

VoIP Technical Information

Unified Communications Streamlines Operations

Unified communications can help address the challenge today's organizations face as they contend with increasingly complex environments that feature a wide array of communications methods.

Employees, business partners, and customers now conduct business using seemingly infinite combinations of phones, voice messaging, e-mail, fax, mobile clients, and rich-media conferencing. Without unified communications, however, these tools are often not used as effectively as they could be. The result is information overload and misdirected communications that delay decisions, slow down processes, and reduce productivity.

Unified Communications Evolves

As precursors to unified communications, IP telephony and IP communications solutions have proven their ability to help solve such problems, enabling organizations to streamline business processes and reduce costs. For years, companies have realized the benefits that carrying voice, data, and video communications across a common, IP infrastructure can bring.

From these, unified communications solutions have evolved and offer even greater benefits. Unified communications applications are actually integrated within an IP network to provide structure and intelligence that can help organizations integrate their communications more closely with business processes, and ensure information reaches recipients quickly, through the most appropriate medium.

Unified communications allows businesses to collaborate in real time using advanced applications from an integrated, easy-to-use interface. These applications include:

- Video conferencing
- Integrated voice and Web conferencing
- Mobile IP soft phones
- Voicemail, and more

Unified Communications Benefits

Unified communications solutions can save time and help control costs, while improving productivity and competitiveness:

- In a 2005 Sage Research study, 86% of companies using unified communications reported that productivity benefits have grown.
- More than 60% reported savings of three or more hours per week for each mobile worker.

Such studies confirm that migrating to a unified communications system provides a substantial return on investment (ROI) and a reduced total cost of ownership.