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AVAYA TREND ADVISOR

Solving the Top 5 Collaboration Challenges in a Multivendor World

It's a multivendor world. Here's how your busines

Collaboration is more than a corporate buzzword—it's one of t
today. Empowering employees to instantly communicate, shar
boost productivity, enable faster and better decision-making, i
profitability.[1]

📊 49%

49% of an employee's impact on business unit profitability comes from the ability to help others perform.[1]

66% of IT executives and 52% of line-of-business executives are putting top priority on improving the capabilities of their collaboration products and services.[2]

Achieving seamless collabo
communications capabilitie
shaping today's business landscape. Companies are more mobile, with employees working remotely using their personal devices on the job. Video conferencing is widespread: less costly than in-person meetings, more personal than conference calls, and offering increased access to top talent and business partners without geographic constraints. Multivendor is the new normal, with companies expecting to be able to add new communications tools and technologies from a variety of key partners, without losing their original investments—and needing to be able to easily integrate and manage it all.

Of course, some things haven't changed: Companies are always concerned about increasing return on investment (ROI) and lowering total cost of ownership (TCO). They want to get the most out of the investments they make, and continue to gain value from the investments they've already made.

In this Trend Advisor, we'll examine some of the top challenges for implementing an integrated multivendor unified communications and collaboration (UC&C) solution—and solutions to help your business achieve it.

CHALLENGE #1: IMPROVING COLLABORATION

When workers can instantly connect, share, and solve problems, they can be m
and perform at a higher level. That's good for them — and good for your busin
collaboration within your organization?

It's important to consider the unique needs of your employees, as well as all th
need to support mobile workers who are in the office only part of the time—or
locations all of the time. You may rely on distributed teams located in different
regularly, share documents and files, and discuss emerging issues "on the fly" c

other. To be as productive as possible
collaboration capabilities as workers
they are, whatever device they are us

⏱ 20%

40% of employees spend over 20% of their time away from their desks.[3]

⚙ 94%

94% of businesses say video collaboration allows them to improve productivity.[3]

Change can be difficult for both indiv
overlook the appeal of the familiar. Er
consumer-inspired communications
to use, and look and feel like the tool
messaging and e-mail. These tools ca
broadest set of users, so you can get
maximize the benefits to your workers.

This includes personal smartphones and tablets, too. The "bring your own device" (BYOD) trend is popular, not just because it's more convenient for employees to carry and use one device for personal and professional purposes, whether they're in the office or working remotely, but also because it's more comfortable for them. There are no new technologies to master and no extensive training needed. Your business can also benefit by eliminating the costs of business-owned devices, although you will also need a way to ensure the security of your corporate data and communications.

A wide variety of solutions is available to help you improve collaboration among all your workers, whatever size your organization is and wherever your employees are located. Here's an example of how it can work.

PICTURE THIS:

A salesperson in the field with a customer discovers a design problem with a product. Accessing the company's UC&C client on her smartphone, she locates the project manager and sends him an IM. With a few clicks, they quickly switch to video, then bring the manufacturer into the collaboration session. The salesperson shares images of the design issue, and within minutes of seeing the problem, the vendor has a diagnosis and proposes a solution. The salesperson arranges for parts to be shipped immediately to the customer. After ending the video conference, she assures the customer that the shipment will arrive the next day. The result: a problem solved, a crisis averted, and a very satisfied customer.

CHALLENGE #2: RISK OF LOSING CURRENT COMMU

Like many companies, you may already be working in a multivendor environm
from one vendor, email from another, and telephony from a third. And if that's
soon, as you add new communications capabilities or upgrade existing ones.

This can seem like a risky proposition. You need to be confident that you won
already made—or the ones you will make in the future. You need to be sure th
work with what you have today, without disrupting your operations, posing a
creating hassles for your IT staff, or stretching your budget thin.

Rest assured, multivendor solutions don't have to be complex, difficult to use,
put together a combination of best-of-breed solutions that are seamlessly int
ease of use and management. Each one should be selected because it's the b
functionality you need, at the lowest cost. The result is a feature-rich solution
users, is simple for your IT staff to manage, poses the least risk, and offers the

Here's an example of how a multivendor best-of-breed solution can help you
communications, and maximize the value of your investments:

Bringing UC&C to the Community College

Constrained by tight budgets, a regional community college is undergoing a three year, multi-phased transition to provide a unified communications and collaboration platform designed to better support faculty, staff, and students. The school has about 6,000 full-time and part-time students with three campuses. The original campus has administrative offices, dorms, and classrooms while the other two locations, each over 50 miles, from the main location, support on-site faculty, staff, and classrooms. The college also offers online courses.

