

Telviva One

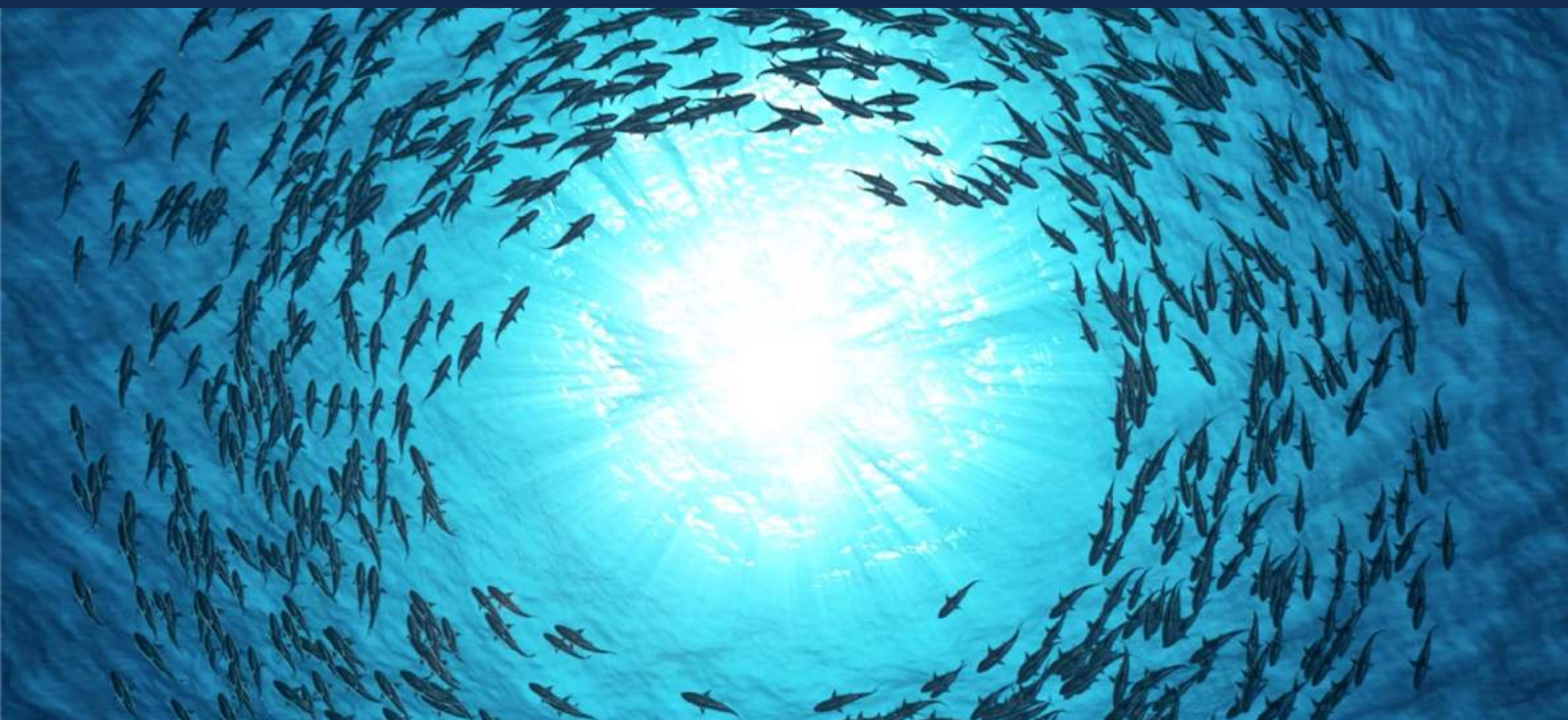
Unified Communications
White Paper



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EVOLUTION OF THE ROLE CHARGED WITH MANAGING BUSINESS COMMUNICATION



Traditionally, as Telecom Manager - and this designation may differ from one organisation to another - you're tasked to plan, devise, build, configure and maintain the business communication system. This planning will inevitably result in the commission of telecommunications equipment, networks, and systems. This may include voice, data, satellite, microwave, digital data systems, and everything else associated with the care and operation of your organisation's Business Telephony System.



Crucial to your functionality is the calculation of performance levels of system software and hardware in anticipating future requirements to develop short and long-term plans for increasing capabilities, improving existing systems, and updating equipment in order to provide better telecommunications solutions suitable for your company's requirements.



