Three Telecom Challenges Facing Central Stations

(…and others you may not be aware of)

With complicated communication routes and a wide variety of equipment delivering information from a subscriber's premises to an operator's screen, there are many things that can go wrong for a central monitoring station. Sometimes the central station may not be aware of problems, and even if they are, it's easy to blame the telecom carrier.

Today, businesses also have more choices than ever when it comes to telecommunication. But with more options and the merging of digital and analog technologies, challenges are becoming evident. The telecom sunset is at the center of these challenges and it is industry wide. Let's take a look at three of the challenges impacting central stations and explore some of the solutions.

Challenge One: Lost or Broken Alarm Signals

With traditional phone carriers, geographic regions are divided by areas and assigned area codes. To complete a call or alarm signal transmission from one area to another, remote call forwarding takes place multiple times to reach the final destination. But like photocopying a photocopy, the quality of the call is reduced each time, leading to communications errors and undeliverable signals.

The outcome is that alarm signals are delayed with errors and may not essential information such as account numbers or zones. With a voice call, you may notice an occasional glitch, but the impact is not as disruptive as it is with an alarm signal. If you do have a problem with a voice call, you can call back and the signal will probably take a different route, allowing you to complete the call successfully. However, this is not possible with an alarm signal.

Because the alarm industry has historically used analog technology, alarm signal transmission issues were never a major issue. Now, if a customer moves to another carrier and replaces an analog line with a SIP Trunk, many alarm companies are under the impression the telecom carrier caused the alarm panel not to work. The real problem is that the central station is using an analog line and then making the signal convert back to analog from digital, resulting in alarm signals with delays and errors.

Challenge Two: The Discontinuation of the Adtran 550 PRI Channel Bank

Adtran discontinued its 550 PRI channel bank, including replacement parts and support. These channel banks were essential in completing DTMF conversions and breaking down frequencies to analog lines that go to the receiver cards on a data center's legacy receivers. Many central stations are now unable to find replacement parts to fix a product that is no longer available.

Challenge Three: Old and Out-of-Date Receivers

Sur-Gard Receiver Systems 3 and 4 are also being discontinued and the cost to replace them, as well as each line card, can be costly. Plus, keeping your receivers in your facility goes hand in hand with the first problem: the need for channel banks to communicate with receivers.

The Solutions

It is important to note that the problems described are all interconnected. So instead of simply addressing each problem with a solution, let's take a look at the big picture.

First, to replace the Adtran Channel Bank 550, DICE and IPtelX offer a channel bank that is less costly, has 48 lines, and is supported 24/7. Adtran's channel bank only has 24 lines, requiring two to meet the capacity of only one from DICE and IPtelX.

There is another solution offered by a company in the alarm industry that offers a PBX with a channel bank function. However, it does not make sense to purchase a PBX to handle a small number of signals transmitting to a receiver. Additionally, if you want to move to another PBX in the future, you will encounter the channel bank problem again. The DICE and IPtelX PBX is built for special tasks exclusive to the alarm industry, including redundancy, autodialing integrated to all automation suppliers, and built-in call recording.

Another solution is to convert every customer's alarm panels. For most alarm installers and with millions of panels in the U.S, this option is not feasible – at least in the immediate future.

If you want to keep your receivers on site, DICE and IPtelX can provide advanced channel bank and telecom services built for the alarm industry.

IPtelX and the Alarm Signal Network

IPtelX is the only telecom provider in the alarm industry that has a dedicated alarm signal network that is connected to your channel banks. Plus, if you don't want receivers on your site and you don't want to deal with channel banks, you can subscribe to the company's receiver farm in the DICE UL 827 data center cloud, allowing a seamless connection to your automation platform (whichever one you may have).

Changing Your Carrier to IPtelX

Designed with the security industry in mind, the IPtelX alarm signal network is a FCC licensed federal phone carrier that prioritizes call routing, eliminates remote call forwarding, and facilitates direct peering to allow alarm monitoring companies to identify, resolve, and eliminate communications errors that other networks cannot. It is important to note that IPtelX is not a sales agent. Changing your current carrier is fast, easy, and completed seamlessly at the telecom infrastructure network. You won't miss a signal.

UL 827 Data Center

As mentioned, DICE and IPtelX can host receivers, signals, channel banks, and has a simple driver into <u>any</u> automation platform. The hosted receiver is turnkey, in the cloud, and handles everything. Plus, it is UL 827 compliant, which eliminates the need for you to recertify with UL on an ongoing basis.

Alarm Signal Routing

Like a GPS system, IPtelX picks the best route for the alarm signal to arrive at the destination. The alarm signal network is also capable of direct peering, allowing users to establish a direct telecom connection between one point and another. Think of a carrier as a series of roads. A traditional telecom network owns Interstate A and will only allow you to take that route to get to your destination, leaving you with no other ways to proceed. On the other hand, IPtelX and the alarm signal network works with Interstate A and a series of other roads to provide multiple paths to your destination. If Interstate A is your clearest

route but is experiencing disruptions, IPtelX works to ensure another path is available, such as Interstate B, to provide a clear connection without downtime or interruptions.

IPtelX uses a proprietary system to analyze and pinpoint local exchange carriers or customers for signal discrepancies, outages, processing issues, or other factors leading to signal disruptions in real time. This technology is only accessible by IPtelX and allows the company to offer a truly unique and valuable service to the alarm industry.

Voice Calls and Internet

If IPtelX can do what other carriers can't do with these very sensitive alarm calls, you should also consider adding voice and internet services? You will receive a better rate and reduce your bill because there will be a greater volume.

With the IPtelX alarm signal network, you'll notice an immediate difference in call quality, completion, and service. Additionally, the reduction in errors allows users to process alarms faster and with fewer support calls, freeing up operator productivity. In many cases, IPtelX can lower service fees with the ability to reroute and peer directly. IPtelX's ISP connections also follow the new UL standards for failover, whereas other ISPs don't understand industry UL rules and requirements.

Join Others

There is a reason that both large and smaller central stations have chosen to take advantage of the IPtelX alarm signal network and DICE's hosted solution. It is a worry-free, cost savings solution and future proof.

A Host of Solutions

As you can see, there are several challenges central stations are facing as telecom technology evolves. But IPtelX and DICE provides several solutions. If you're interested in learning more about which solution is right for your situation, contact us today. Our team is available to answer your questions and help you make the best decision for your central station.