

The Big Switch Off

**Best Practice Plan –
Act now**



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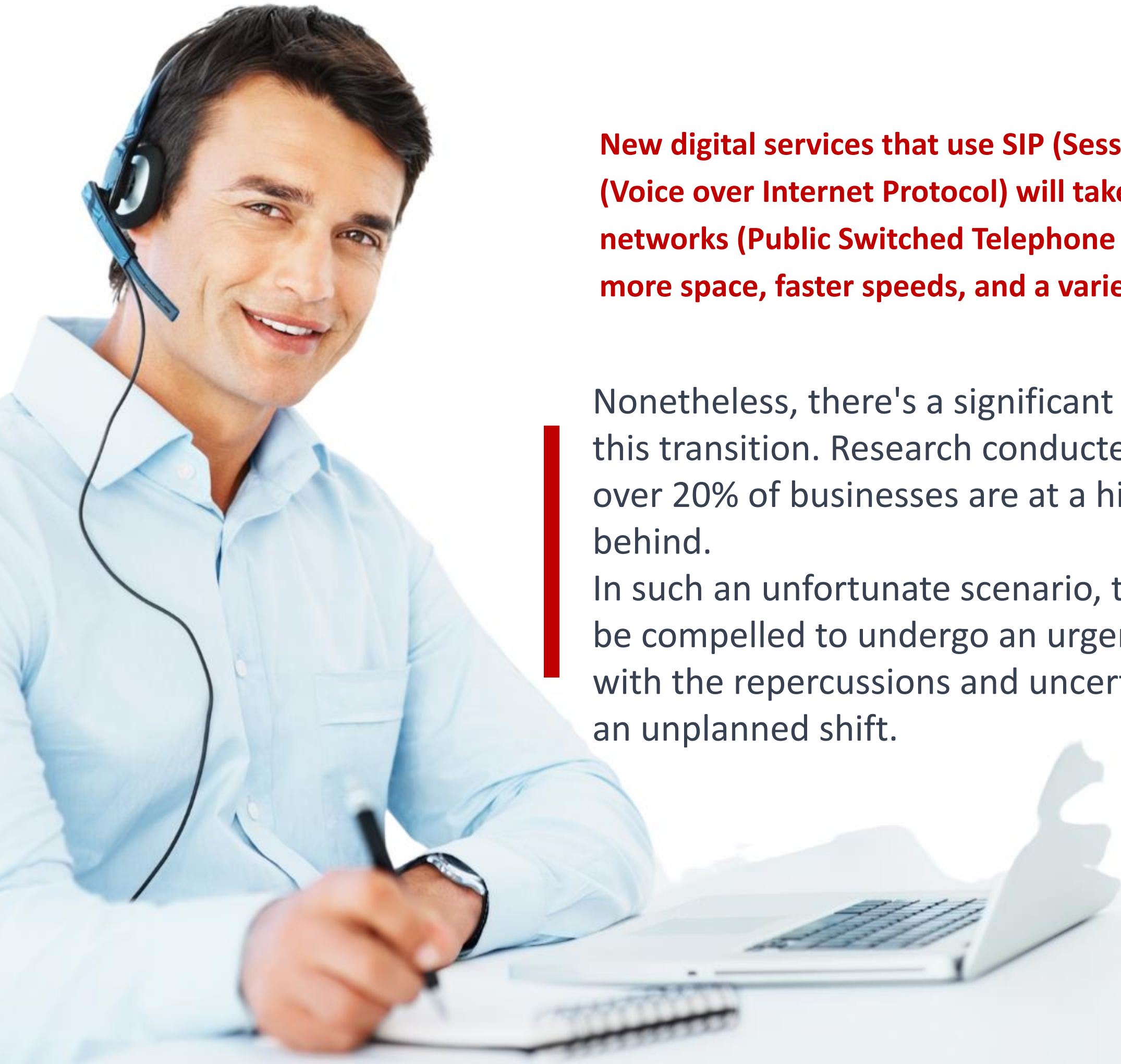
NEWS ALERT

In 2017 it was announced that the UK would transition to a fully digital communications network.

