

ALL TOGETHER NOW

Bringing together your communications can transform the way your business works – but can be a big step. BT can help you make it simple

Communication is the key to business success. But how do you put your people in touch with customers and suppliers wherever they are, without spending all of your time worrying about your complex communications infrastructure?

Traditional methods of communication give a range of options: fixed or mobile phone lines, fax and e-mail, instant messaging, as well as other internet-based methods of communication. But which tool works best in what situation?

And there's scope for confusion. If a customer needs to get back to you, should they call your mobile or landline? Or should they use e-mail? Keeping up with all of these modes of communication you use can provide you with an administrative headache too, with separate suppliers and even separate networks for different kinds of services.

The answer to all this is a new trend in communications services which is starting to filter through from the technology labs to the real world: unified communications.

What is unified communications?

Unified communications isn't itself a product: it is a range of options available

for business which could deliver real, tangible gains in terms of cost, flexibility and increased productivity (see "The benefits of unified communications", right). It helps stop the overload of information from various sources – e-mail, phone, fax – and consolidates them into a single system. Essentially, it takes an approach that puts people at the centre of communications, rather than technology. Wherever you are, whatever you're doing, and whatever system you're using, you're at the centre.

One simple example of this is how we use faxes. In any medium sized company, you'll probably find several old fax machines scattered around the office. Each of these faxes is probably used a lot less than they were previously, but there's still the occasional vital fax which ends up sat on the machine until someone notices it. If someone needs a fax sending to them but are on the road or working at home, things can get even more complicated.

With a unified communications system, this form of fax usage is a thing of the past. Instead of being printed out and lying on a fax machine unnoticed, a fax can be routed electronically to someone's e-mail inbox, going direct to the person that needs it in a



form that's likely to be seen immediately. If they're out of the office, they can still get access to it – in fact, using products like BlackBerry or BT Office Anywhere, they could even get it when on the road. Sending a fax too, could be simplified – simply select the person you want to send to from your address book, open the document that you want to fax to them, and send it. No waiting around by the fax machine to ensure that it's sent.

This is a simple example of how unified communications works, but eventually it goes beyond this. The longer-term objective is to forget about how you reach someone, and simply reach them. The ultimate unified address book will allow you to set preferences for how you wish to be contacted – e-mail, instant message, phone, or whatever – and, when someone wants to reach you, all they need to do is click on your name on screen and connect with you in that way. Instead of having to work around the technology by using e-mail addresses, phone number and so on, you simply work the human way – with a name.

The road to unified communications

Unified communications is an exciting prospect, and so you might expect it to be costly. One of its key benefits is that it

The benefits of unified communications

A report in 2006 by Sage Research¹ highlighted three main ways in which unified communications can bring benefits to companies.

1. Cost reductions


Companies using integrated voice and web conferencing reported a 30 per cent reduction in conferencing expenses by making integrated conferencing facilities available in and out of house.

2. Time savings

Organisations using unified messaging reported that employees saved an average of 43 minutes per day from more efficient message management. Companies which enabled "presence" features, allowing employees to easily show everyone when they are unavailable for contact, saved an average of 32 minutes per employee per day as they were able to reach each other on the first try.

3. Productivity gains

Using soft phones – software which runs on your PC instead of a conventional desk phone – companies saw an average saving of \$1727 (around £875) per month in mobile and long distance charges. Mobile workers saved an average of 40 minutes per day, enjoyed greater convenience, and generated annual productivity gains of 3.5 days per year through business continuity.

 To find out more about how BT can help you unify your communications, call your BT Local Business on 0800 731 3343 or go online at bt.com/sb

1. Unified Communications Applications: Uses and benefits. Sage Research, December 2006

See it!

Free web seminars are available on integrated communications, covering topics including **Convergence – making it simple, making it real**, plus practical guides such as **Getting you on the road to convergence**. See them at bt.com/webseminars

does not have to mean a big complicated IT project which could be prohibitively expensive and break the bank. It can, instead, be part of your natural cycle of upgrading and replacing systems as your business grows – with each step giving you tangible business benefits as well as those of unified communications.

