8 SIGNS

That Your Outdated TDM-based Phone System Is Hurting Your Bottom Line

Here is how your TDM phone system presents more business risks than you ever thought possible.

❶ You have to spend a fortune to scale the system.

How much did you spend on expanding your TDM PBX system the last time you had a surge in call volume or staffing? Guess it was not a small amount.

Purchasing new hardware to extend your TDM PBX can be costly. Because your system is configured with a fixed number of analog telephone lines, you need to bring additional phone lines into your facility, which also means adding new boards into the system, thus making the system bulky in size. Since supported phone lines are sold by the board, you usually have to purchase more capacity than you need.

❷ It is a daunting task to add new phone lines.

TDM relies on hardware and phone lines to carry your voice traffic, so you need to contact your phone service provider every time you want to bring in new lines. It could take weeks or over a month to complete the cabling work required to support TDM connectivity, which also involves complex wiring configurations and may require shutting down the system temporarily.

In contrast, with IP-based phone systems, you can increase the

number of call appearances on a SIP trunk via self-service web interfaces or by simply opening a ticket with your carrier.

❸ You are locked to a single vendor for the overall architecture.

Worse yet, not only do you have to purchase boards that may exceed actual needs, but you also have to buy them from the same vendor as the rest of your components to ensure compatibility.

TDM technology is frequently proprietary, which means you simply cannot shop around for the best prices and add one vendor's fix to another's TDM system. There is no competition and little choice in products.

It is also risky to stick with the old TDM system given that more and more vendors ring the death bell of the TDM PBX every year. The parts will become more difficult to find and qualified technicians for support will also be fewer.

❹ You need dedicated IT staff to keep the system running properly.

Having a TDM system involves constant in-house management, maintenance, and configuration. Otherwise, you are risking business interruptions due to system outages that fail to be remedied in time. Especially for small businesses, it is pretty bad value for money to have someone take care of this very system.

For MACs (moves, adds, and changes) to the existing settings, you also need to contact your telephone service provider in advance. Therefore, maintenance contracts become a necessity to keep everything working as your vendor or service provider is your only backup when things get problematic.

❺ You are struggling to manage different phone systems in multiple locations.

If your organization plans to add a new building, you will need to purchase an entirely new TDM infrastructure as TDM PBX systems limited in the number of physical ports available are designed for a single location. The complex wiring configurations make it even harder to replicate across multiple locations. It is also challenging from a maintenance standpoint also, as any changes or updates may need to be performed at each location individually.

❻ Your employees are tied to their desks to make and receive calls.

TDM PBX systems are typically not designed with mobility in mind.

They are often limited to physical desk phones connected to the PBX system via hard-wired connections, making it difficult for employees to work remotely or on the go. Your employees also have no access to advanced features like softphone applications, presence, and instant messaging.

While some TDM PBX systems may offer limited remote access to voicemail or call forwarding, they are often not as robust or flexible as modern IP phone systems.

❼ Your phone system cannot fit into today's business communications ecosystem.

Are you using customer relationship management (CRM) systems? What about contact center software or Microsoft Teams? Are these systems working together or in silos?

You may be able to purchase additional hardware to support certain phone capabilities, such as intercom functionality, but as TDM PBX systems use proprietary software that is not compatible with other systems, they are often limited in terms of the number and type of integration options available. Even minor alterations to the system require knowledgeable and trained technicians to manage and control.

❽ Your phone system fails from time to time, causing business interruptions.

TDM PBX is susceptible to hardware malfunctions. Components such as power supplies, line cards, and central processing units can fail, as well as the software used to control them, causing the system to go down. Configuration errors, changes without proper testing, and landline damages can also lead to system crashes and failure.

Depending on the severity of the failure, it may take significant time and resources to troubleshoot and repair the system, further prolonging the business interruption.

Hardware Malfunctions

System Failure

Configuration Errors