

5 ways your small business could save money to become more efficient

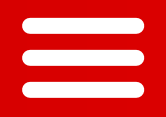
Simple changes to your business tools, tech and culture that could drive productivity, employee satisfaction and cost savings

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Together we can
vodafone
business

What's inside



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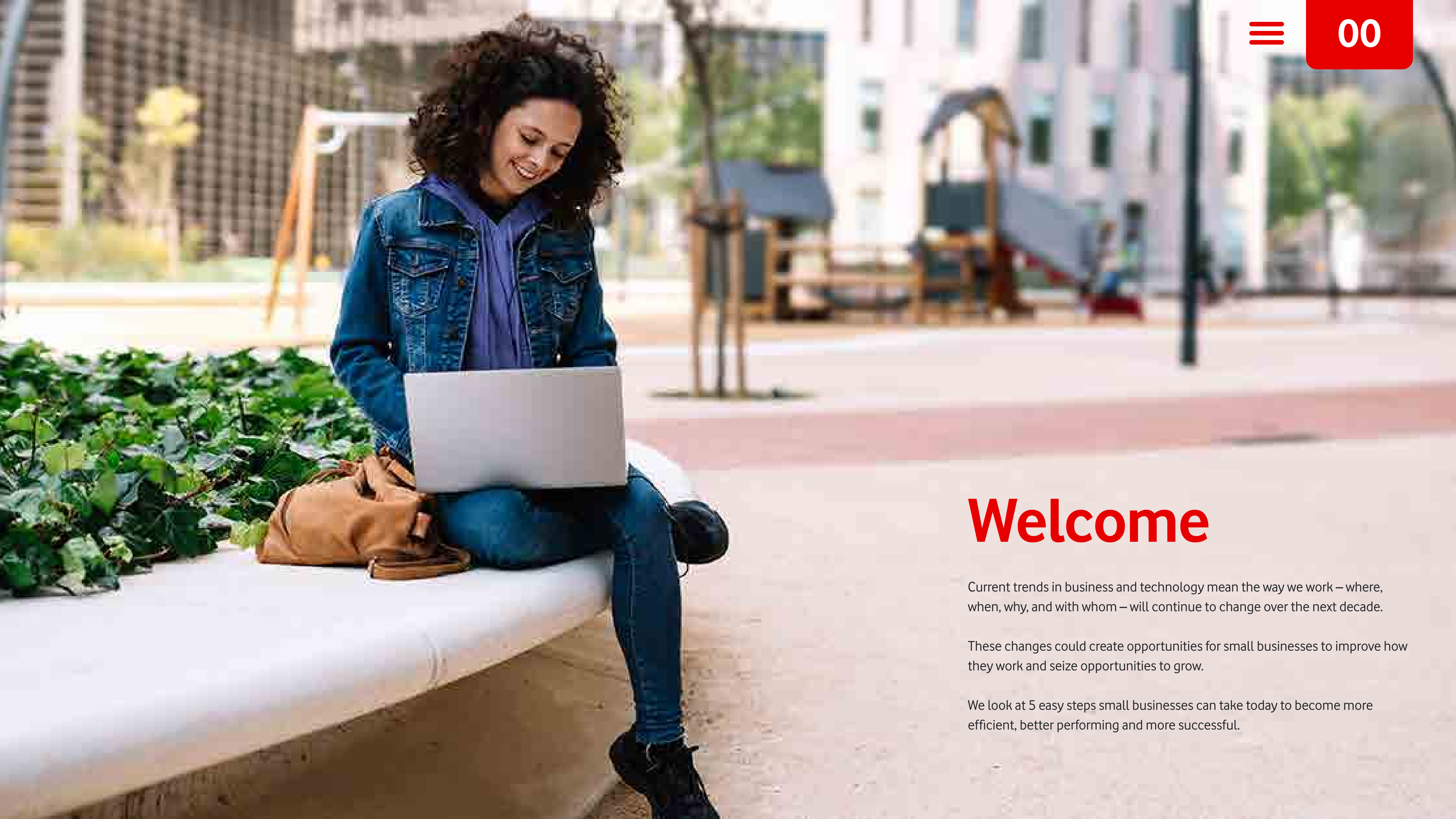
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Welcome

Current trends in business and technology mean the way we work – where, when, why, and with whom – will continue to change over the next decade.

