

INSTALLATION BEST PRACTICE

Alarm Vendor Engagement

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The purpose of this whitepaper is to outline the best practices for engaging with alarm vendors during the installation of DataRemote's POTS in a BOX (PIAB) . This guide is intended to help ensure a smooth transition during POTS line migration.

During POTS line migration installations, it is common to encounter resistance from alarm vendors that are attempting to sell alternative cellular-based solutions. The recommendations in this white paper aim to streamline interactions with alarm vendors to provide the best chance for success and mitigate unnecessary roadblocks.

Overview

The alarm vendor engagement during a PIAB installation can be broken into three phases:

- Install Preparation – The days leading up to the install date
- Install Initiation – The morning of the install
- Test and Turn-Up (TTU) – The install

Phase 1 – Install Preparation

During the days leading up to the install:

- Ask the Local Contact (LCON) to have the alarm vendor's contact information ready. There is no need to proactively inform the alarm vendor about the POTS migration.
- Confirm with the Local Contact that the alarm panel is in "normal" mode (no faults displaying on the panel).

Phase 2 – Install Initiation

On the morning of the install:

- Ask the LCON to get the alarm vendor's contact information ready
- After an initial survey of the site, initiate contact with the alarm vendor
- Have the LCON call (or call on their behalf) the alarm vendor and request for the account to be put into **TEST MODE**
- There is no need to discuss details about the POTS migration
- Simply request the alarm account to be put into TEST MODE

Phase 3 – Test and Turn-Up (TTU)

During the install:

- Ensure the PIAB line is in Alarm-AUTO mode. This mode performs an auto-detection of the fire alarm protocol.
- It is recommended to install the PIAB next to the DMARC/66-block and not necessarily next to the alarm panel. The PIAB is a POTS line replacement and must be referenced as such with no impact to any inside wiring downstream of the DMARC. If the PIAB is installed next to an alarm panel and connected directly to the alarm panel, it will technically work the same, but alarm vendors will sometimes misinterpret the function of the PIAB as being an alarm communicator that requires different install considerations. Treating the PIAB as a POTS line replacement at the DMARC/66-block avoids these types of disputes.
- Begin cut over of POTS line at the DMARC
- When disconnecting POTS at the DMARC, leave the line disconnected for at least 60 seconds. Some panels require a voltage drop on the POTS line for at least 40 seconds or longer to register a “Line Trouble” error. Be patient.
- After 60 seconds, connect the PIAB at the DMARC. Allow the panel to make its first call.
- **IMPORTANT:** This first call is a TRAINING CALL. The panel may indicate a trouble condition initially, which is normal. The PIAB uses this first call to detect the alarm panel protocol. The panel may continue to show a trouble condition after this first training call. The panel will wait momentarily and redial. Faults should clear, and the panel should return to normal. Subsequent calls are expected to work successfully.



Figure 1 - Example of Telco Line Error

If the system is not working after cut-over:

- Engage support and perform alarm line troubleshooting for the line feeding the alarm panel.
- If troubleshooting is unsuccessful, a vendor meet may be advised.

Post-install:

- Call the alarm vendor to confirm they are receiving signals. If successful, they should see the recent error restoral messages that were sent by the panel above.
- Request the alarm vendor to take the system out of TEST MODE.
- This interaction with the alarm vendor provides an opportunity that they are successfully receiving communication from the panel, which serves as a secondary confirmation that signal transmission is working correctly (the primary confirmation is the fact that the panel will clear the trouble condition and return to “normal” mode).

Conclusion

This whitepaper is intended to help provide a structured approach to alarm vendor engagement during the installation of DataRemote's POTS in a BOX. Although we believe these best practices provide the most opportunity for success and scalability, we are certainly open to ideas and feedback. Please reach out to your DataRemote customer success manager for any feedback.