



# Unified<sup>TM</sup> COMMUNICATIONS

Discover Convergence Opportunities

**PREMIERE ISSUE**

Volume 1/Number 1 July 2007 [www.uc-mag.com](http://www.uc-mag.com)

**Voicemail is dead:  
Long live voicemail!**

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# Shimano GearsUp<sup>TM</sup> For Unified Communications

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**Collaboration and UC:  
Group Productivity  
Applications**

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#### About Unified Communications Magazine®

Today's enterprise workforce is demanding productivity enhancing communications solutions from their IT and telecom departments. Unified communications technology is at the heart of these solutions that improve business processes and transform the way people communicate. Unified Communications magazine features a comprehensive, targeted news and editorial designed to provide decision makers the information they need in order to make intelligent investments in UC technology.

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Unified Communications Magazine® encourages readers to contact us with their questions, comments, and suggestions. Send e-mail (addresses above), or send ordinary mail. We reserve the right to edit letters for clarity and brevity. All submissions will be considered eligible for publication unless otherwise specified by the author.

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# The Promise of Convergence Fulfilled

## Welcome to TMC's latest and most exciting creation, *Unified Communications*, a magazine unlike any other.

First, UC picks up where our other publications, *Internet Telephony*, *IMS* and *SIP*, leave off. For years we've all been enamored with IP Communications itself. But now the novelty is wearing off as the technology becomes commonplace — “disappearing into the machinery”, as it were — so it's time to talk about the most useful thing you can actually *do* with it. Undoubtedly, that “thing” is unified communications. When fantasizing about what IP can do, we're actually visualizing various facets of UC and its capabilities. IMS (IP Multimedia Subsystem), the future service architecture of both wireless and wireline networks, as well as its logical extrapolation, FMC (Fixed-Mobile Convergence), as impressive as they are, both ultimately serve the vision of UC — the ability to contact and collaborate with anybody, anywhere, anytime, using any kind of communications device.

Second, there's our magazine's intriguing *horizontal* format, having nearly the same aspect ratio as your PC's screen.

Why, you ask? When a conventional vertical-format magazine is moved to digital or web form, computer users find themselves reading a vertical magazine on a horizontal screen. This is ridiculous. More people read the online version. Indeed, everybody now gets their first impression of a publication and its brand identity by its website, for although there are only so many paper copies available, there's an infinite number of possible online page views. A periodical's website is now a strategic marketing tool, capable of myriad forms of reader interactivity and subject to sophisticated analysis. Publishers and advertisers can now utilize advanced web-based technologies to determine click-throughs, page views, etc.

Thus, it shouldn't be arduous for readers to navigate the digital and/or online versions of a magazine, simply to preserve the sanctity of Ye Olde vertical paper format. That explains our “landscape” format. Each page fits neatly on screen, and an exact paper version exists for “offline” reading. Readers and advertisers now have the best of both worlds.

*Unified Communications* is therefore the world's first “webified” magazine — or is it a “paperized” website? You decide. But whatever it is, *Unified Communications* is a tremendous informational asset that we hope you'll both enjoy and find useful. **UC**

Richard Grigonis is Executive Editor of TMC's IP Communications Group.



by Richard  
“Zippy” Grigonis

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# What has your phone system done for you lately?



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The IT Telephony Company™



# Voicemail is Dead! Long Live Voicemail



by Rich Tehrani

## Publisher's Outlook

**Launching a new magazine is always an exhilarating process here at TMC, particularly in the case of *Unified Communications*, which has both timely subject matter and a unique "landscape" design. I can tell from this magazine's rapidly expanding subscription list that the future looks bright for both our new magazine and this exciting and burgeoning technology.**

For years voicemail was the great bugaboo that drove people crazy. Not that voicemail itself drives people crazy — people wielding voicemail are the culprits, generally by way of Voice Tag ("I missed your call again, so I'm leaving you this message again.") and Voicemail Jail ("I'm leaving you this message because I think you haven't gotten to the one that I left last week."). Fortunately, unified communications and presence technology can almost guarantee that a call will reach the intended party.