The migration is currently over 50% finalized – and the potential ramifications for your organization are significant.

Openreach has taken the step of discontinuing numerous familiar communication services at a considerable number of exchanges nationwide.

Your organization's communication strategy might be at risk.



New digital services that use SIP (Session Initiation Protocol) and VoIP (Voice over Internet Protocol) will take the place of the older PSTN networks (Public Switched Telephone Network). This change will bring more space, faster speeds, and a variety of useful features to customers.

Nonetheless, there's a significant task ahead to facilitate this transition. Research conducted by Cavell indicates that over 20% of businesses are at a high risk of getting left behind.

In such an unfortunate scenario, these organizations would be compelled to undergo an urgent migration, grappling with the repercussions and uncertainties associated with an unplanned shift.

Create new opportunities faster

With additional exchanges ceasing to offer new ISDN connections (Integrated Services Digital Network), a growing number of businesses will join the trend toward adopting digital communication solutions.

The substantial increase in demand will place an immense strain on available resources. Therefore, organizations that delay their migration could potentially face **substantial lead times and significant delays.**

Transitioning to hosted voice services is both inevitable and remarkably advantageous for your business. In fact, the potential advantages – such as cost reduction, heightened productivity, innovative work approaches, and enhanced flexibility – are readily accessible at this very moment.

By opting to upgrade at this juncture, you can promptly enjoy the benefits of advanced technology and sidestep the growing waitlists that emerge as Openreach discontinues the sale of new ISDN services.



What's the plan?

In this best practice plan we outline what you need to do now – and how your business can realise a competitive advantage.

We also explain the new benefits that digitization brings and why you must act sooner rather than later to avoid serious operational problems in the foreseeable future.

The Switch Off deadline is approaching faster than you might think.
What steps should we take?



Follow this straightforward **five-step plan** to guarantee your thorough readiness for the shift and seize the chance to enhance your communications, saving both time and money by making them future-proof.



STEP 1

Audit your current communications usage.

What is your existing setup now? Conduct an audit to evaluate your current communication configuration, ensuring a comprehensive grasp of necessary updates. Remember to examine often overlooked components such as fax machines, alarm systems, and modems. Every single ISDN connection must be substituted with an IP-based alternative.

Examine how your business needs can be effectively addressed through a streamlined approach using cutting-edge technology



STEP 2

Find out when your legacy contracts end

Verify the timeline for when your nearby communications exchange is set to receive a stop sell notice.

Are your contracts set to conclude before or after that specific date?

Services under contract beyond that date will remain operational, but the possibility of renewing expiring agreements will be lost.

If your contract expires post the stop sell date but before the 2025 switch off, you must consider transitioning to a next-gen alternative, as your existing service will no longer be accessible.



STEP 3

Define your future communications strategy



Meet with your stakeholders to determine current and future business requirements.

- » Will you increase use of flexi-working?
- » Are more of your team working remotely?
- » Do you have international expansion plans?

Answering these strategic questions will help you understand what your upgrade needs to achieve and help to future-proof your business communications.



STEP 4

Assess potential of next gen technology

Once you've established your communications strategy, you can delve into exploring how modern technology can assist you in achieving those objectives.

Streamlining your communication systems opens opportunities to create novel and more effective work methods - and it might even contribute to lowering your current and future operational expenses.



STEP 5

Speak to Fidelity Group



We're eager to assist you in this endeavor. Reach out to us today, and we can commence the process of charting your digital transformation journey in collaboration.

Our practical expertise will guide you through the array of upgrade choices, enabling you to pick the most fitting solutions aligned with your strategic objectives.

Keep in mind that the sooner you initiate, the quicker you can begin enjoying the advantages of a fresh, comprehensive digital communications system.