The world around you is constantly changing. Your internal customers are changing too and chances are great that your organisation's demands on you is to now cater for a wider variety of communication needs for a workforce made up of various generations, situations and destinations - each preferring a different medium of communication. Voice alone, be it fixed, mobile or a combination of fixed and mobile, will no longer cut it.



In addition, and even more important than how employees in the organisation connect with each other, is how the outside world seeks to interact with the organisation. This brings into focus the level of proficiency that will be required for the organisation to interface with them, through the varied communication mediums of their preference. External stakeholders interface differently, with different departments and internal stakeholders so it would make sense that the business communication needs are determined more broadly by a team of subject matter experts that understand each stakeholder, rather than solely by a Telecoms Manager. The role of business communication management, therefore, in this digital age, must strategically include the CIO, customer service, sales and marketing and a person charged with communication.

EVOLUTION OF THE ROLE CHARGED WITH MANAGING BUSINESS COMMUNICATION



This cross functional team is charged with planning the digital journey of the organisation. It entails a continuous improvement of the customer touchpoints from customer acquisition, enablement, service delivery and billing and collection into an “easy to engage model” in the mode of communication (text, audio and visual) that best suits the customer. This requires an “all in one solution” straddling a fixed, mobile phone, browser and the website all inclusive of video.



In order to embark on this journey of digital transformation, the team needs to be in touch with all the latest developments in business telecommunication technology and even the decision to leave your legacy telephony system behind has already been made, with so much out there to digitally transform to, it can all be pretty daunting. Perhaps, the greatest peace of mind you have right now is in the fact that the capital and operational costs and user experience – no matter which modern solution you choose, is more than likely to delight both your CFO and your varied workforce.



Transforming traditional PBX/PABX voice based business communications to what’s available in the sector today, by way of analogy, is like comparing your neighbourhood piano teacher to the conductor in a Philharmonic Orchestra. The piano teacher directs and controls the player on one musical instrument and , as such, may be equated to the somewhat outdated legacy PBX/PABX business telephony systems...that have limited-capability control over voice. The conductor in the Philharmonic Orchestra on the other hand, directs multiple outputs of multiple individuals, who each work only with what’s in front of them. The individual musicians are arranged in several separate teams called sections. These comprise the strings, the woodwinds, the brass and the percussion with some additional players added such as the harp. The conductor simplifies, controls and directs all the moving parts from one location creating harmony through communication and collaboration. He’s all in – head, heart and hands. That’s synchronicity, when things happen together, perfectly timed. The conductor, therefore, is paralleled to a modern business communication system...an all-in and all-in-one voice, video and chat platform that synchronises CRM tools and calendars and address books, and that is just the start.



The collaborative role of the business communication management team, in the meantime, has become a strategic one that directly contributes to sustainability and profitability of the organisation. It entails finding and implementing a solution that replaces legacy systems with something that does it all in terms of meeting every communication need, internal and external to the organisation, in the most cost effective way possible, while improving efficiencies, encouraging collaborative teamwork and by introducing a flexibility that makes the organisation attractive from a talent attraction and retention perspective.

UC&C Market Overview

“They help the organisations to share information more effectively.” - Global Market Insights

PROJECTION, GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

On 1 February 2022, Bloomberg cited a research study by Global Market Insights Inc. that concluded that the unified communications and collaboration (UC&C) market is expected to surpass USD 100 billion by 2028, as the growing popularity of BYOD (Bring your own device) trends is proliferating the industry demand.

The study indicated that the growing adoption of remote working is driving the UC&C market growth. Business organisations have increasingly adopted UC&C tools for hosting meetings and conferences, according to the study.

With the projected levels of growth expected for this industry and with investment from prominent global market players – amongst them 8x8 Inc, Alcatel Lucent, Enterprise (Nokia Networks), Avaya Inc. (Avaya Holdings Corporation), BT Group, Cisco Systems Inc., Genesys (Permira), Google LLC, Huawei Technologies., Microsoft Corporation, Mitel Networks Corporation, NEC Corporation, Nextiva (UnitedWeb), Orange Business Services (Orange) and RingCentral Inc. – there is little doubt that this methodology for business communications will fundamentally change the way businesses communicate, here in South Africa and the rest of the world, now and in the future.