As for voicemail itself, it will be integrated into some kind of unified messaging list that encompasses voice, email, fax and whatever else you can think of. It's okay with me if voicemail loses its old persona, since I've always been more "email-centric" than "voicemail-centric" anyway. Indeed, I'm usually so engrossed in dealing with the continuous deluge of email that I rarely get a chance to check my more ponderous voicemail system. I've even tried some instant messaging clients, but I only use them when I need to get a quick answer or as a means to schedule a quick conference call. After all, it's easier to say things than to write them, and that's why I'm intrigued with the whole field of "voicemail transcription", otherwise known as voicemail-to-text.

Vonage offers this service, and SpinVox ([news - alert](http://www.spinvox.com)) (<http://www.spinvox.com>) offers Spin-my-Vmail, a product that automatically sends your voicemail messages to you as text messages

or emails. I tried the service and it practically blew me away. The quality of the Spin-my-Vmail service has been incredible, allowing me to ascertain what callers want without having to call in to listen to messages.

For example, I was recently in a conference where I couldn't take calls. I did however receive a SpinVox-powered voicemail transcription from one of my toddlers: "Daddy. I want Daddy to talk. Bye." Cute and heartwarming.

SpinVox's VP of Strategy & Development Daniel Doulton explained to me that in the UK the company has over 150,000 users and they believe they have perfected their service and it's ready for the U.S. market. It does seem better at speaker independent speech

### Why a "Horizontal" Magazine?

More and more readers tell me they read the digital issues of publications. But when a print magazine's multicolumn vertical format is ported over into digital form and read on a horizontal PC screen, readers complain they don't like to scroll up and down as they read each page. That's why, when we began formulating *UC Magazine*, we decided we would solve this problem once and for all by designing the magazine for the PC screen first, without forsaking the magazine's ability to be read in paper form. Thus, you should be able to read an entire page at a time on your screen without scrolling.

We hope you enjoy this new way of reading magazines and we welcome your feedback on this new idea. Do you think *UC* will lead the way for all other magazines or do you feel this new format will remain a niche idea?

# Teach E-mail to Talk



Rich Media Internet Communications

## Pronto!

view Flash Demo at [www.communiGate.com](http://www.communiGate.com)

**CommuniGate**  
SYSTEMS

## VoiceMail is Dead! Long Live VoiceMail



by Rich Tehrani

### Publisher's Outlook

recognition than many other solutions, being about 95 to 100% accurate. It's pretty fast too: a 15-second voicemail shows up in as little as a minute or two. A three-minute voicemail takes about ten minutes to arrive.

Basically, I no longer have to check my voicemail unless there's a discrepancy in the email. In about one out of five or ten emails I do call into the system to check a message for accuracy, but even when I need to do this, the system makes it easy since embedded in the emails is a code allowing instant access to the voicemail in question. However, you do first need to dial into the system to listen to the message. And when calling from a cellphone, the system recognizes your cellphone number so you have to block your Caller ID (\*67 in the U.S.) to leave a message for yourself. If not, then you go straight into the administration menu.

SpinVox's main competitor is [SimulScribe](http://www.simulscribe.com) (<http://www.simulscribe.com>). (news - alert) The company's CEO, James Siminoff, had previously launched a successful prepaid calling card business. One day while having a casual conversation with his calling card business partner and his son, the topic of voicemail came up. The general opinion was, wouldn't it be great if you could read your voicemail instead of listening to it? Shortly thereafter the company developed a prototype system and used it internally. Then it was rolled out to a few friends and family members. It was a fun side project. In late 2005 the company decided to focus on voicemail transcription as a business model and SimulScribe was born.

Siminoff tells me his service is the only one which has been rolled out by a major carrier (Vonage) and can actually be billed by the carrier. Other SimulScribe service provider customers are M5 and FreedomVoice. The company is in some stage of discussions with over 33 carriers globally.

**I can tell you from months of personal experience that using voicemail transcription is a liberating experience...**

Siminoff says that the security in his company's service is first-rate, and whatever you feel comfortable doing with your email you can do with their service too. He also points out that his service can bring UC into a company with virtually no pain or investment.

