Case Study

Everon turned to iotcomms.io to bridge the gap between digital telecare systems in grouped living and analogue platforms currently used in alarm receiving centres (ARC). The iotcomms.io's platform will also enable Everon's digital solution to connect to ARCs by using digital protocols.

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Getting alarm communication for grouped living ready for the big PSTN switch-off

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Management summary

- Ahead of the big 2025 PSTN switch-off in the UK, Everon needed a way to bridge the gap between their digital systems used in grouped living locations and ARC platforms only capable of handling analogue protocols, and to prepare for digital connectivity end-to-end.

- Everon turned to iotcomms.io's cloud-native alarm, voice and video communications platform for integration into Everon's digital alarm handling platform, Lyra.

- iotcomms.io's Alarmbridge and its multi-protocol support and protocol conversion function bridges the gap between analogue and digital communication protocols allowing analogue and digital systems to communicate seamlessly.

- The Lyra solution is, with the integration of the Alarmbridge functionality, enabling any grouped living setting to smoothly transition to an all-digital alarm and voice communication.

- Everon can broaden its addressable market and offer its digital solution in grouped living settings currently serviced by ARCs only capable of receiving analogue communication, and in the future also in grouped living settings serviced by ARCs using digital protocols.

Everon – a market leader in digital telecare solutions

Everon's mission is to deliver innovative digital living solutions which support vulnerable individuals to live productive and independent lives.

They are the European market leader in digital grouped living solutions. They have been providing digital solutions since 2007 in Finland and Sweden and were introduced to the UK in 2019. Their systems can be quickly configured to suit individual support across multiple care settings including care homes, assisted living, or at home.

Their flagship offering is Lyra, an intelligent, cloud-based digital alarm handling platform that includes wireless telecare sensors and devices provided to individual users, and a central hub connecting to the ARC.

Alarms can be received and managed using the Lyra mobile app on any smartphone. Lyra can also be tailored to allow voice communications between the client and caregiver.

The hidden complications for local authorities and housing associations when switching to digital

In the UK, the analogue public switched telephone network (PSTN) will be turned off at the end of 2025. In preparation, many of the grouped living and assisted living spaces that have been using analogue alarm systems up to now are looking to switch to a digital platform like Lyra.

This is a big opportunity for Everon. However, many of these potential customers are connected to alarm receiving centres that cannot yet receive digital alarms calls.

Switching to a different alarm receiving centre would require budget and, in many cases, a formal tendering process. There may also be contractual obligations in place which would complicate matters, as Richard Hosier, Head of Product Development at Everon UK, explained. This means that even if Local Authorities and Housing Associations switch to digital telecare devices in their grouped living locations, they cannot really take the step to providing an all-digital care service end to end.

“There were quite a few customers who were asking us if we could help them to bridge the gap. In many cases, the local authority and housing association couldn’t move to a digital alarm receiving centre (ARC) as they had a long-term contract with the provider, or they simply wanted to keep it.”

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Bridging the gap between digital and analogue

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To solve the problem, there would need to be some way of connecting Lyra's digital telecare solution deployed in grouped living spaces with the analogue alarm response systems used by the alarm receiving centres.

Everon searched for a solution and contacted iotcomms.io, a specialist supplier of real-time alarm, voice and video communications services. The iotcomms.io platform and the protocol conversion functionality included in Alarmbridge provided what Everon needed. With this functionality Everon can send its digital-based alarm communication to the iotcomms.io platform which will receive it and send it as an analogue-based alarm communication to the ARC system.

This way the Everon/iotcomms.io solution enables digital grouped living systems to continue to use alarm receiving centres only capable of receiving analogue-based alarms.

The combined Everon/iotcomms.io solution is also establishing a secure voice communication between the analogue-based ARC system and the grouped living location.

Alarmbridge was integrated with Lyra and first used in September 2022 and has since been rolled out to several Everon customers.

Opening up new business opportunities

For any ARC that are not in a position to take digital alarms or calls, we can now use the iotcomms.io protocol conversion functionality to bridge that gap.

RICHARD HOSIER, HEAD OF PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT, EVERON UK

“We would usually connect to all ARCs digitally with Lyra”, Richard Hosier explained. “But for any that are not in a position to take digital alarms or calls, we can now use the iotcomms.io protocol conversion functionality to bridge that gap.” This allows Everon to broaden its addressable market and can take on additional business.