What happens if you don't switch now?

While the Big Switch Off won't conclude until 2025, your business should proactively consider moving to a hosted voice solution as soon as possible. The escalating issuance of 'stop sell' directives by Openreach across numerous local exchanges emphasizes the urgency of taking steps now.

Major projects take time

Should you possess an existing phone system or an on-premise switchboard (referred to as a PBX), collaborating with a seasoned provider such as Fidelity Group becomes essential.

We can aptly evaluate your current setup, determine your requirements, and chart the deployment across your entire organization.

The shift to hosted voice typically proceeds smoothly. However, considering that your phones constitute a pivotal communication channel for your business, it's imperative to ensure meticulous pre-planning and management for each project phase.

Initiating the process now guarantees that the project unfolds without haste, ensuring a comprehensive and well-executed transition.

Plan ahead

Avoid cost increases

As December 2025 approaches, the demand for migration services will steadily rise. Anticipate a rapid surge in vendor lead times, accompanied by escalating prices. By beginning the process early, you can steer clear of potential supply bottlenecks, sidestep waiting lists, and pre-empt the associated cost hikes that may arise.

Companies that postpone migration might discover that waiting lists stretch past the Big Switch Off date, potentially leaving them without functioning phones and, consequently, customers.

The process may be more complicated than expected

While conversations about the Big Switch Off often revolve around telephone systems, it's important to recognize that the digital transition will impact all PSTN-connected devices, a detail that is frequently neglected. Conducting an asset audit becomes imperative, encompassing elements such as CCTV, alarms, fax machines, EPOS terminals, dial-up connections, and point-to-point leased lines. Anything tethered to a phone line is susceptible to the change.

The earlier you begin your VoIP transition planning, the more time you have available to deal with the unexpected.



Why should you make the switch now?

The shift to cloud communications presents noteworthy prospects for your business, and these opportunities are already accessible, even prior to the culmination of the digital transition. In fact, there are substantial advantages to embracing this change ahead of Openreach's forthcoming round of 'stop sell' directives.

Lower costs

Hosted voice operates entirely on software. This empowers your organization to construct a high-caliber phone system without the burdens of procuring, implementing, and upkeeping an on-premise switchboard. There's no need for upfront expenses, extra hardware, or additional infrastructure.

Increased flexibility

Hosted voice has the capability to direct calls to nearly any device: be it a handset, smartphone, or PC. What's crucial is that calls can be initiated and answered from any location, granting you the ability to take your work extension wherever you go. Whether you're at the office, traveling, or working remotely, the days of being confined to your desk are behind us.