Siminoff says SimulScribe is the most flexible service from a delivery standpoint because he and his staff were users of their own product for some time and so they built in the features they needed before they rolled it out to the public. For example, there's an application called SimulSays which features a GUI that sits on a Blackberry and soon Windows Mobile devices (more devices will be supported soon). The app stores the transcribed text along with the voice file, so you can listen to messages without using up network minutes. You can also

listen where there's no cellular access, such as on an airplane. Voice files can be sent in various formats: WAV, MP3 or WMA. You can delete, move or otherwise manage your messages via a web interface, something the competition doesn't yet have.

Siminoff claims that SimulScribe can save you three hours a month. I have no doubt that a busy executive can see savings in this range. This also correlates with my own experience using SpinVox. More importantly, with voicemail transcription you can be on a call and simultaneously read voicemails from other callers. You can also archive your voicemails and search for that useful nugget of information stored in a three-minute voicemail from 18 months ago.

I can tell you from months of personal experience that using voicemail transcription is a liberating experience and you can't easily stop using it once you become accustomed. Regardless of which service you favor, I urge you to try voicemail transcription for yourself if you are interested in saving time and becoming more productive. **UC**

# Freedom to Connect

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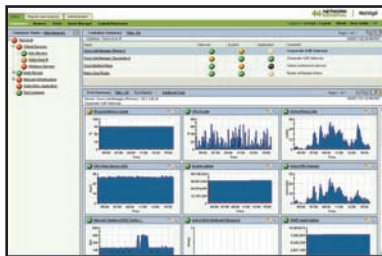
# NEWS



<http://www.tmcnet.com/823.1>

## Network General Adds Intelligence to VoIP Solution

Network General ([news](#) - [alert](#)) has added VoIP intelligence to its VoIP Forensics solution, one of the Business Forensics solutions available from its Network Intelligence Suite. Companies are evolving VoIP deployments by adding Unified Communications and, as applications are added, IT departments find that their IT environments are becoming increasingly complex. VoIP Intelligence provides fast and efficient display of individual call performance and overall VoIP metrics, unique visualization of per-call VoIP performance, and instant correlation of voice and video communications with data traffic patterns.



<http://www.networkgeneral.com>

<http://www.tmcnet.com/822.1>

## UC Application Selection Brings In Decision Makers

A recent survey, conducted in partnership with IntelliCom Analytics, ([news](#) - [alert](#)) suggests that while IT Infrastructure groups play a significant role in choosing the specific Unified Communications applications that get deployed in the enterprise, many businesses have brought additional stakeholders into the decision process. Fifty-six percent of North American-headquartered enterprises indicated that UC application selection resided primarily in their IT Infrastructure Group, while 16% in NA reported the selection process being driven by other internal groups.

<http://www.intellicom-analytics.com>

<http://www.tmcnet.com/842.1>

## Nortel Makes Unified Communications for Enterprises as Simple as 1-2-3

Nortel ([quote](#) - [news](#) - [alert](#)) is fundamentally changing the way enterprises conduct business with the introduction of UC 1-2-3, a global program providing ready-to-use solutions that simplify the transition to Unified Communications (UC). UC 1-2-3 helps businesses cope with the challenges of Hyperconnectivity, a new era in communications where anything that can be connected to the network will be connected — encompassing person-to-person, person-to-machine and machine-to-machine communication.

<http://www.nortel.com>

<http://www.tmcnet.com/824.1>

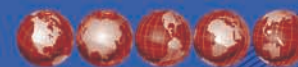
## Nortel and IBM To Help SMBs Get Unified Communications

In response to market trends for unified communications in the SMB space, and to help their SMB customers realize the benefits of unified communications, Nortel ([news](#) - [alert](#)) and IBM ([quote](#) - [news](#) - [alert](#)) have announced they will team to combine offerings and create a complete UC solution running on a single system. The new offering, the Nortel-IBM System i Unified Communications solution, combines IBM software and hardware with Nortel IP telephony and multimodal capabilities and brings them together onto one robust, scalable platform.