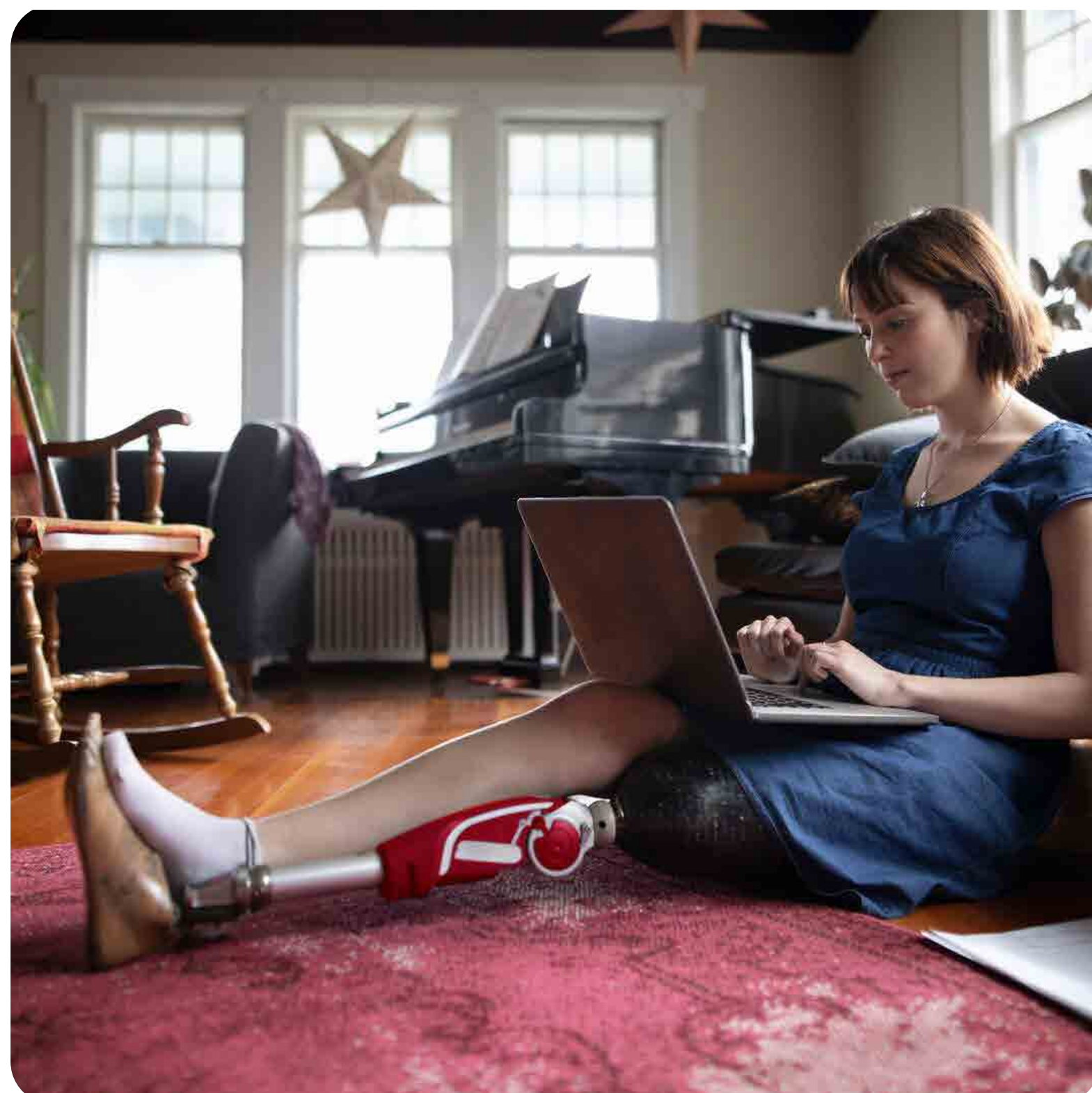
These changes could create opportunities for small businesses to improve how they work and seize opportunities to grow.

