

## Time Is Running Out for Your NEC PBX—What’s the Smart Path Forward?



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### Executive Summary

NEC has announced its decision to exit the on-premises PBX market and will cease sales of new systems by December 2024 and end all software support by March 2026. This strategic shift marks a significant change for organizations relying on NEC PBX platforms for their voice communications. As a result, customers may face challenges including limited access to replacement hardware, the eventual loss of technical support, and security risks. Businesses currently using NEC systems should begin evaluating future-proof alternatives to ensure continuity, security, and the ability to adapt to evolving communication needs.

### Why Now Is the Time to Upgrade to a Modern Communications Solution

The communications landscape is undergoing a dramatic shift. Legacy PBX systems—such as those provided by NEC—are being phased out, with manufacturers ceasing development, support, and hardware availability. This marks a clear signal to businesses: the time to act is now.

Modern communication platforms offer far more than basic voice service. Today’s cloud-based and IP solutions deliver enhanced mobility, integrated collaboration tools, improved security, and scalability that legacy systems simply can’t match. As the workforce becomes increasingly hybrid and customer expectations rise, businesses need flexible, future-ready solutions to stay competitive.

## The XSTIM® Migration Advantage — Exclusive to E-MetroTel

E-MetroTel's patented XSTIM® protocol, available through our on-premise Galaxy appliances or UCX-Cloud platforms, delivers an unmatched advantage: full-feature support for a wide range of existing business phones—without the usual hassle of reprogramming or firmware updates.

By embedding intelligence in the call server—not the handset—XSTIM® enables us to replicate the full user interface and experience of phones from leading vendors like NEC, Panasonic, Nortel, Avaya, and more.

Here's what makes XSTIM® a game-changer:

- **No firmware updates. No reprogramming.** Simply update your network with the MAC address of your new E-MetroTel system—and you're back in business.
- **No password resets or user changes.** Your existing configurations, usernames, and settings carry over—saving up to 30 minutes per user.
- **The same phones, the same user experience.** Programmable buttons, custom key layouts, and familiar workflows stay intact—ensuring zero disruption to your team.
- **Industry-leading compatibility.** Support for digital, IP, and SIP phones across multiple vendors makes E-MetroTel the ideal solution for mixed environments and multi-site businesses.

### Don't Be Fooled by Imitations

Some vendors may claim their phones “work on your system,” but they're usually referring to basic SIP functionality—a stripped-down experience that lacks key features and often demands manual reprogramming.

Only E-MetroTel's XSTIM® gives you a complete feature set on your existing phones, preserving your investment while delivering a seamless, full-service upgrade.

## The Risks of Inaction - Potential Impacts for NEC PBX Customers

Still, some businesses may adopt the “if its not broken, don't fix it” attitude to addressing this decision by NEC. Ask yourself how many of these issues you will be able to comfortably address in the future as problems arise:

- **End of Hardware Availability:** Replacement parts will become scarce, affecting system maintenance and limiting expansion as your business grows.
- **Support Phase-Out and Business Continuity:** NEC will discontinue all technical support and software updates by March 2026, leaving systems vulnerable to security risks, bugs, and compliance issues.
- **Increased Operational Risk:** Aging infrastructure with no vendor support will lead to higher failure rates, increased downtime and will compromise integration with evolving technologies and business needs.

- **Rising Maintenance Costs:** As systems age and parts become harder to source, service and maintenance costs are expected to increase.
- **Security & Compliance Vulnerabilities:** Without ongoing software patches, systems may no longer meet regulatory standards, putting organizations at legal and financial risk.
- **Barrier to Innovation:** Legacy systems limit the ability to adopt modern unified communications (UC) features such as video conferencing, mobile access, and cloud collaboration tools.

In summary, delaying the transition risks increased maintenance costs, system outages, security vulnerabilities, and a growing inability to meet evolving communication needs. Upgrading now ensures continuity, reduces long-term costs, and positions your organization to leverage innovations that drive productivity and customer engagement.