<http://www.ibm.com>

<http://www.nortel.com>





<http://www.tmcnet.com/825.1>

### **Esnatech Introduces Location Centric Communications for Enterprise Presence Solutions**

Esna Technologies ([news](#) - [alert](#)) announced the addition of its Location Centric Communication technology, integrating with Microsoft Windows Live online services and Skype to be featured in its new Presence Manager Utility, a component in Telephony Office-LinX unified communication platform version 7.5. Esna's new Presence Utility delivers its Location Centric Communication technology to third-party presence applications, such as Microsoft LCS and now Windows Live Messenger and the Skype desktop VoIP application.

<http://www.esnatech.com>

<http://www.tmcnet.com/826.1>

### **RADVISION Announces General Availability of Revolutionary New Desktop Video Conferencing Solution**

RADVISION ([news](#) - [alert](#)) announced the general availability of its SCOPIA Desktop video conferencing solution — an important extension of the SCOPIA unified communications platform. SCOPIA Desktop extends room system based video conferencing deployments by allowing remote users to connect to conferences and fully participate in audio, video, and data collaboration as if they were in the same room, making it easy to connect to and fully participate in meetings no matter where users are, further extending SCOPIA's mission to easily connect any communications device anywhere.



<http://www.radvision.com>

<http://www.tmcnet.com/834.1>

### **CallTower Launches Consultant Access Program**

CallTower ([news](#) - [alert](#)) has launched the CallTower Consultant Access Program (CAP), which offers North American telecommunications consultants access to hosted

telephony services, customer ROI evaluations, RFP development support and valuable education on the rapidly growing, hosted voice and data solutions market. The CAP will offer customized information and support that consultants need to understand the needs of clients better, with respect to hosted-PBX and IP-based Unified Communications solutions.

<http://www.calltower.com>

<http://www.tmcnet.com/827.1>

### **Bandwidth.com Partners with AltiGen to Offer True SIP Unified Communications**

Bandwidth.com ([news](#) - [alert](#)) announced it has partnered with AltiGen ([news](#) - [alert](#)) to deliver complete end-to-end VoIP services and systems for the SMB market. This alliance bundles the AltiGen Communications MAX 1000 all-in-one SIP platform with Bandwidth.com's SIP trunking solution. The goal of the alliance is to be among the only partners in the industry to offer SIP solutions that have been certified for security and interoperability, in addition to providing the productivity benefits of unified communications.



<http://www.bandwidth.com>

<http://www.altigen.com>

<http://www.tmcnet.com/841.1>

### **Unified Communications and IP Telephony Driving Voice and Data Network Upgrades**

According to a recent Nortel ([quote](#) - [news](#) - [alert](#)) survey of 464 members of the International Nortel Networks User Association (INNUA), the increased productivity and simplicity of unified communications and IP telephony are driving businesses to upgrade their existing voice and data networks. Productivity gains and the proliferation of devices are considered the main drivers for moving to unified communications. Respondents also indicated that the migration was a significant driver in upgrading their enterprise data networks.

<http://www.nortel.com>



# NEWS



<http://www.tmcnet.com/828.1>

## CallXpress 7.9 UC Solution Now Available

AVST ([news](#) - [alert](#)) announced general availability of the new version of its flagship unified communications solution, CallXpress 7.9. Businesses of all sizes can now take advantage of AVST's robust solution, which offers new SIP integrations, enhanced localization features, and the ability for enterprises to define the unified messaging architecture that best meets their storage, access, and security needs. CallXpress 7.9 is the first unified communications solution that gives enterprise decision makers a choice of four different UM architectures.

[www.avst.com](http://www.avst.com)



<http://www.tmcnet.com/833.1>

## Covergence Supports IBM BladeCenter

With a vision towards redefining communications and making it more efficient and affordable for everyone, Covergence, Inc. developer of secure, scalable technologies for controlling VoIP and other services at the access edge, has announced that its CXC appliance will now support IBM's BladeCenter. With CXC, [Covergence](#) ([news](#) - [alert](#)) is the first company to supply a unified security and management solution for SIP-based services. CXC is a SmartClient Network Appliance, which allows the enterprises to secure, control, and monitor SIP based real-time communications.