We look at 5 easy steps small businesses can take today to become more efficient, better performing and more successful.

Step 1

Embrace hybrid working

How to adopt modern working patterns that can benefit your employees and your business



A startling 60% of workers – and 76% of Gen Z – are looking to move jobs in the next year. And after money, the most common reason is a lack of flexible hours or hybrid work options.¹ What's more, a third of UK office workers said they would quit if they had to return to the office full-time.²

Businesses should therefore – where possible – look to offer hybrid working and have the tech in place to make sure it works.

The productivity debate also means that businesses are looking hard at their operations and are searching for potential efficiencies. Moving from a reactive to a proactive approach and building the next iteration of effective working environments for the hybrid working era could, therefore, pay serious dividends.

How can it be done?

If your people use different apps and devices to work flexibly and remotely, it's important to make sure their productivity, collaboration and file sharing tools are safe.

With the right tech in place to help everyone work closely together both face to face and remotely, you'll be better placed to maintain a positive and cohesive company culture, and take care of your people's welfare. Plus, you'll gain the edge in attracting the best talent.

By focusing on improving their collaboration tools, cyber readiness and company culture, businesses can evolve in step with changing employee expectations. And it's easier and more affordable than you might think.

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Step 2

Keep your staff happy

Ideas for how to put your employees – and their health and happiness – front and centre



01 Focus on work/life balance

Today many people want a healthy work-life balance. In a recent survey, 63% said they'd choose work-life balance over better pay.³ The ability to work where, how and when people like is key here, but employees also say that a healthy work environment that allows for an open dialogue between employees and employers is important.



02 Support innovative employee engagement

Have you evolved your meeting rooms to get the best out of sessions involving on-site and virtual team members? Do you aspire to harness innovations like the metaverse? By looking to the future and testing innovative solutions that promote collaboration, you'll show your employees that your business is committed to improving their everyday experiences and enhancing their working culture.



03 Think beyond flexibility

While flexibility can increase productivity and happiness – workers are looking for other benefits to help foster a healthy integration of work and life. They expect their employer to foster an environment of empathy and recognition, and offer access to wellness and health resources. One recent Qualtrics survey of nearly 8,000 full-time workers in Asia, showed close to two-thirds feel their job is the main factor in their mental health.⁴

Step 3

Become more efficient

When you run your own SME, time is money. Savings in both these areas could make a world of difference to the success of your company, as well as to the happiness and therefore retention of your employees

01 Make security a priority from the get-go
Many businesses only start to take the issue of security seriously once they have experienced a breach themselves. Instead, companies need to ensure that they have appropriate measures in place no matter where their employees are based, and that all employees are fully clued up on what certain attacks – such as phishing – could look like, plus what to do if they suspect they have been targeted.

02 Reduce stress
This isn't a challenge that can be overcome overnight. Instead, it requires the right workplace culture to be embedded – this is even more important in the new world of work. Managers need to lead by example. This could look like taking the right amount of downtime or talking openly about their own struggles with stress and how they overcame them.

03 Do what you can to minimise errors
A potential risk of remote working is version control; many of us have learnt the hard way that emailing documents back and forth often leads to mix ups and mistakes. When investigating the right platform and partner for you, consider certain scenarios. How can, for example, you make it as easy as possible for employees to edit documents at the same time without problems occurring? Are the video meeting capabilities as strong as they can be, lessening the chance of disruption?