It can now also respond to tenders where there is a specific requirement to provide a bridge between the digital solutions being installed in care homes and assisted living locations, and analogue systems used by alarm receiving centres.

This means local authorities and housing associations can go ahead and embrace new digital technologies. Furthermore, it eases the pressure on housing and local authorities to make the move to digital alarm receiving platforms ahead of the PSTN switch-off.

Richard Hosier has been really impressed with iotcomms.io, both in terms of their technical ability and understanding Everon’s needs. “We provide life-saving equipment and I feel confident that their solution is safe, and we can feel comfortable using it. We have multiple sites already and have had no issues at all to date. It’s been a total success.”

Everon and iotcomms.io are now looking at adding more capabilities to the Lyra platform. Thanks to iotcomms.io’s support for digital care protocols such as TS50134-9/CENELEC and BS8521-2 (SCAIP and NOW-IP), Lyra can easily be compliant with these protocols. This means that Lyra can send its alarms to TS50134-9/CENELEC and BS8521-2 enabled ARCs, and Everon can thus expand its addressable market once again.

In the meantime, the combined solution meets the immediate needs of local authorities and housing associations that operate care homes and grouped living spaces.

Enabling alarm & voice communication between digital care home devices and analogue ARCs

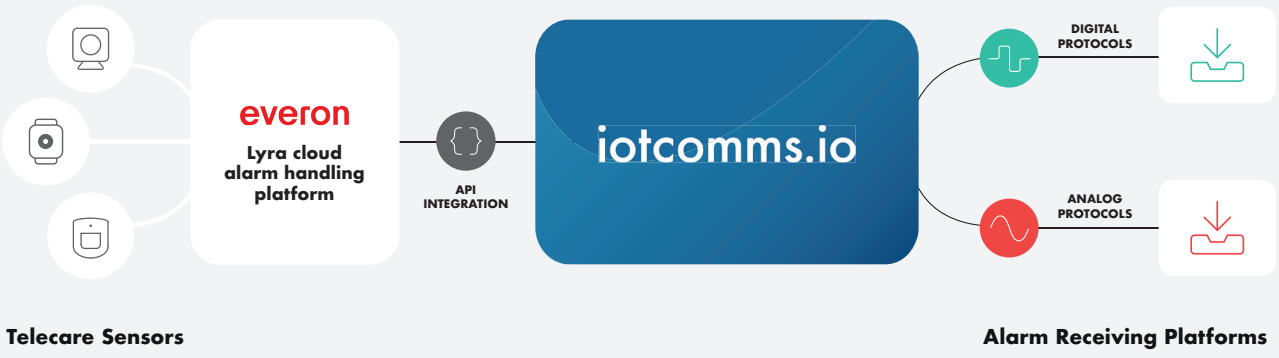

Illustration showing the alarm flow of Everon's digital solution connecting to both analogue- and digital-based Alarm Receiving Centres.

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Smooth transition from analogue to digital

For housing associations and local authorities the benefits of the combined Everon/iotcomms.io solution are far-reaching. “Let’s say it’s a housing association with 50 locations which they want to upgrade to digital but can’t yet as they are in contract with an alarm receiving centre that can’t take digital alarms”, said Richard Hosier.

“It can now go ahead and upgrade those 50 locations without having to wait for the receiving centre software to be capable of handling digital-based communication. That means they can use their favoured ARC provider and keep their monthly and annual reporting consistent.”

What really makes the difference, said Richard Hosier, is it gives customers the ability to transition from analogue to digital. “We’re enabling care service providers to start upgrading to future-proof digital solutions and use them with analogue alarm receiving centres until the whole alarm communication process is digital from end to end.”

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About iotcomms.io

iotcomms.io is a privately held Swedish company founded 2018 in Stockholm. iotcomms.io offers a cloud-native communications platform providing alarm, voice, and video functionalities for integration in critical real-time applications, services, and business processes, and attracts companies within sectors such as Security & Alarm, Unified Communication, Contact Centers, Smart Buildings and IoT. The platform is built with a serverless backend, microservice software architecture and delivered as APIs and protocol interfaces.

iotcomms.io's APIs coupled with the company's deep competence and experience in designing critical communication services, enable Solution Providers to build reliable and secure solutions that scale effortlessly – both in size and globally.

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