



What if your communication systems collaborated?



The truth? We are better together.

The same holds true for technology—when it works together, we work better together. While you already have some of the technology pieces in place that enable your teams to collaborate in some ways, vendor and cloud complexity are getting in the way.

Bringing your communication systems together can not only deliver the kind of experience workers demand, but it can also simplify, secure, and save costs on your side.

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1 From multiple systems to a unified solution

What if you had a unified communications solution that was not only simpler for your IT team to manage but also provided exceptional experiences for your customers and your employees?

The right collaboration portfolio should be easy to integrate, simple to deploy in the cloud, on premises, or in hybrid configurations. Here's how it works to handle today's challenges.

CHALLENGE

Work silos

Your IT department is tasked with not only supporting modernized desk phones but also delivering support for mobile, chat, and video on multiple devices in and out of the office. The problem is when your systems are siloed, they cause headaches for everyone. IT struggles to manage multiple vendor solutions and keep everything updated, compliant, and secure. Employees run into compatibility issues when they're trying to collaborate in real time, which means wasted time and frustrating meetings.

Security threats

Staying ahead of the latest security threats and compliance regulations is more than a full-time job. The more complex your phone and collaboration solutions are, the harder it is to wrangle security and compliance into all your systems. You're also working within firewalls and juggling remote access, which gets sticky when it comes to keeping everything both accessible and in control. How can you make sure conversations and shared documents are secure?

User frustration

Trying to help employees work with their favorite apps and connect their desk phone, laptop, and mobile collaboration systems is taxing for your IT department and frustrating for everyone.

Custom needs

Just like you don't want to pay for 1,000 channels when you only want your 5 favorites, you also don't want to pay for features you don't need in your calling and communication solutions.

SOLUTION

Unification

When you combine solutions, you bridge the communication gaps and make it easier for employees to connect, collaborate, and brainstorm, which means better productivity and happier teams. Meanwhile, your IT team enjoys one single view of how your communication systems are performing and can easily see where to optimize and improve. While compatibility with other solutions you already use reduces friction across your workflows, one single contact for support means you can quickly enjoy updates and new features.

Security out of the box

Combining communication solutions means security is baked in—firewalls, remote access, encryption, the works. You also get the latest certifications across your entire infrastructure and adherence to industry regulations and standards. It's modern security out of the box, and it works seamlessly with the environment you already have.

Simplification

Set employees up with communication systems that are easy to use on any device, anywhere the workday takes them. A full unified communications deployment means all your technologies work together, and a single application means employees can access all their collaboration tools in one place.

Flexible solution

Get exactly what you want—nothing more, nothing less. This comprehensive, open architecture addresses what you need: flexibility and security with less hardware, less complexity, and lower cost.

2 Where to deploy

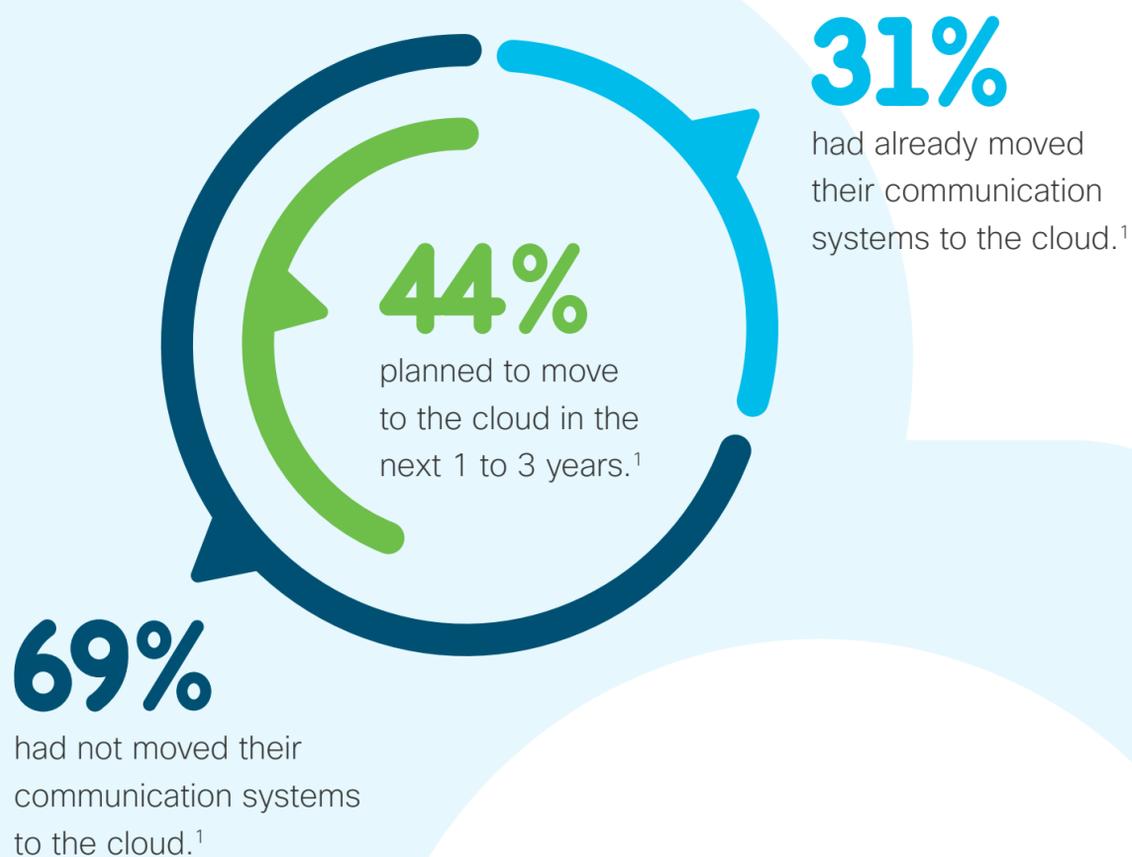
Cloud is trending.

