ZCorum™

The Top Six Reasons to Transform Your Legacy Metaswitch

Introduction

Delaying your Metaswitch to IP network transformation could be costing your business more than you know. For every type of communication service provider (CSP) — including fiber ISPs, WISPs, ILEC/CLECs, satellite, cable MSOs, municipalities, and electric co-ops — future-proofed voice communication is critical.

For most service providers, voice services continue to play a vital role in subscriber revenue. If you're still reliant on obsolete, legacy technology that isn't meeting the needs of your customers and end users — you don't have to be.

You may think that a Metaswitch migration will be too complex or capital intensive. The reality is that the transition from a legacy switch system to a cloud communications platform can be smooth and fast.

Contents

Top 6 Reasons to Transform Your Legacy Metaswitch

1. Eroding Margins and Rising Costs

As subscriber bases erode with the attrition of landlines to mobile phones, service providers face a drop in revenue while their current cost structure remains fixed, which cuts into their margins.

For many providers, that current cost structure includes a significant number of hidden costs. Operating or building your own network is like an iceberg in that there are a significant number of hidden costs beneath the surface. The most obvious, visible costs — like vendor hardware maintenance, session border controllers (SBC), and other voice network expenses like caller name ID (CNAM), signaling system No. 7 (SS7), and local number portability (LNP) — are only the tip of the iceberg.

As the gap between costs and margins widens over time, providers need a way to keep their costs in line with revenue, so they can maintain or increase profitability. By moving to a cloud software as a service (SaaS) model, the OPEX pricing aligns with costs, and there is never any stranded capital.

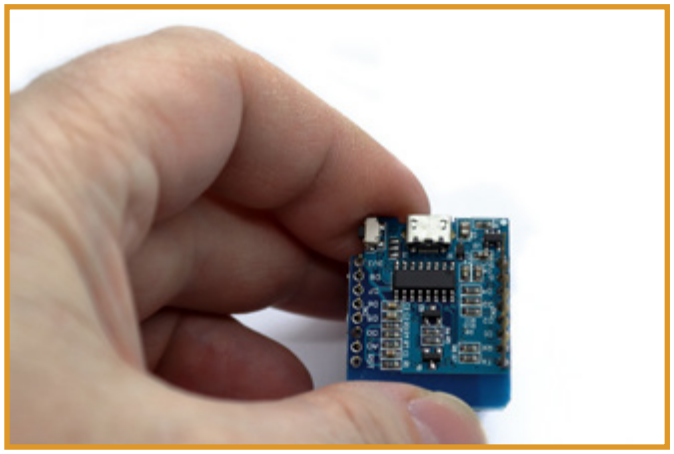
2. Lack of Innovation

Service providers must, at minimum, keep pace with security and compliance regulations and market demand for new UCaaS and collaboration solutions. However, legacy solutions lack the capabilities to innovate and adapt to changing market conditions, putting service providers at risk.

It has become increasingly challenging to get vendors to support those systems (if they are even still around), and new feature development and/or compliance with the latest regulatory requirements (e.g., Kari's Law, RAY BAUM's Act, and STIR/SHAKEN) is non-existent.

3. Lack of Support and Parts Scarcity

Many suppliers of legacy infrastructure have been purchased by other companies (e.g., Genband by Ribbon, BroadSoft by Cisco, and Metaswitch by Microsoft), with various priorities of supporting older equipment. As systems age or become discontinued, customers will no longer have vendor support and replacement parts will eventually be depleted.



Legacy IMS and softswitch products are already in their end-of-life process. For example, while service providers that rely on Metaswitch VP3510 or VP2510 hardware and a bunch of servers can still access replacements for now, they don't have long to decide what to do next as the last date of support on hardware is November 30, 2023.

Even outside of COVID shipping delays and parts scarcity, your old hardware may not be compatible with new software releases.