Reducing stress requires the right workplace culture to be embedded



Look as professional as possible

When selecting partners and suppliers, other companies will have certain expectations. Here, we provide an overview so that, despite being an SME, you look as efficient and experienced as possible



01 Company email addresses

Nothing says start-up or homespun like a personal email address – and these don't exactly scream secure, either. Instead, get an email address that matches your domain name. This is simple and inexpensive to do but can make a world of difference.



02 Invoice professionally and promptly

You won't stay in business long if you don't get paid. Two factors will help you here – a contract and prompt invoicing. With regards to a contract, seek the help of a professional. When it comes to invoicing, consider investing in a programme that will make creating and sending professional invoices painless. You may even be able to accept payments online through them, too.



03 Create content

What you should be generating will depend on your audience – so take the time to research what your competitors are doing and use this as a jumping off point. It could be that your focus should be on attention-grabbing social media, or perhaps in-depth blogs or even whitepapers are what would build engagement. You might also want to look into how tech, such as AI, can be harnessed to make doing this easier. This could include, for example, autocorrections, speedier content creation or data-driven decision making.

Step 5

Improve your comms game

A recent survey revealed that 62% of UK businesses are still using landlines within their company, and that 45% are unaware of an important and impending change that will eradicate them for good⁵

What is happening?

By the end of January 2027, BT Openreach is closing down all ISDN lines – which will basically mean an end to landlines in the UK and the lines most commonly used to make phone calls across the world.

This means that any Public Switched Telephone Network (PSTN)-based products that your business uses today will need to change. PSTN not only supports traditional landlines, but also voice services such as ISDN2/30. The bulk of widely available broadband services, such as fibre-to-the-cabinet (FTTC) or standard broadband (ADSL), also rely on the PSTN.

Voice will become completely digital and delivered over the internet using Voice-over Internet Protocol (VoIP) technology. Broadband services will begin transitioning to Full Fibre (FTTP) and single order broadband (SOGEA). These don't rely on landlines and are fully future-proofed, offering fast download speeds of up to 900Mbps. Crucially, VoIP only requires an internet connection to work. This means you'll be able to say goodbye to costly, old-fashioned analogue phone lines in all your offices.



January 2027 will basically mean an end to landlines in the UK

Why is this happening?

- Known as [‘The Great Switch Off’](#), this is the biggest communications change in a generation.
- It is happening as part of a move to shut down the PSTN – which ISDN is a part of – because it's become outdated and been overtaken by newer technologies, such as fibre broadband.

When is this happening?

- In September 2023, any broadband or phone services that use the old copper network will no longer be sold.
- By the end of January 2027, the [PSTN will be switched off](#) and all UK landlines will cease to operate.
- From 1 January 2026 – all home or phone calls will be hosted via the internet.