When it comes to collaboration, cloud services are easier and faster to deploy, which means IT staff have more time to focus on other business needs. Cloud deployments also don't require the up-front capital that on-premises systems demand—their subscription-based user licensing delivers more predictable monthly costs.

Transition at your own pace.

Here's where the challenge comes in: Organizations know the cloud is out there, but they want to benefit from the cloud while also maximizing their on-premises investments. Cisco is set up to help you slowly transition to the cloud and use hybrid deployments and new cloud solutions that integrate with your existing on-premises solutions.

Where do businesses stand when it comes to their communication systems?



No matter what stage you're in with moving to the cloud, when you bring your communication systems together, you can get the best of on-premises and cloud worlds.

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Cisco brought a lot of innovation and technology to the table with one set of infrastructure.²

Don Tierney, CTO,
Park Nicollet Health Services



1. digitaltransformation.frost.com/expert-insights/viewpoints/taking-pulse-enterprise-communications-platforms-endpoints-market/
2. *Healthcare System Enhances Patient Care with Collaboration*, Cisco, 2014.

3 Tips, considerations, and next steps

It's time to look forward to communication systems that are as easy as "hello."

What to look for when you bring your communication systems together:

- **Simple to manage**
Day-to-day tasks shouldn't take up a lot of IT time and resources. The back-end management and upkeep should be minimal, and updates should be simple so you can benefit from new features right away. Simplified management means time and money saved.
- **Simple setup, installation, and maintenance**
Simple setup looks like this: No special routers, devices, or IT expertise required. Endpoints are easily updated to the necessary software, so every branch and region is on the same page, and implementation goes down without a hitch no matter how big or small the environment.
- **Simple interface, simple training**
An intuitive interface makes it easy for employees to start using the software right away, without needing IT support. It also means employees can easily handle setting up day-to-day tasks like meetings and conferences.
- **No downtime**
Phone systems need to be up and running 24/7. Cloud-deployed unified communications and next-gen calling solutions mean seamless, secure, and reliable connectivity. They also come with real people behind every call, so you get fast response time to support any challenges.
- **Integrated**
You want your communication systems to work with the solutions, applications, and services you already have in place. Not only does this provide the same exceptional experience for your employees and customers no matter where they are or what device they're on, but it also leverages the assets you already have, like CRM, chat, email, and meetings. Consistency across all these communication channels means everyone can easily collaborate, from meeting rooms to mobile devices to midair business flights.

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One phone number, one contact, one invoice. It's just easier dealing with one vendor. Period.

Tim Tyler,
Director Product Marketing,
Verizon



- **End-to-end reliability and security**

“End-to-end” comes into play in a lot of different ways with unified communications solutions. First, it connects everything, from the network to every endpoint, so everything is designed to work in tandem. The outcome is the kind of seamless experience you want your users to have. Second, it makes sure the technology behind all your devices and applications is ready to handle and maximize full-featured voice, video, and web collaboration. And third, it provides a single vendor for support.

- **Availability and options, from everywhere**

Mobile, tablet, laptop, desktop—users should be able to use any device from any location to collaborate with team members and keep projects on track. They should also be able to choose whatever means of communication they work with best: voice, video, or instant messaging.

- **Expert vendor backing**

With a vendor who not only understands your underlying networking challenges but also knows unified communications like the back of their hand, you can avoid pitfalls and make sure your solutions remain reliable and secure.

Why Cisco

So, you have flexibility in your deployment options. But you also want a complete, end-to-end solution that includes the best-of-breed technologies throughout. Where does Cisco stand? The Gartner Magic Quadrant for Unified Communications lists Cisco as a leader in terms of telephony, meeting solutions, messaging, presence and instant messaging, clients, and communications-enabled business processes. It’s simplicity, scalability, cost efficiency, and security, all from an integrated solution and trusted technology.

Want to discover more about unifying your communications and next-gen calling solutions?

Cisco has been named Gartner Magic Quadrant Leader:

13

years straight in Corporate Telephony

11

years straight in Unified Communications