4. Growing Competition from Legacy Infrastructure Vendors

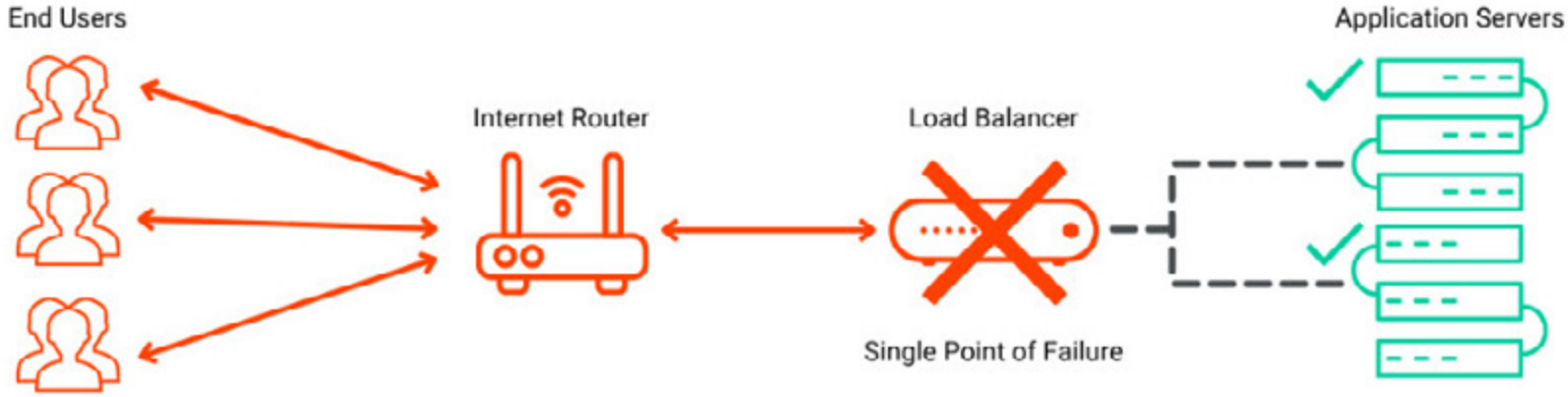
Cisco is now competing with its service provider customers by entering the direct sales market and having end-user subscribers with its GoCo offering. Service providers are now in the awkward position of competing with Cisco, their platform provider. This isn't ideal because it limits the go-to-market leverage for service providers and induces acute conflicts of interest around the strategic aspect of the relationship, which will impede successful partnerships, roadmap innovation, and general information flow.

5. Aging Workforce

As skilled personnel (including NOC technicians and VoIP, switch, network, voice, and full stack engineers) retire in greater numbers year over year, service providers will have an increasingly challenging time locating professionals who have the knowledge needed to manage hardware developed 20 years ago. The cost to retain those employees or train someone new will be significant. In addition, there is no incentive for new individuals entering the workforce to learn how to program an obsolete 40-year-old softswitch.

6. Single Point of Failure

Failures may occur not in the softswitch itself but from having a single switch at a single site. While many service providers have geo-split two halves of a switch, its often only from one side of a city to the other. Few providers have scaled to implement a nationwide active-active geo-redundant solution to mitigate the risks of failure and network outages.



Don't Let Sunk Costs Stop Your Metaswitch Replacement Plans

When it comes to moving from Metaswitch to the cloud, many organizations fear the migration — that the services will not be the same, it may upset customers, or they won't be able to recover revenue — and then bring a "if it ain't broke, don't fix it" mentality to the decision-making process.

If you've heard finance, IT, or technical stakeholders suggest "We've already invested so much into this, we need to get our money's worth," that is sunk cost fallacy, and it's negatively impacting your organization's ability to objectively determine the right path forward.

The bottom line: Yes, you made a significant investment in a now legacy phone system, but it's no longer serving you the way it should be. As the need for legacy network transformation becomes more pressing for service providers, C-level telecom executives need to evaluate the decision from a cost savings and growth perspective.

Selecting a Great Metaswitch Replacement Partner

With a traditional cap-and-grow approach or softswitch replacement, adding new customers to a new platform is relatively easy, but migrating existing customers to a new platform is one the most expensive endeavors a CSP can take on. The cost in both time and money is doubled because each subscriber must be added to the new platform and deleted from the old one. There is also the prohibitive cost of maintaining both the old and new platforms while the migration is underway, putting both platforms below critical mass for most of the migration. The longer the legacy infrastructure must be kept in place, the higher the costs and lower the margin — not to mention the risk of losing subscribers along the way. An inexperienced or new solution provider won't have the depth of knowledge needed to understand what can go wrong during migrations or how to avoid it.

Transitioning from a Metaswitch solution to the cloud can seem cumbersome, but it doesn't have to be. Getting the right cloud-based offering is about understanding not only the options available but also how to differentiate between okay and great solutions based on the migration experience, business model, automation capabilities, and how the cloud providers can support a safe and efficient migration.

Get started by working with an established cloud communications provider whose expertise you can rely on to deliver a fantastic migration experience.

Let Us Make Your Metaswitch Replacement & Network Transformation Easy

ZCorum is backed up by a team of experts who have successfully migrated providers from virtually every switching platform on the planet, and who know how to mitigate risk and move subscribers over safely. That includes experience in migrating hundreds of thousands of subscribers to a modern cloud communications platform, including bulk migrations as large as 10,000 subscribers in a single day.

The time to transform your network is now! Want to hear about how we can help? Reach out and let us know.

ZCorum™

4501 North Point Parkway,
Suite 125
Alpharetta, GA 30022
1-800-909-9441
info@ZCorum.com

ZCorum provides broadband Internet and communication solutions to telcos, cable companies, utilities, and municipalities, assisting in all facets of broadband implementation, integration, engineering and consulting, network monitoring and diagnostics. ZCorum also offers wholesale, privatelabeled Internet services, including data and VoIP provisioning, email, Web hosting, and 24x7 support for end-users, enabling service providers to compete effectively in their local rural and suburban markets. ZCorum is headquartered in Alpharetta, GA.