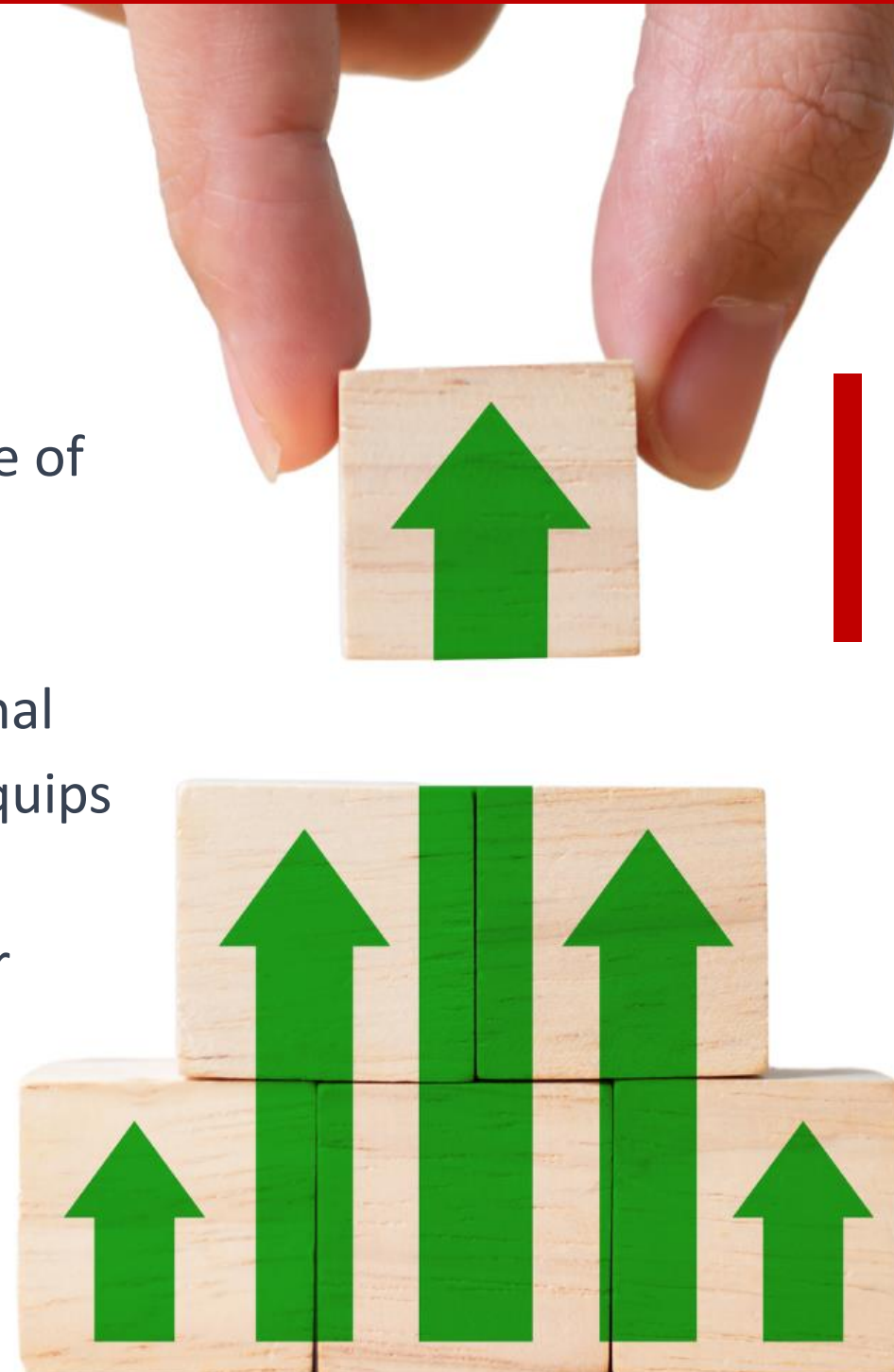
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Increased productivity

Hosted voice platforms offer a multitude of features and functionalities that surpass those of traditional landlines. Unified communications enable you to integrate video calling, conferencing, instant messaging, and additional tools into your communication toolkit. This equips your employees with an array of innovative methods to stay connected and enhance their productivity..

New ways of working

Incorporating new users and extensions into a hosted voice platform is as simple as a few clicks. Constructing a virtual switchboard that links colleagues across different locations becomes effortless, enabling you to assemble teams comprising the finest talents regardless of their whereabouts. Additionally, the ability to adjust extensions according to your workforce expansion ensures you only pay for the capacity you actively utilize.



Take the next step

Contact us today!



“The Big Switch Off could be seen as an inconvenience – but it is actually an opportunity to deploy new technologies that save money, unlock new ways of working and prepare your business for the realities of communication in the digitally transformed marketplace.”

Sara Sheikh

Head of Product Management, Gamma Telecom

Reach out to us now for a conversation about your communication strategy and the necessary steps to prevent any disruptions caused by the impending Big Switch Off.



Tel: 0800 840 6800

Email: hello@fidelity-group.co.uk

Web: www.fidelity-group.co.uk