

Two-Way Radios: Are we required to switch from analog to digital?



Short answer is no. The FCC has indicated that their intention is to have the new standard at 6.25 kHz (digital) but have not provided a switchover date. If you're running radio communications on analog frequencies, you do not have to make the switch. And if you have great-working analog radios that meet your current communication needs, that's reason enough to stick with them until something changes. However, if you are communicating via analog radio and experiencing issues communicating throughout your facility, common problems associated with analog radios simply go away after switching over to digital radio communications.

Benefits Digital Two-Way Radios Can Bring

RANGE: The top reason we see companies choose to go digital is that they're not getting complete coverage throughout their facility. Dead zones are an annoyance at best and potential danger at worst. While digital transition won't solve all range issues for all facilities, countless times our customers have experienced complete elimination of dead zones just from moving from analog radio to digital. Ensuring everyone can communicate, regardless of location, is a big reason facilities choose to upgrade their radio comms.

CLARITY: A lot of our customers work in high noise environments, and digital radios -- all on their own -- have excellent noise cancellation capabilities. If there are areas in your facility where radio communications are difficult to hear due to noise, swapping out your analog radios for digital ones can be a big help.

An upgrade to digital also brings a series of features that analog radios don't offer. These include calling features like text messaging, all call, and individual talk. Plus, digital radios have superior battery life over analog, which anyone who can't complete their shift without changing their radio battery can appreciate. Additionally, CavCom carries a complete line of radio accessories specifically designed to assist with radio comms in high noise. Suddenly, you're able to hear and be heard on the radio in areas where you used to be drowned out. It's a small change that can make a big improvement.

Top benefits a facility could see with the integration of digital communications are:

- Dead zone elimination
- Noise cancellation
- Modern calling features
- Extended battery life

With these potential benefits, it makes sense that some facilities aren't waiting for new FCC requirements to switch from analog to digital. Especially because the process can take place gradually.

The Push Toward Digital Two-Way Radios

After comparing analog vs digital, there's a chance you might be feeling a push toward making the switch.

First, I want you to know you're not alone.
Second,

it's important to remember that if your analog radios are working for you and meeting the communication needs of your facility, there's no current regulation requiring you to move anything. **Third**, I want you to know that if you do plan to eventually upgrade to digital, there are gradual ways to go about it.

Integrating Digital

The decision to switch to digital is something that can be implemented as quickly or slowly as you like. Some of our customers want to start receiving the benefits of digital two-way radios as quickly as possible and others want to remain on analog with the intent to go digital in the next few years. Either way they rely on us to help them navigate their process.

Some customers who choose to remain on analog but know that digital is in their future, choose replacement devices that are compatible with both digital and analog. This way, they can continue with their existing radio infrastructure while preparing for the future.

Partnering with CavCom

There are some great reasons why facilities are upgrading their radio infrastructure to support digital. By choosing to partner with CavCom, we can help you through the process. If you would like to explore upgrading radios in your facility, or you're simply looking for some advice tailor-made to your situation, connect with us. We can help you figure out a path to digital that isn't going to leave you dealing with a massive upset or unmanageable capital expense.

Our Process

We begin by checking on your FCC license and understanding your communication struggles as well as your short- and long-term communication goals. We can have a technical specialist conduct a demo and let you try our radios and communication solutions. We carry industrial digital radios that can be programmed in both digital and analog. These devices make great replacements for existing radios that eventually become obsolete. When you are ready to go digital, the radios can be set up to change to digital with literally a flip of a button. Your employees will still have those same radios, but their experience communicating will immediately improve.

Are you interested in learning about your options regarding integrating digital-capable radios into your facility? Get started by connecting with one of our sales representatives.