Today, the school uses Microsoft 365 as a cloud-based platform for its student e-mail system. Faculty and staff use a premise-based Exchange Server to support Microsoft Outlook, along with a SharePoint Server as a common repository for documents. To consolidate desktop operations, the school is replacing their premise-based desktop support with a hosted Microsoft Lync service. The Lync service will allow for common faculty, staff, and student directories, e-mail services, and calendaring—plus host desktop applications like Microsoft Word and shared documents in the cloud.

Like the desktop services, voice communications are being upgraded to include UC&C. Unlike the decision to use hosted service for desktop upgrades, the school determined that a premise-based system was more cost effective for UC&C. Because the school's budget can only afford to upgrade one campus UC&C per year, the installed system will support the legacy PBX locations in the interim. Avaya's Aura platform offers the engine behind the UC&C features, including VoIP,

intra-campus video calls / desktop video conferencing, presence management, inter-campus SIP trunking, and support for BYOD. As each campus upgrades its legacy PBX to an Aura platform, the school will integrate common directories to facilitate click-to-call / click-to-chat between the Lync, 365, and Aura platforms––and among campus locations.

Although the distan
the school's legacy s
Lync architecture ca
learning under the U
term plans also call f
to support inter-cam
video conferencing,

CHALLENGE #3: RISK OF DEPLOYING NEW SOLUTION

Organizations looking to improve their current collaboration capabilities have a

A. Replace their current infrastructure with a complete solution from a new vendor

B. Upgrade the current system with new capabilities and tools from a different ve
platforms and devices.

Only about one-third of companies identify a single strategic vendor that provides all or most UC apps in an integrated fashion.[4]

Some companies may believe that the first option is best, hoping that a total "rip-and-replace" will give them the complete set of capabilities they need in one package, with the simplicity of dealing with just one key partner.

In reality, the choice is not so clear-cut. While each vendor's UC&C solution may offer specific features that others don't, no solution is perfect — and none has every capability your business may need today and in the future. What's more, no one vendor's solution is likely to offer a large enough advantage to offset the cost, disruption, hassle, and time involved in a complete replacement of your current infrastructure (assuming your current system is from a major vendor who is providing ongoing development and affordable support).

Upgrading your current infrastructure or migrating to an integrated multivendor solution can help you simplify your deployment while improving your collaboration capabilities. Here are just a few of the benefits of this approach:

- **Reduced need for retraining.** This expense may not be tracked in your IT budget, but training users and IT staff on new systems and applications involves real and substantial costs, including time and resources diverted from other priority projects. Since your workers are already familiar with your current infrastructure, keeping all or part of it greatly reduces the need for retraining.

- **Reduced expenses.** Like many organizations, your budget may not account for the loss of unamortized assets replaced with new endpoints, servers, gateways, and other equipment that represent new expenses—but actually perform the same functions as the old ones.

- **Reduced risk.** By building on your current infrastructure rather th
  avoid the potential risks of:

  - Losing your current investment.
  - Being locked into a single vendor, solution, and technology that ma
  - Relying on a single partner who supplies your software—and requi
    components from multiple third-party vendors.
  - Moving your voicemail messages to a potentially less secure syste
    to comply with rules about discoverability and retention of voicem
    Rules for Civil Procedures, and other regulations).

To fully realize these benefits, you need a multivendor solution that v
the same look and feel your employees are familiar with, provide sim
cost-effective in terms of IT staff hours and licensing costs. Here's a

High Tech Consultancy Lives High Tech with UC&C

A global technology consulting company with about 7,000 employees (and growing) needed to reduce its cost for phone calls within individual countries, and for international calls. At the same time, it wanted a solution that enabled faster collaboration between consultants and teams around the world.

The solution included the Avaya Aura® Communication Manager, Session Manager, and media gateways. By choosing a UC&C solution from Avaya that started with a VoIP deployment and IP-PBX functionality in the

branc
dome
The sc
call in
PBX – reducing international calling costs and eliminating the need to account for and reimburse employees after the fact for business calls made from their home office or mobile device.

Collaboration was noticeably enhanced with the Aura features, observed in employee comments and satisfaction. As a result of the decreased costs and the collaboration improvements, the company plans to extend the architecture to its offices in other countries.

CHALLENGE 4: NEED TO INCREASE ROI AND DECREASE TCO

Enhancing your UC&C capabilities can drive ROI for your business. In addition to retaining your current IT/communications investments, adding on the features and capabilities you need, and selecting those with the optimal features and lowest cost and risk, enables you to put together the best combination to meet your specific needs in the most cost-effective way. You get the most from your investment, free up your budget for other important business objectives, and gain all the benefits of improved collaboration, too.

