moves and changes.

With a Cloud PBX, you'll also experience the benefits of advanced features (like simultaneous ring, call forwarding and auto attendant), unified communications (get chatting, calling, meeting and collaborating all within the same application), and business continuity.

IP-PRI

Want to keep your existing PBX but upgrade to cloud calling?

You know you need to make a change, but you're hesitant to throw away the investment you've already made in your PBX. No problem! You don't need to purchase new hardware or throw away what you already have. Think of IP-PRI as the more efficient version of your TDM-PRI.

An IP-PRI builds on your existing PBX investment and leverages your current PRI-capable equipment for a cost effective VoIP solution. We simply power PRI connections through your internet connection to optimize the bandwidth you already use. And with a pay-per-path model, this voice solution offers significant cost savings and effortless scalability. It's both affordable and flexible.

With IP-PRI, you get high-quality, reliable voice service with every call. It's the perfect starter solution for modernizing your legacy system and getting your toes wet in the digital world.

The Future of Your Business is Now

The coronavirus pandemic forever altered how we work. Think about how the shift to working from home impacted your day-to-day functions. You probably wore a lot of sweatpants, juggled virtual meetings and childcare responsibilities, and jumped back and forth from one platform to another.

If the adjustment period was particularly painful, it's likely because your legacy communication systems weren't flexible enough to meet your new needs. The organizations that had already adopted cloud communication systems were a step ahead when it all changed.

Virtual meetings, unified communication platforms and remote collaboration are here to stay. How are you going to ensure that your organization not only survives this new era of work, but thrives in it?

Welcome Aboard

The future of business revolves around one thing: **Digital Transformation.** While this is not a new idea or concept, many organizations are still reluctant to begin the process. They're held back by the fear of change, the seeming enormity of the project and the comfort of the status quo. But here's the thing. The world is changing, whether you choose to acknowledge it or not. The reality is that the companies who acknowledge the shift and respond will find themselves leagues ahead of those who don't. The future is rapidly approaching. It's practically here. **Do you have your ticket to board?**

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When your technology isn't working for your business, your productivity, security and sanity suffers.

Too many businesses struggle with communication technology that's ineffective and frustrating.

We're changing that.

Our empowering, cloud-based solutions simplify the way you communicate and collaborate.