<http://www.covergence.com>

<http://www.tmcnet.com/829.1>

## RIM, Ascendent Systems Marry BlackBerry to the Corporate PBX

BlackBerry ([quote](#) - [news](#) - [alert](#)) users can bring the functionality of their office desk phones with them anywhere they go, now that RIM has introduced the BlackBerry Mobile Voice System (MVS). The BlackBerry MVS enables a BlackBerry device to securely connect to a corporate PBX. That means all the functionality delivered through the PBX — such as four-digit dialing, access to voicemail, and other features, can be pushed to the device.



<http://www.rim.com>

<http://www.ascendentsystems.com>

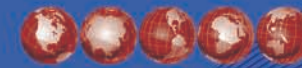
<http://www.tmcnet.com/830.1>

## Dialogic Expands Relationship with Microsoft

Dialogic ([news](#) - [alert](#)) announced it has expanded its support for Microsoft's ([quote](#) - [news](#) - [alert](#)) unified communications solutions. Specifically for the upcoming unified communications release, Dialogic is readying a new series of gateways capable of hosting one of the server elements required for the Office Communications Server 2007 solution. The new gateways will debut the first hybrid architecture designed as integrated systems specifically for the Microsoft unified communications environment. Capable of hosting server software on-board, these hybrid gateways reduce the total number of servers required in the solution set.

<http://www.dialogic.com>

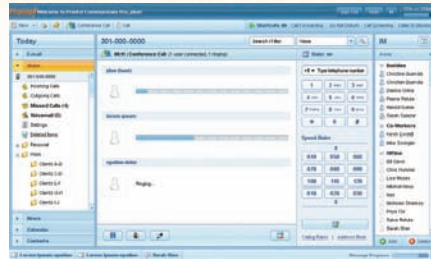
<http://www.microsoft.com>



<http://www.tmcnet.com/831.1>

### CommuniGate Launches Pronto! for Unified Internet Communications

Pronto! is an Adobe Flash- and Flex2-based technology that brings together multiple forms of Internet communications and Rich Media, including email, chat, calendar/scheduling, IM, and more. CommuniGate ([news](#) - [alert](#)) chose Flash for a number of reasons, including security, portability, and the fact that one single technology supports a wide array of multimedia apps such as video, music, etc... in a single interface. Pronto! promotes team collaboration and increases employee productivity by unlocking email and other productivity tools from the desktop.



<http://www.communiGate.com>

<http://www.tmcnet.com/835.1>

### Siemens Goes Hosted with OpenScape Enhancements

Siemens ([news](#) - [alert](#)) Communications is not content to sit still in either the on-premises or hosted spaces, and has now announced not only enhancements to its existing OpenScape enterprise Unified Communications solution, but also that it is now offering that same platform on a SaaS offering.

<http://www.siemens.com>

<http://www.tmcnet.com/836.1>

### Ensim to Demonstrate Unify Shared Edition 4.0 Capabilities on Microsoft Solution

Ensim Corporation ([news](#) - [alert](#)) announced the demonstration of a beta version of its Unify Shared Edition 4.0, the latest upgrade of its communications and collaboration management center for service providers. Ensim's demonstration will show how Unify simplifies the day-to-day burden of activating, configuring, and managing a service provider's unified communications and collaboration infrastructure, as well as highlight Unify's over-the-air client and device configuration capabilities.

<http://www.ensim.com>

[www.tmcnet.com/837.1](http://www.tmcnet.com/837.1)

### Bandwidth.com Helps Mitel Demo IP Telephony and IP Presence

Bandwidth.com ([news](#) - [alert](#)) announced that its SIP trunking technology is now being used by Mitel ([news](#) - [alert](#)) in its solution centers — facilities where customers preview Mitel's solutions in a live environment. "Solution centers are an invaluable way for us to showcase our Unified Communications to customers and partners," said Dan Mondor, President of Mitel. "Bandwidth.com enables us to show our market-leading SIP capabilities in action while allowing customers to experience product firsthand and the real-world business benefits our solutions deliver."

<http://www.bandwidth.com>

<http://www.mitel.com>

[www.tmcnet.com/838.1](http://www.tmcnet.com/838.1)

### Avaya Announces New Intelligent Communications System for Branch Offices

Avaya ([quote](#) - [news](#) - [alert](#)) announced Avaya Distributed Office, a new IP telephony communications system that delivers rich branch communications capabilities and powerful management tools in an economical package. Features such as presence and IM can be delivered to every location, enhancing staff responsiveness to customer needs. In addition, mobility features support employees on the go, providing effective communications regardless of location.