Decreasing TCO is an important consideration for any business. A 2014 report from Nemertes Research found that in the area of IP telephony, costs among vendors varied widely.[4] To keep expenses down and reduce total cost of ownership over the long term, it's important to consider both the size of your rollout and the operational expenses (including staff time, equipment maintenance costs, third-party managed services, training, and certification costs) associated with each endpoint.[4]

Here's an example of how the right UC&C solution can help you increase RO

Health Insurance Provider Solves Open Enrollment Demands

Every year, a large health insurance provider faces the "open enrollment" period, meeting the peak contact center demand as users change their plans or even move to a new provider. The company uses a two-step process: the first step consists of contact center agents focused on helping the client find the right plan and complete the paperwork, while the second step uses a "warm handoff" to match the customer with a licensed insurance agent / underwriter who can close the deal and set the policy rates.

Contact center agents are trained to help incoming inquiries using chat, e-mail, voice calls, or a mix of these communications media to help customers get through the enrollment process. Regulations like HIPAA require that customer privacy be protected, that transaction records are stored, and that proper security procedures are all part of the process. Standard contact center tools like skills-based routing and

workload mana
business proces

The company's
Avaya's solutio
desktop applica
between agents
systems manag
like IVR / speed
management to
reliability. Lync
chat sessions, a
e-mail, chat, an
manages "prese
environment, al
presence featur

By enabling best-of-breed collaboration in the contact center, this hybrid solution is well suited to meet the insurance company's cost objectives, accommodate the peak customer traffic flows, meet regulatory requirements, and provide excellent customer service.

78.9% of companies planned to **increase** their IP telephony endpoints moving into **2014** by a median of 25%; 80% of companies planned to increase their number of IPT mobile clients by a median of 130%, driven by telework support and user demand, according to a 2013 survey of IT decision-makers by Nemertes Research.[5]

CHALLENGE 5: NEED TO KEEP OPTIONS OPEN FOR

Organizations of all sizes and types looking to improve collaboration and imp
flexible deployment of a solution with performance, quality, and resiliency. If
UC&C capabilities through a multivendor model, working with key partners w
solutions can give you a clear advantage. Here are some things to consider a
options:

- Will this solution integrate easily with what I have today, with the fle
  for my future needs?
- Will this solution deliver the UC&C clients and performance I expect
- Can this partner provide endpoints with unique features to meet my
- Can this partner support connectivity to virtually any multiparty con
- Does this solution provide an open environment, allowing for develo
  time, so that I can gain the full benefits?

The multivendor model gives you the freedom to make changes as your business needs evolve and enables you to benefit from the creativity, technical expertise, and resources of multiple partners. Here's an example of how that can make a help your business succeed over the long term:

Cleaning Up with Collaboration

A domestic company specializes in home and office clean-up following fires, floods, and other disasters. The company used Microsoft for e-mail and directory services, Polycom for room video conferencing, and Avaya for its phone systems and audio conferencing services. In connection with a strategic business decision to support BYOD for all employees, including field support technicians, the company wanted to offer a solution that integrated directories, provided presence management and click to call for desktop and mobile devices, and that enabled BYOD and desktop audio/video participation for all employees. The company looked at three options: cloud services to replace its current infrastructure, a "rip and replace" premise-based option, and an upgrade to existing infrastructure.

The company chose to upgrade its existing infrastructure, keeping its Polycom room-based video system, relying on a Microsoft Lync upgrade to manage integrated employee directories, and choosing the Avaya Aura architecture (including the Aura Communication Manager) to manage system-wide communications features such as session management and presence management for desktop, BYOD, and extending video to all devices.

The selected option had the best return on investment when considering the capital investment because it protected most of the existing infrastructure, it was the least costly multi-vendor solution to integrate, it had the acceptable ongoing operations and maintenance costs, and it did not require significant employee training to implement—thus reducing total deployment costs when compared to other options.

SOLUTIONS FROM AVAYA

Avaya stand-alone solutions enable extensive enterprise features with scalability, reliability, manageability, and security. When factoring in acquisition and support costs with the operating costs, Avaya also offers a lower total cost of ownership. Avaya support for BYOD and UC capabilities isn't just the client software with features and user experiences - it's the also applications and security tools that allow IT to feel comfortable with deployments.

When customers prefer a multi-vendor solution, Avaya also offers industry-leading integration with other suppliers. For example, Avaya's integration with Microsoft enables the user to have a Microsoft user interface on their PC with the Avaya quality of service and quality of voice and video underneath. Avaya's platform is designed for interoperability to help customers evolve from what they've got today with the agility that's required to address tomorrow's requirements.

ABOUT AVAYA

Avaya is a global leader in enterprise communications systems. The company provides unified communications, contact centers, and related services directly and through its channel partners to leading businesses and organizations around the world. Enterprises of all sizes depend on Avaya for state-of-the-art communications that improve efficiency, collaboration, customer service, and competitiveness.

Visit **avaya.com** for more information.

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