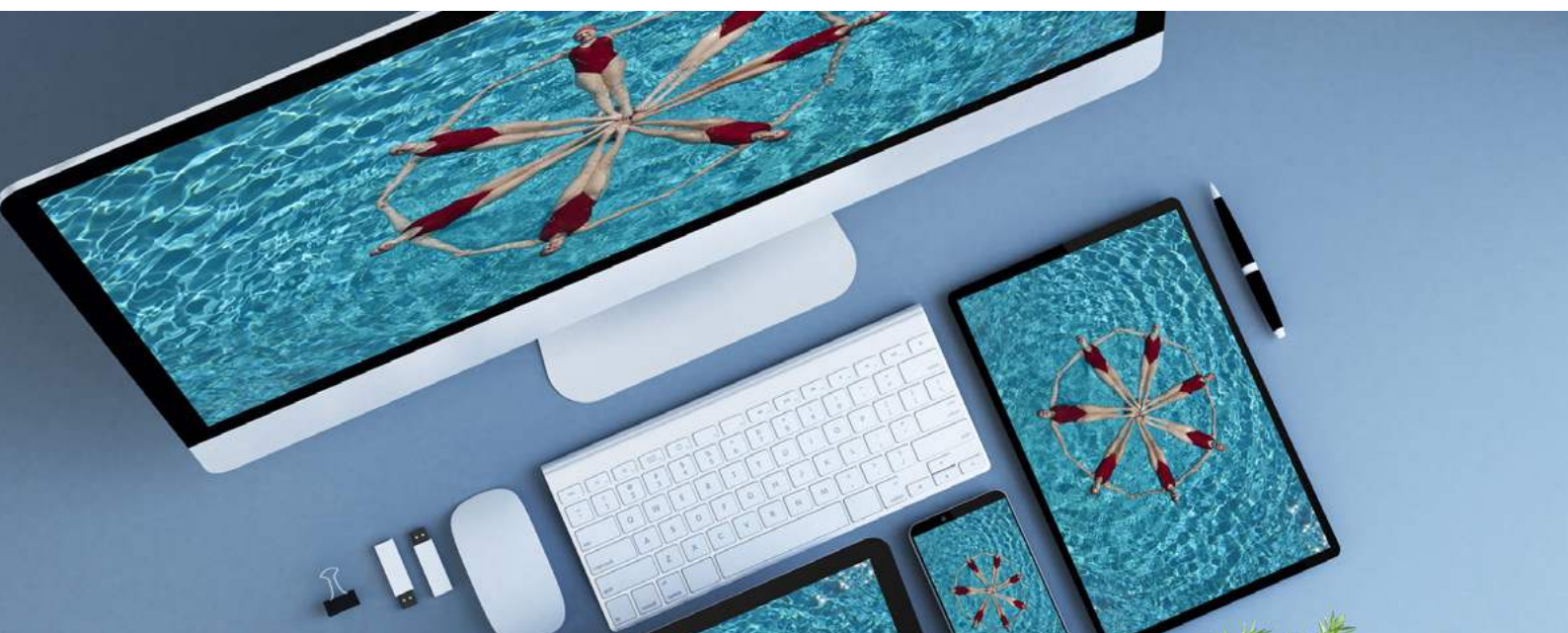


UC IN A NUTSHELL

Unified communications implies a combination or a unified set of communication tools such as email, calendar and scheduling, voice/telephony and real-time communications capabilities that are presented to a user through an application on the users desktop that has the intelligence to provide rich functionality and/or accessed through a browser-based interface that may be limited in terms of functionality. Other capabilities that may be included in a unified communications system include text messaging /SMS capabilities, fax services, mobility services and Video Conferencing. The unified communications platforms

integrate what previously was largely separate communications modes and it increasingly is a critical success factor as organisations of all sizes attempt to increase employee productivity, drive down telecommunications costs, and increase the overall flexibility and quickness of their organisations. This was initially largely available as an option only to enterprises that had the capital outlay to reconfigure their existing on premise systems, through integration by third party intervention that transformed their disparate business communication platforms into hybrid (legacy and newer) unified working.

Leading unified communications platforms will provide a facility to your users so that they have access to all of their communication tools from a single interface. It will enable users to be just as productive when on the road or when working from home as when they are physically in the office. It will give your managers and decision makers the flexibility to allow their teams to work from anywhere, resulting in an enhanced user experience and greater real time collaboration between their employees and possibly better employee retention as this kind of flexibility is highly desirable to many contingents within the modern workforce.



UC IN THE CLOUD

Unified Communications as a service (UCaaS), is a cloud-based platform that also bundles several key business communication and collaboration systems into one unified platform and interface. It may also be referred to as an Omnichannel communications platform in some instances and by some vendors, especially when the organisation's effort is aimed at unifying customer experience across several different interface channels.