<http://www.avaya.com>

[www.tmcnet.com/840.1](http://www.tmcnet.com/840.1)

### Microsoft and Industry Leaders to Bridge Communications Systems

Microsoft ([quote](#) - [news](#) - [alert](#)) and 12 industry leaders announced plans to make it easier for businesses to protect and extend their communications investments. These industry leaders are extending their support for unified communications software from Microsoft by implementing the company's interoperability specification for Microsoft Office Communications Server 2007.

<http://www.microsoft.com>



Simon Gwatkin,  
VP Strategic Marketing

**Rich Tehrani's Executive Suite is a monthly feature in which leading executives in the VoIP and IP Communications industry discuss their company's latest developments with TMC president Rich Tehrani, as well as providing analysis on industry news and trends.**

Despite still being in its infancy, the unified communications movement is steadily gaining momentum, both from the provider side as well as from adopters of the technology. However, as with any new solution, the initial groundwork must be laid out and potential users must understand the benefits of the new solutions they are contemplating.

Mitel ([news](#) - [alert](#)) has a long history of success in IP communications, and has the expertise to lend to businesses looking to enhance their productivity through unified communications. Rich recently spoke to Mitel's Vice President of Strategic Marketing Simon Gwatkin, who explained the importance of understanding the benefits of unified communications before selecting a solution, as well as Mitel's thoughts on the potential impact of unified communications.

**RT:** Tell me about Mitel's thoughts on unified communications.

**SG:** We have been very prolific in the development around unified communications. We started initially with our end product, Mitel's Your Assistant, which is a full collaboration tool, including conferencing, presence enablement, workflow management, knowledge management as well. Back in 2004, we then entered into the Microsoft Technology Partnership agreement, and started developing around their platform as well, around the LCS Office Communicator platform. In essence, we're pretty well the first to market with those kinds of solutions.

**“We're integrating presence not just at the Office Communicator level, but into messaging products, whether they are voicemail, unified messaging, or contact center products.”**

Our view has been not just to do a generic implementation of LCS, or OCS, but to actually add value above and beyond what Microsoft brings. Examples include the integration of our quick conference capability within one of the Microsoft tabs, and also our new messaging and mobile extension capabilities, with tabs on the Office Communicator window.

**RT:** You seem fairly well embedded with Microsoft. How long have you been working with the company? How long have you been integrating your products into Microsoft's?

**SG:** We commenced in 2004 and we came to market later in 2005, but, obviously, we need customers. We now have customers around the world, in Australia, North America, Europe, and in the South Pacific. And they range from small businesses to very, very large businesses. We have some very significant roll-outs happening in Europe.

We see this as an expanding market, and we also see it as a differentiator above and beyond just normal telephony. We're integrating presence not just at the Office Communicator level, but into messaging products, whether they are voicemail, unified messaging, or contact center products. It's very useful for a customer because, for example, why would I call you if I know you are on the phone? There wouldn't be much point, but sending you an IM to say, “When you get off the phone, give me a call,” can be an effective way of communicating.

Particularly with our call center portfolio, we adhere to the notion of federation. For instance, if, as an agent, a call was to come in to me and I was not able to solely handle that first call resolution — which would be my key objective — I would be able to see the status of a subject matter expert who might be outside of my business. I could then send him an IM and escalate the call to that individual, who could actually maximize the first call resolution. That kind of functionality is very exciting, and we're going to see a lot more of it going forward.

**RT:** How do you see mobility playing into unified communications?

**SG:** It will be a huge part of it. We've heard an awful lot of talk around fixed/mobile convergence, and I think there's a lot of confusion as to what that really means. There are many definitions.

Technology used to come out of the enterprise space into the consumer land, and now, to a certain extent, it's the other way around. For instance, people are expecting to have IM — enterprise IM — and they're expecting to be able to use a cell phone as part of the corporate network, and we're getting to this age where the younger generation coming into the business world expects this kind of functionality.

