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Experiences That Matter

Power Up Your People Power Up Your Communications

Gaining Competitive Advantage
from Cloud Communications



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The face of your business continues to change—and at an accelerating pace. Even if your business is a small one, you now have opportunities to support customers on a global basis. But you also face the realities of global competition. Your workforce and your customers are also changing. Pew Research recently reported that Millennials are now the largest generation in the U.S. labor force at 35%¹ and workers are, of course, key consumers. Known for their focus on networking, their tech-savvy nature, and their team orientation, Millennials have honed their interaction habits on social media and have high expectations of both their interactions as consumers and as employees.

This is driving change in the office, and in the standard business tools used every day. What was a central hub of face to face activity has become, in many cases, more like a touch-down space where highly mobile employees interact on a more occasional basis. For example, a recent survey found that 60% of employees spend more than a quarter of their work time away from their desks, and 1 in 3 businesses reported that a “significant portion” of their employees work remotely². Communication still happens, but physical encounters are now widely augmented with text, voice and video interactions that bring employees together from virtually any location.

For business leaders these new realities can create significant challenges and opportunities. Among the challenges are providing the right tools to keep employees productive, reachable and engaged from virtually any location. If done correctly, these capabilities open opportunities for greater customer interaction and satisfaction, enhanced responsiveness, wider access to markets and better, faster decision making.

But how do you keep up? Like many businesses, your IT department may be under pressure to implement and maintain the systems that keep your business going—particularly the regular flow of patches that keep your infrastructure secure. Plans for expansion may be forcing you to conserve capital for key initiatives. And you may worry about whether your employees are being as productive as they could be. All these factors are motivating businesses like yours to move to the cloud as a way to address security, new technologies and predictable monthly expenses.

The following eBook will outline the benefits of the cloud with a view to helping you make up your own mind about what Cloud solutions could bring to your business. Not every Cloud advantage may be applicable to you, but the explosive growth of Cloud solutions suggests that many businesses are seeing enough clear benefit to drive adoption to increasingly greater levels.

1. <http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2018/04/11/millennials-largest-generation-us-labor-force/> accessed 23 Nov 2018.
2. Canam Research, Avaya Commissioned Survey, 2016.

Taking Care of Business

Unified communications and team collaboration applications are becoming a mainstream part of business but implementing and maintaining these tools can be time consuming for untrained personnel. Thankfully, these capabilities can be delivered from the cloud as either stand-alone apps or as applications fully integrated with your existing voice infrastructure. By enabling apps from the cloud, you can provide specific capabilities to individual users that need them, versus having the expense of providing them to everyone because they are on the same premises-based system.

Modern unified communications solutions make it significantly easier for users to invoke productivity enhancing capabilities. For example, calendar integration allows a user to see their upcoming meetings and conference calls and join these sessions with a single touch on their device of choice: their PC, laptop, tablet or mobile phone. Similarly, starting a video call or adding a third or fourth person to an audio or video conference is as easy as typing in the person's name and then dragging their icon into a session. Because these capabilities are so easy to use, employees can make use of them to rapidly communicate complex ideas, get resolution and then move on to their next task. The days of wasting 20 minutes setting up a video conference are long gone.

In a similar vein, team collaboration apps drive real productivity into your teams. One app does it all: one click access to audio or video conferencing, a file repository for documents, task assignment, and persistent team messaging and chat so that team members can rapidly engage their group to resolve issues or make the entire team aware of updates or changes.

In each case applications from the cloud allow you and your employees to focus on what's important. Like all good technology, cloud-based apps provide intuitive and reliable capabilities that run in the background, allowing you to focus on moving your business forward, not on the technology itself.



Optimizing Your Cash Flow and Conserving Capital

No business has unlimited supplies of cash or capital. Carefully applying these resources to the most important needs of the business are a cornerstone of long term success. By shifting to cloud-based communications and collaboration, you can shift your spending profile from large one-time expenditures to a smooth and predictable set of monthly payments. This includes not only the purchase of equipment but also the significant costs associated with set up and installation, as many cloud providers include these in their monthly fees.