In short, the exit of traditional vendors like NEC is not just a disruption—it's an opportunity to evolve.

## What to Look for in a Modern Communications Solution

If NEC's exit from the communications market is an opportunity to evolve, then what attributes should you seek in a new solutions provider? Here is a checklist you may find useful:

- **Cloud-Native or Hybrid Architecture:** Flexibility to deploy fully in the cloud, on-premises, or in a hybrid model depending on your needs.
- **Scalability & Flexibility:** Easily add users, locations, or features without major infrastructure changes or cost spikes.
- **Unified Communications Features:** Integrated voice, video, messaging, conferencing, screen sharing, and mobility in one seamless experience.
- **High Reliability & Redundancy:** Built-in failover, geo-redundancy, and strong SLAs for uptime and performance.
- **Advanced Security:** End-to-end encryption, user-level controls, secure remote access, and compliance with relevant regulations (e.g., HIPAA, GDPR).
- **Mobility & Remote Work Support:** Native apps for mobile devices and desktops to support remote teams and hybrid work models.
- **Future-Proof Technology:** Regular software updates to ensure long-term viability and innovation.
- **Interoperability & Integration:** Easy integration with Microsoft Teams, and other productivity tools.
- **Strong Vendor Support & Ecosystem:** Reliable support, an active partner network, and ongoing training resources.
- **Transparent Pricing & Total Cost of Ownership:** Clear licensing models and predictable costs without hidden fees or expensive contract lock-in.

## Why E-MetroTel Needs to be on Your Shortlist of Solution Providers


At E-MetroTel, we have a saying: "If we can get the customer to demo the system, we'll win the deal".

Why are we so confident? E-MetroTel offers a unique value proposition that our competitors can't match. Our Green Migration strategy gives our valued customers everything they need in a modern solution at a price no other vendor can touch. The reason is simple: We give our customers the ability to reuse their existing investments in robust business-grade telephones while offering a path forward in terms of new capabilities and applications, all on a system that can be deployed on premise or from the cloud.

## The E-MetroTel Advantage

What can we offer? With an E-MetroTel solution you will receive:

- **Cost-Effective Transition:** Leverage existing NEC digital and IP phones to avoid costly hardware and wiring replacements, reducing capital expenditure by up to 40%.
- **Seamless Migration:** E-MetroTel's patented software ensures minimal disruption during the transition and offers your end-users the same features and user interface they use today.
- **Scalability and Flexibility:** Whether from the cloud, on premises or a mixture of both, E-MetroTel's solutions scale effortlessly to meet your business needs, supporting remote work, mobile integration, and multi-site connectivity. And because all our solutions are based on the same software, the features don't change with the deployment model.
- **Reliability:** Our solutions offer a myriad of enhanced reliability options including redundancy and duplicated hardware and components. Our cloud solutions are hosted by Amazon Web Services or can be virtualized in your own data center. And optional fail-over can be provided to survivable on-premises appliances or remote gateways which are surprisingly cost effective.
- **Advanced Features:** Access unified communications tools such as video conferencing, team messaging, call recording, and omnichannel contact center capabilities, all from a single platform.
- **Future-Proof Technology:** Stay ahead with E-MetroTel's evergreen design, which supports ongoing updates and innovation, including integrations with 3<sup>rd</sup> party applications like Microsoft Teams.



**Delaying your transition risks increased maintenance costs, system outages, security vulnerabilities, and a growing inability to meet your evolving communication needs.**

- **Enhanced Security:** Benefit from robust encryption, high availability, and compliance with industry standards like HIPAA and FINRA.
- **Perpetual Licensing:** Control costs with flexible licensing options. On prem we use perpetual licenses that include one-year warranty and software updates. Cloud offers are available monthly or annually with no contract lock-in.

## **We Understand That Communications Are the Lifblood of Your Business**

The move to a new communications solution isn't just a purchase decision. It's a journey to improved communications with your customers and employees. E-MetroTel has an extended family of trusted partners that care deeply about your business and will put in the extra effort to ensure a smooth transition.