This iteration of UC lets your users access several real-time communication channels on their preferred device. Users can connect via a unified app or any browser on their smartphones, desktop computers, laptops, tablets, and even smartwatches, within a single "unified" interface, as opposed to constantly having to switch between different applications and devices.

In addition to including the many modes of communication already discussed, it's also possible for some UCaaS systems to have customisation options through API integrations that allow for interoperability with other popular platforms and services. For instance, specific solutions might let you incorporate activity from external locations such as Microsoft Office, Zendesk, or G Suite and others have the capability to aggregate multiple over-the-counter chat solutions and fully integrate it with your website.

UCaaS is essentially a subscription-based means of deployment for unified communications and it will actually give your business access to unified communications (UC) capabilities and functionality that you may not have already had in terms of your existing legacy communications setup.

With UCaaS, you need not create your own central communications hub from the ground up. Instead, access to a suite of UC tools is through connectivity to the provider's cloud services. Because UCaaS works over the Internet, there's no need for your company to purchase expensive, bulky hardware. To accomplish these objectives, a unified communications platform must be reasonably priced, easy to manage and highly reliable.

UCaaS is also much easier to use, as there is no requirement for you and your users to have extensive knowledge of software development and technical support. This is because UCaaS providers, not the users themselves, handle the backend data centre, security, functionality, cloud hosting, and setup. This means there's also no need for your business to invest in its own in-house IT team specific to its business communications requirement.

If required, as is in the case of many adopters of UCaaS, you can integrate your contact centre and existing CRM tools into the platform to further streamline both, internal and external, communications systems.

Benefits of UCaaS

A quick glance of some of the benefits of switching to Unified Communications, in particular UCaaS:

- ✓ Lower Communication Costs
- ✓ Lower Operational costs
- ✓ Greater flexibility during rapid growth or downsizing
- ✓ Access to advanced features and capabilities
- ✓ Supplements in-house IT/telecom staff
- ✓ In-house IT/telecom staff can be re-assigned to more strategic tasks
- ✓ Easy integration of multi-vendor products and solutions
- ✓ Supports a dispersed workforce



Apart from the obvious **single-app convenience** to access all modes of communication, the most prominent benefits of UC are the **cost and time savings** it offers.

According to research from [Cisco](#) and [Nemertes](#), **UCaaS saves the average company:**

- ✓ 30-50 Minutes daily per employee
- ✓ 5 Hours per week on telephony IT support
- ✓ 40 Minutes of employee travel time per day
- ✓ \$1,727 / Month on cell phone and long-distance charges
- ✓ \$1,700 Monthly savings in employee travel costs
- ✓ 27% on meeting times
- ✓ 24.3% on IT spending

*Important to note, is that both above-mentioned research studies were carried out in early 2020, prior to the full impact of the Covid-19 pandemic that forcefully pushed – white collar workers especially – to new ways of hybrid and full remote working.



Additional benefits of Unified Communications include:

- Faster support resolution time
- A better overall quality of customer service
- Allows for mobile and remote work
- Communicating with customers on their preferred channels
- Ability to seamlessly switch between communication channels
- Improved internal communication provinces time-consuming miscommunications
- A higher level of team collaboration
- increases productivity
- Fewer administrative issues as all communication needs are through one provider
- Improved accountability in the workplace
- Valuable insights and analytics into customer and employee behaviour
- Scalable communication APIs

Detailed Exploration of Top Benefits

LOWER COMMUNICATION COSTS

Research shows that switching to UCaaS systems saves businesses up to 30-50% of current operating costs. UCaaS systems help to lower operating costs by:

- ✓ Reducing IT staffing costs
- ✓ Optimising employee activity and scheduling
- ✓ Negating the need to purchase expensive hardware (decreased upfront costs overall)
- ✓ Offering scalable solutions that ensure businesses don't pay for features and users they don't need/want
- ✓ Providing unlimited internal VoIP phone calling minutes and low cost outward call
- ✓ Creating better opportunities for revenue/sales growth

TEAM FLEXIBILITY

Because UCaaS is available across multiple communication channels and multiple devices, it's perfect for today's remote or mobile workforce.

Your employees have all the data and tools they need at their fingertips, no matter where they are. This level of flexibility means that your organisation will no longer be geographically limited when it comes to who they can hire. Thanks to the remote-friendly nature of UCaaS, it's easier than ever to invest in high-quality employees — and keep them happy.

Nearly 80% of team members say that they're more likely to stay loyal to companies that offer remote work solutions, while others say they most appreciate the simpler, user-friendly nature of UCaaS solutions.