If you're considering investing in unified communications, the most important thing is to talk to a supplier that understands the need to look at companies as individuals, as there's no "one size fits all" system which is suitable for everyone.

Choosing the right partner

To take this approach, you need to choose a service provider which offers a full range of communications products, and understands how each can contribute to your progress towards unified communications. With BT, you can ease gradually into unified communications with telephone and communications products such as **BT Business Communications Manager**, **Cisco CallManager Express Solo**, and **BT IP Converge**. For example, Unified Contact is an inexpensive add-on for Business Communications Manager which allows you to click on a contact in Microsoft

Outlook to call them rather than having to dial their number. It also allows you to view fax and voicemail messages via your Outlook inbox – a single inbox for email, voicemail and fax.

Unified communications is a journey, one which companies will be taking over the next few years and which delivers real business benefits. Because the benefits can be gained in a step-by-step approach, it's easy to see that companies which

ensure their systems have room to grow as their needs grow, will have advantages over their competitors. But this means you need a supplier you can trust.

BT has long experience of deploying unified communications. What's more, we work with leading partners in the area to deliver the right solution for you.

For more information about unified communications, contact your BT Local Business Team today.



Get more for your money with BT

Take the first steps to unified communications with these networked IT services

Save up to 30% on IT Assurance

Switch your network maintenance to **BT Networked IT Assurance**, and you could get a reduction of up to 30 per cent¹ on your existing phone and Local Area Network (LAN) maintenance contracts, wherever your equipment is from.

BT Networked IT Assurance finds and fixes faults fast. With our nationwide team of 1900 engineers, 95 per cent of faults are fixed the next working day. And because our advanced system access facilities are available 24/7, we can often work remotely to get your network back online – no engineer visit required.

If you face termination charges, we'll provide 90 days' free assurance to help ease the move. For details of how you can save, contact your BT Local Business team now.

i To start your journey to unified communications, call your BT Local Business team on 0800 731 3343 or go online at bt.com/sb

1. Offer ends 30 June 2007. Offer available to customers subject to survey (maintenance acceptance test). 30 per cent saving is subject to production of proof of customer's existing maintenance bill and contract. Minimum 3-year term. Offer applies to selected switches from the following suppliers: Alcatel, Avaya, SDX, Ericsson, Goldstar, Nitsuko, Panasonic, Plessey, Samsung, Siemens, Toshiba, Nortel (all models), Cisco (all models), Lake (all models). 2. Must be for new IP Converge networks for new customers only ordering brand new circuits at selected offer bandwidths. Existing eulP, metroVPN, MetroFlex, IP Converge or IP Clear customers are not eligible. Available on 3 or 5 year term contracts only. Promotion runs from 2 April 2007 to 29 June 2007 inclusive without exception. Standard IP Converge discounts will still apply to the rentals. The special offer prices are for a limited period only and BT reserves the right to withdraw these at any time pre contract. The charges are only available for those sites on the original contract, not for sites added at a later date or after expiration of the offer. Offers can not be combined, ie: AAI audit offer and ARO offer. The ARO pricing can not be submitted for Special bid. 3. Review available to all UK businesses with more than five employees until 31 July 2007. No purchase necessary.

The BT phone system price challenge

BT also helps to lower the cost of converged telephone systems – take the **BT Phone System Price Challenge** to see for yourself. As the UK's market leader in telephone systems, BT can provide you with a phone system that meets your business needs at the best possible price. All you need to do is take a written quotation from another supplier to your BT Local Business team, and we'll do the rest!

Save 50% on IP Converge

Install **BT IP Converge**, and you can benefit from a 50 per cent discount on your IP Converge connection fee². BT IP Converge is a managed solution which links multiple sites into a single wide area network (WAN), making it easier to share information. IP Converge is tailored to your needs and end-to-end managed – so it won't increase the burden on your IT department either.

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