Continue reading

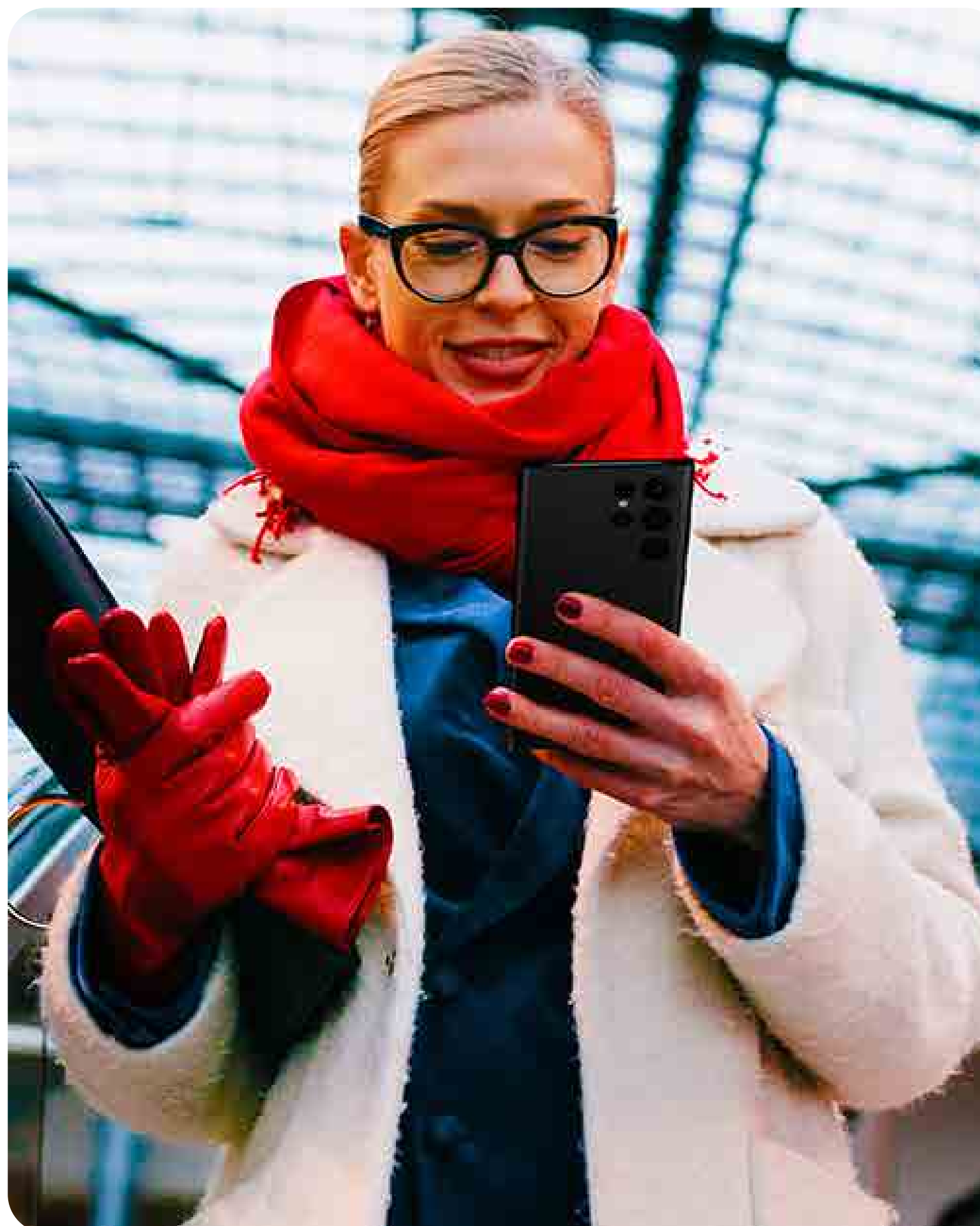


Step 5:

Improve your comms game (continued)

Other than no more landline charges, what are the benefits?

- Improved video conferencing, file sharing and [cloud-based working](#).
- The ability to scale without adding new costly landlines, allowing for remote answering, greater automation and tracking.
- Better call quality and faster networks. This will in turn improve innovation, increase productivity and keep teams tight via hyperconnectivity.
- The move towards more flexible and inclusive hybrid experiences will also be bolstered and future-ready operations and intelligent workspaces will be better enabled.



What do you need to do?

Take some time to review and understand your communications infrastructure. This will include thinking about the number of locations, the amount of bandwidth you have at each site and the telephone numbers you own.

Remember that organisations that are not prepared before the switch off date might also find that they're at the back of a long queue of installations while also having no telephone system. This could cost businesses customers and revenue.

There are several great partners out there who can support with your migration. Be sure to research your options and look for a company who can help make this process a smooth and successful one – readying your business for the future.

**Take some time to review
and understand your
communications infrastructure**



Go back

Get in touch

In a fast-changing world, we're committed to quality service and supporting you through a hassle-free transition.

We are a leader in innovative technologies and a trusted partner in providing future-ready infrastructure to support businesses of all sizes.

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give us a call on

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to talk about how we
can help your business
embrace the future.



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