Better Customer Communications

In addition to vastly enhancing communication amongst your employees, UC solutions can also radically improve the experience of your customers by:

- Allowing your customers to communicate on the channel of their choice
- Integrating your existing CRM tools to provide your agents with instant conversation/client history, so that customers need not repeat themselves
- Enabling your agents to provide personalised customer support and service
- Increasing your rate of first contact resolution

Increased Security and Reliability

A study by [Frost and Sullivan](#) found that the two most important factors businesses use to evaluate a cloud services provider are security and reliability. Though this may initially come as a surprise, the reality is that all the features in the world for the best possible price can never make up for poor security and unreliable tools.

When it comes to security, UCaaS providers offer:

- ✓ HIPAA/PCI compliance
- ✓ End-to-end encryption
- ✓ Third-party security certifications (GDPR, SOC II, etc.)
- ✓ Advanced administration controls and user management
- ✓ SSO/multi-factor authentication
- ✓ When businesses host platforms themselves, they often leave themselves open to major security threats — many that they may not even be aware exist. The provider manages all security measures in an offsite data centre, monitors activity 24/7, and can instantly identify and act if an issue is detected.

The same goes for network reliability:

- UCaaS platforms have multiple servers in different parts of the world (called “geographic redundancy”) This helps them in their endeavour to provide an uptime of at least 99.95% — a high level of reliability.

More Productivity and Collaboration

A study from Cisco found that over 3/4 of UCaaS users report an increase in productivity levels after switching to a unified platform:

- Real-time team collaboration features like instant chat messaging, user presence, and file co-editing and storage increase productivity while lowering the chance of miscommunication.
- Collaboration and cross-channel team communication are especially essential for today’s remote and blended workforce, and UCaaS tools make it easy for users to connect with each other.
- 80% of teams feel the collaboration features that UCaaS software includes vastly improve productivity levels.
- Plus, UCaaS automates several time-consuming, tedious business processes so your team can stay focused on and devote more time to what really matters.
- UCaaS analytics also make it easier to review employee engagement levels, so you can quickly identify performance issues or common problems before they get out of control.

Building Your Strategy for Enterprise UC

EVALUATING ORGANISATIONAL UC REQUIREMENTS

The initial step in the process is understanding what you currently have. Profile your entire existing communications setup, as well as information pertinent to your internal and external forms of communication. An independent consultative view from a specialist UCaaS provider, such as Telviva, will be of great assistance in helping you formulate an idea of how your business is currently operating and what the logistical requirements might be.

Generally, you – perhaps together your UcaaS partner, want to make note of:

- Current and future locations
- The number of end-users in total, and at each location
- Existing provider contracts and agreements for both equipment, and service
- Existing hardware and equipment – desk phones, mobile phones, network architecture like modems, routers, switches
- Inventory and understand your existing LAN or WAN networks, and network security including any firewalls
- Current network traffic and utilisation levels – an important step to help understand if your business must upgrade its network, or prevent any common hosted PBX implementation issues
- Any existing collaboration tools used by current teams – email, video conferencing solutions, chat apps, etc.

UC features and integration ability

There are several equally important ways to evaluate UC providers:

- Cloud-UC means that the service provider hosts your services within their own data centres. Your provider should offer a minimum guaranteed uptime of 99.95%.
- Enquire as to how the UCaaS provider maintains that uptime. How they let users know in the event of a problem and what their average response and resolution time is to system problems. Carefully consider the aspects of maintenance and repairs that are included as the provider's responsibility in your contract and the aspects that are for your company's management and account.
- Also ensure upfront that the UCaaS platform will integrate with your most essential business software.
- Bear in mind also that a UC system won't necessarily replace all your existing third-party applications. It is also possible that some team members may prefer to continue work on platforms they are already familiar with.



Additional signs of a superior UCaaS system include:

- Interoperability with current hardware or compatible hardware available for purchase (headsets, desk phones, etc.)
- Defined Installation process
- Available add-on features
- User training
- Compatible and complete mobile app
- Positive user experience
- User-friendly interface
- 24/7 customer service and support
- Phased migration from your existing system to the new provider platform
- Ease of use
- SLA and Security Compliance (PCI, HIPAA, GDPR, etc.)
- Service configurations
- Guaranteed call cost reduction
- Cloud-based free call community
- Capability to aggregate multiple over-the-counter chat solutions with website integration

Top Unified Communications Features to Look for:



VoIP Audio Calling

Because users make phone calls over the Internet as opposed to via the PSTN, IP telephony solutions provide unlimited local and long-distance calling and reduced rates for international calls. By making the switch from standard landlines to VoIP, your company can reduce monthly call costs around 40%. Admins can create toll-free vanity numbers, local business phone numbers, and user/department extensions.