By creating a team approach that includes E-MetroTel, our Partners, and the customer, we can offer superior results. Here's an example quote from Tracy Bartley - IT Director at Bath Community Hospital:

"The downtime for replacing our Option 11 with an Avaya solution required that the hospital be down without phone service for 8 hrs. Tom Freeman [E-MetroTel's partner] proposed that he could do the replacement with the E-MetroTel UCX solution with less than 10 minutes of downtime. And in fact, in the end, we moved from the Option 11 to the UCX in 8 minutes!"

How do we achieve these kinds of results? E-MetroTel's Green Migration Strategy is built on extensive experience in transitioning customers from legacy systems like NEC PBX, to feature-rich UC solutions.

Our approach includes:

- **Assessment:** We evaluate your current NEC PBX infrastructure, identifying compatible endpoints and assessing performance to tailor the migration plan.
- **Planning:** A detailed migration roadmap ensures minimal downtime, with options for hybrid deployment to test capabilities while maintaining existing systems.
- **Execution:** Our patented UCX software seamlessly integrates NEC digital and IP phones with the UCX Cloud or on premises platforms, preserving existing functionality.
- **Testing:** Rigorous stress and failover tests confirm system reliability and performance under various conditions.
- **Training and Support:** Comprehensive user training and 24/7 support ensure a smooth transition and ongoing success.

**“Having a large customer base with traditional NEC PBX systems and handsets, E-MetroTel has empowered me to go in and offer my customers continued support beyond the NEC sunset, by providing a flexible, top tier solution while also retaining their existing hardware investment.”**

**Dan Mack - Voice New England**

## What Our Customers Say

Nothing speaks louder to E-MetroTel’s core values and success than the comments from our customers. Here are some examples:

- "The interface is simple and very intuitive considering the features that are available through the system and the cost savings were substantial." *Daniel Rozon IT Manager - Shaw Centre*
- "We upgraded to an E-MetroTel’s UCx VoIP server platform a few years ago and have been thoroughly impressed with its flexibility and rich feature set." *Kevin Jones, Information Technology Officer Jefferson Bank & Trust*
- “Its evergreen design is...helping the City of Columbia realize significant cost savings, in the order of 30%. We now have a reliable, scalable communications system that simplifies our IT network and helps increase staff productivity.” *Jim Chapdelaine, CIO City of Columbia, Missouri*
- "E-MetroTel provided the complete solution at 44% cost savings over all of the others. Our savings are through the roof and we are very excited about that." *Joe Sus, Telecom Coordinator, Pete’s Market*

## Your Next Steps

- We don’t expect that E-MetroTel will be the only solution you will consider to solve your NEC end-of-life issue. But we do anticipate being the best solution for your business. We would like to suggest the following next steps to preserve your business’s vital communications:
- Don’t delay. Critical dates for NEC support are coming soon and in some cases are already presenting customer issues.
- Consider your alternatives. On-premises, cloud, virtualized or a hybrid approach based on your business needs and priorities.
- Engage with potential vendors and carefully consider cost, business disruption, features and on-going timely support.
- Schedule a E-MetroTel demo. We’re confident that once you have seen our solution in action and considered E-MetroTel’s value verses the competition, we will win your business, and just as importantly, your on-going trust and satisfaction with our solutions.

## About E-MetroTel

E-MetroTel delivers flexible, end-to-end communication solutions that evolve with your business. Our Green Migration strategy supports 100+ endpoints across six major brands—maximizing existing investments while enabling a smooth, cost-effective transition. Founded in 2009, we bring deep expertise in Avaya, Cisco, Mitel, NEC, Nortel and Panasonic solutions, with global teams across the U.S., Canada, Europe, and Asia-Pacific. Our solutions support over 3,000 users and 1,200 call center agents, offering on-premise, virtual, or cloud deployments tailored to your needs—backed by a worldwide network of partners.