



2019 Happy New Year's Day

January 6, 2019

As we enter 2019 there are certain important items that I would like to bring to everyone's attention. My sincere hope and wish has been for at least the past 10 years is to create a community of interest focused solely on support of the legacy PSTN network. My goal is to create a forum where ideas can be discussed freely and lessons learned and critical issues raised.

Our audience and members would include services providers (Tier1/2/3), cable companies, equipment vendors, technical support companies, repair vendors and secondary market suppliers as well as industry leaders and consultants. Over the past several years, I've presented my view of the world at various IEEE CQR and ISE forums ([ISE-Presentation](#)), with the aspiration to get people motivated and inspired. Unfortunately, most participants are enamored with the current trends in technology (5G, NFV/SDN...) and I haven't succeeded in getting to the right people who share this common issue and concerns.

The death of the PSTN has been greatly exaggerated. Ironically, in a FCC report in 2011 stated that the PSTN would cease to exist in 2018. 2018 is now over and the "technology prophets" keep making that claim and eventually they will be right.

While there has been a significant erosion in the embedded base of PSTN equipment, there is still is a significant investment in legacy wireline equipment and associated revenue. Service Providers have aggressively reduced costs (people, maintenance contracts, energy, real estate footprint, etc.) to improve margins and continue supporting the network. Re-engineering initiatives have ranged from outsourcing Tier 2/3 NOC functions, adopting a self-maintenance approach and fix it only if it breaks model, and consolidation/migration transformation strategies.

While this trend will continue and gain momentum in future years, the current PSTN network will remain for a minimum of 5 years –through 2024- and possibly beyond. Of course this depends upon a Service Providers cash flow financial position and balancing investments (CAPEX) in new technologies (NFV/SDN, 5G, fiber) and maintaining (OPEX) the network infrastructure.

Now is the time to develop a 5 year plan that addresses PSTN transformation and develop Best in Class method to support and maintain the existing legacy infrastructure.

To this end, I propose a conference of all interested participants to address these issues and develop solutions to be shared across the industry. I propose we hold it in the Dallas/Irving Texas area in the May/June 2019 timeframe.

If you would like to participate, please send me your contact information ([contact-us](#)) and we can start to create an agenda that focuses on these issues and possible solutions.

Thanks,

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