Web Conferencing

With the increasing prominence of remote working, face-to-face video meetings have become an important way to communicate. Your staff teams can communicate with each other quickly, switch between devices during video calls, schedule their meetings ahead of time, or start ad hoc meetings from the instant messaging interface.



Unified Messaging

Unified Messaging allows real-time communication across several messaging platforms, including chat messaging, SMS text messaging, social media messaging, and MMS messaging. Because messages are synched within the singular Unified Communications interface, conversations can seamlessly transition from one messaging channel to another.

Chat messaging can be used as a standalone communication channel or in conjunction with a video conference. Your users can send/receive public and private chat messages, create channels for departments, teams, or projects, and upload files in the chat interface. Agent status updates allow users to see who is currently available/online, away, offline completely, or has enabled Do Not Disturb.

In addition to allowing users to send/receive individual messages from their desktop computers and mobile devices, business SMS texting makes sending mass marketing messages much easier. Many UCaaS platforms also allow for messages on Facebook Messenger, WhatsApp, and Instagram Messaging in addition to other social media platforms.

The UCaaS tool will automatically sync conversation histories across devices and communication channels to prevent customers and co-workers from having to repeat themselves.



Team Collaboration Tools

UCaaS team collaboration tools like real-time team chat messaging, live file editing and version control prevent miscommunications and let users send/receive quick answers and updates without the need for constant emails.

Basic task management functionalities make team member expectations clear, simplify keeping up with deadlines and multiple projects, and help to identify workflow roadblocks.

Digital whiteboards let users collaborate on ideas and concepts and help to keep track of key points in meetings, while screen-sharing tools ensure everyone is on the same page through more hands-on communication.



Virtual Faxing

Unified Communications systems also offer virtual faxing, where users send/receive faxes via email as opposed to fax machines. End users will receive faxes even if they're on the phone when the fax comes in. They can also store previous faxes within the tier UC system and get notifications when a fax has been delivered.



Integration & synchronisation

Though some Unified Communications platforms have basic CRM and project management features, their goal is not to merely replace your current third-party business software, but rather to integrate with it.

Unified Communications integrates within preferred CRM software or project management and collaboration apps into one interface without having to switch from one application to another.

Unified Communications app marketplaces let users choose tools to integrate with the platform, providing a highly customisable experience.



Telviva One UC&C Solution

A complete Unified Communication and Collaboration solution, the Telviva One platform has the flexibility of access from an array of devices - including IP Phones, Mobile Phones, Desktop Computers, Laptops, Tablets and even through your Boardroom Audio Visual solution.

Aimed at facilitating better quality conversations, Telviva One enhances your inbound customer engagements through mapping to your business's contact directory and interfacing with your Customer Relationship Management (CRM) solution. This allows a real-time view of your history of engagements with the calling customer, to provide richer context to the conversation and vastly improve customer experience and exponentially increase the possibility for first call resolution.

Collaboration is made easy too with a conferencing facility that's built for multi-mode (text, audio and video) participation on any device. In addition, the Telviva One suite supports integration with 3rd party chat solutions, internal and team chat with website integration and Chatbot automation.

Apart from the afore-mentioned integration with CRM, Contacts Directories and Chatbots, Telviva One is able to seamlessly integrate with other cloud-based services incorporating the benefits of Voice Biometrics and Analytics.

At its core, Telviva One is a high-end cloud based PBX with telephony features that can cater to the business telephony requirements of any business.

Telviva One UC&C at a glance



Conclusion

Unified communications enable your business to streamline communications at all levels. This includes communication between your employees and departments, at a company-wide level, and between your business and customers.

Unified communications can transform your business by boosting productivity, improving customer service, increasing accessibility, reducing costs, increasing scalability, integrating with other company-wide systems, and improving compliance.

While some enterprises may prefer to build a bespoke on-premises UC platform, SMBs especially can benefit greatly from UCaaS, which offers big-budget infrastructure at affordable, scalable rates. UCaaS leverages the power and extensibility of cloud storage and computing to provide a unified communications platform to businesses that may have a challenge implementing such far-reaching changes.

Let's start a conversation

We know every business has unique requirements.
Get a free needs assessment and obligation-free quote
by contacting us today.

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