Cloud services also allow you to scale your capacity up and down to match the fluctuations in your business. For example, you may add temporary employees for a particularly large project or to meet the needs of increased activity around the holiday season. The flexibility of the cloud allows you to carry only the capacity you need at any particular point, providing significant savings and efficiency.

By implementing Cloud solutions, you can conserve your capital for the projects that are vital to your business: new locations, adding production plant and equipment, funding new innovation, or enhancing your customer service capabilities.



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Continuity for Your Business

Business continuity is becoming a more significant issue for business owners every day. We read about and are affected by weather disasters, systems infected by viruses, hackers and infrastructure issues that can have a dramatic impact on ongoing business operations. Moving to the cloud can be a key part of your business continuity strategy because it provides significant flexibility over an on-premises system located at a single location. For example, many cloud providers offer their services from redundant data centers that are physically dispersed to ensure applications remain available even if one location is impacted by a disaster. For you, that means that you never need be without communications capabilities if a location is negatively impacted.

So, communications systems remain up and running but what if your employees can't get into the office? By their nature, cloud solutions are available from virtually any location so remote access is easily implemented. Employees can work from home or any remote location as easily as being in the office. And the flexibility of modern unified communications solutions means that full capabilities can be accessed from a variety of devices, including the employees' tablet, smartphone or laptop. Using a technology called WebRTC, users can gain full access to their voice and video communications tools by simply launching a browser and pointing it to the correct, secure location.

Another advantage of modern UC capabilities from the cloud is multi-device access. This provides access by one user from a variety of devices—virtually any device, in fact, including those that can support a browser. Multi-device access ensures that users remain “on-line” and reachable wherever they are—at their desks, on the go, or working remotely from home or a hotel.

Streamlining your IT

Very few businesses would ever claim they have too many IT resources. Far more commonly, businesses complain of not finding enough IT people and having a perpetual backlog of new applications and systems they want implemented. Cloud communications can help. By moving to the cloud, the day to day administration of communications is taken over by the cloud provider. Software patches, upgrades and routine administration is outsourced to experts who can complete these requirements efficiently across a number of businesses. For you, that means lower costs overall and the ability to use your limited IT resources for the unique initiatives that drive your business forward.

Cloud solutions also allow you to avoid the expense and work associated with technological obsolescence. It is no longer your issue to replace servers and other hardware components as new releases call for ever increasing processing and memory requirements. Your cloud service provider takes these challenges on and, instead of your business facing large one-time expenditures, these costs are rolled into your predictable monthly fees.

Keeping it simple

Modern unified communications can have a dramatic impact on our day to day collaboration and productivity. For example, a recent analyst report noted that 90% of enterprises who have deployed UC have reported an increase in collaboration volume, with half noting an increase of 50% to 100% or more³. As powerful as these applications are, and as intuitive as they are for users, implementing them can be challenging to IT departments unfamiliar with the nuances of real-time voice and video.

To keep life simple for both IT and users, consider implementing unified communications from the cloud. As noted above, it can provide your business with a “best of both worlds” approach—giving you the powerful, easy to use solutions your people need to drive your business forward while at the same time minimizing the involvement of your IT department and conserving your capital.

3. Wainhouse Research: The UC Journey: 7 Steps to Unifying the User Experience, May 2017





About Avaya

Businesses are built on the experiences they provide and every day millions of those experiences are built by Avaya (NYSE:AVYA). For over one hundred years, we've enabled organizations around the globe to win—by creating intelligent communications experiences for customers and employees. Avaya builds open, converged and innovative solutions to enhance and simplify communications and collaboration—in the cloud, on premise, or a hybrid of both.

To grow your business, we're committed to innovation, partnership, and a relentless focus on what's next. We're the technology company you trust to help you deliver Experiences that Matter.

Visit us at www.avaya.com

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IP Office is used by over 26 Million users every day on over 650,000 systems in over 100 countries. Powered By Avaya IP Office™ takes this same award-winning platform and makes it available to businesses like yours from the cloud. It provides a complete, integrated array of productivity enhancing unified communications and contact center capabilities, a full-featured mobile experience, and a streamlined migration path to the cloud, regardless of what system you're using today. With the flexibility to address the needs of virtually any business, Avaya Powered By Avaya IP Office™ will power up your people by powering up your communications.