

Definity-G(x) Demystified:
By Walt Medak

Q: I am trying to hook up a computer to our switch to be able to capture CDR data. I don't have a call accounting system, I am just capturing the data to a text file that I can search through if needed. I did this on a different switch about a year ago, but I can't remember where to plug the cable in to the back of the switch and what I needed to program.

A: If you are connecting a serial cable directly between the switch and your PC, it would connect to the DB25 connector on the back of the cabinet labeled Data Communications Equipment, or DCE. The programming you would need to do is in the form called system-parameters CDR. There are lots of options on the form, but just to get the switch to start sending out data, there are only a couple that are necessary. You will need to pick a primary output format. There are several options in this field as well, but let's just pick "unformatted" for now. This will bring up another field where you tell the switch the destination for the data. For a direct connection such as yours, you would need to put "eia" in this field. There is also another field for the bit rate for the eia port, which you would need to match with the communication software you're running in the PC. That should be all you need to get the data started.

Of course, there won't be any data unless you have your trunks set up to report CDR. Also, if you want to capture station to station calls, you will have to enter all of the extension numbers that you want to report in the form called "intra-switch CDR".

Q: The starting and ending dates for daylight savings time have changed this year. Is there something I need to do to be prepared for this? I have a Definity G3V9.5 and an Intuity R5.1.

A: This is a great question, and quite timely I might add as we are rapidly approaching that time of year already. The answer to your question is both a yes and a no, at least not yet.

For your Definity, the fix is a pretty simple one. First, find out which daylight savings rule you are using with "display time". I haven't seen a switch that uses anything but rule number 1, but it always best to check anyway. Once you know which rule you're using, use the command "change daylight-savings-rules". You should see that it currently shows the start date to be the first Sunday on or after April 1. You will need to change that to the first Sunday on or after March 8. The current stop date is the first Sunday on or after October 25. That needs to be changed to the first Sunday on or after November 1. That will take care of your switch until they decide to change the dates around again. Your Intuity is a different story. At the time I'm writing this, the OEM says they are going to provide a software patch, but I have not seen that anything has been made available yet. If a patch is not available in time, it really isn't that difficult to change the time manually. You would select "Unix Management" from the Intuity main menu, and then select "Unix Date and Time". Once you have corrected the time, you will be prompted that the system needs to be rebooted to ensure all processes are updated with the correct time.

If you are running a system on Communication Manager 1.x, the OEM is not going to provide a patch. Your only choice is to either upgrade, or manually move the time ahead an hour in March, and then manually move it back an hour after the system changes the time on the first Sunday in April. The end of daylight savings time would have to be taken care of manually as well by setting the clock ahead an hour after it's automatically moved back an hour on the last Sunday in October. Finally, you would have to change the time again on the first Sunday in November.

Systems running Communication Manager 2.x are a little more complicated. Some of the versions will have a patch made available, while other versions will have to be upgraded to CM 2.2.2 before a patch is available. Alternatively, the time can be adjusted manually using the same procedure as the CM 1.x switches.

A patch may or may not be needed for switches running Communication Manager 3.x. It depends on the exact version, and whether or not the system is in the U.S. or Canada. For example, CM 3.1.2 does not require any kind of patch if the system is in the U.S., but does require a patch if it's located in Canada.

If you have any questions regarding how the new daylight savings time changes affect your system, please give us a call.