That puts pressure on the CIO, but that is inevitable. I'd also add that a lot of people look at FMC as a cost reduction within their business, but it isn't. There are many things to consider when looking at FMC, but what it's really about is productivity and efficiency, and being able to get hold of the right person at the right time.

**RT:** What do you think a company looking to deploy unified communications should be looking for first when making a decision?

**SG:** They have to ask the big question: Why and for whom? I'm not sure that unified communications suits everybody within a business, and they have to look at their individual business processes, and how they're actually going to embed the benefits of unified communications within those business processes. People need to consider that, and they also need to consider how they're going to achieve a competitive advantage through the use of unified communications.

We've seen examples of people implementing unified communications because they've seen modernity and, therefore, an attraction for getting university students to join their businesses. There are all sorts of reasons, but taking it into your back-end systems and getting to the point whereby the features of voice become actions of a database field, like creating an alert, is where unified communications is going.

**“...our view is that working with Microsoft initially is not a bad bet. Still, there is going to be quite a battle out there...”**

**RT:** From a competitive standpoint, where do you see the biggest competition for your company going forward?

**SG:** I think there's competition from all over the place — there always has been and always will be — but the interesting thing about unified communications is you have new entrants coming into the market. It's not just the Microsofts, but you've got the IBMs at the same time, and you've got Oracle with its collaboration suite.

The landscape is changing quite a bit, but I think the most important thing for us is to work out who's most prolific on the desktop. We have our end products, but we also partner, and because the desktop is where it's going to be first implemented, our view is that working with Microsoft initially is not a bad bet. Still, there is going to be quite a battle out there. It's a case of understanding where your products fit into the marketplace, understand your customers' needs, and, to a certain extent, avoiding the hype around what isn't there and what can't be there from some of these new entrants, yet. But as I say, they'll persevere, so it's going to be an interesting time.

**RT:** As a telecom industry veteran, what do you see as the difference between telecom in the next five to ten years *versus* what you've seen in the past?

**SG:** The transition over the last ten years or so has been pretty great — some of it successful, some of it not successful. If you think back to the late 1990s, that's when Microsoft made its first foray into voice, and we were working with them then. Then we went through all the CTI years, which wasn't very exciting for most manufacturers, because it was still a very proprietary business.

Now, as we move more to open, packet-based systems, the opportunity for embedding voice into all applications within the business becomes much easier, and I think you're going to see continuous change in the industry. The most important thing for us as manufacturers and you as a publication house, is to ensure that we don't confuse everybody.

To read Rich's interview with Simon in its entirety, please go to <http://www.tmcnet.com/855.1>. **UC**



Eileen Rudden,  
VP & General  
Manager –  
Unified  
Communications

## Executive Suite

### Rich Tehrani's Executive Suite is a monthly feature in which leading executives in the VoIP and IP Communications industry discuss their company's latest developments with TMC president Rich Tehrani, as well as providing analysis on industry news and trends.

With the heavy focus on [unified communications](#) ([news](#) - [alert](#)) of late, it is no surprise that Avaya has put itself in the middle of that playing field — after all, Avaya has long been a key player IP communications. The potential productivity enhancements unified communications promises are central to the attention it has received, and in light of the growing demand, Avaya has recently revamped its unified communications offerings to meet that demand.

Rich recently spoke with Eileen Rudden, Avaya's Vice President and General Manager, Unified Communications, who explained the strength of Avaya's approach to unified communications and how unified communications solutions can help meet the evolving needs of growing enterprises.

**RT:** The age of the information worker has finally arrived, with help from Avaya's push into intelligent communications applications. What are today's info workers looking for, and how does Avaya intelligent communications serve their needs?

**ER:** Today, companies are trying to achieve a simplified and integrated experience with their communications needs. They have instant messaging, email, and, of course, their calendars and contacts; and they have their real-time voice and video and conferencing capabilities. All of their communications capabilities are spread across their mobile phones, their PCs, and their desktops. What unified communications seeks to do is to make that user experience much more simplified and integrated, to make the administrator and company experience much simpler, to lower total cost of ownership, so that, from both an IP

perspective and a user perspective, there's more productivity. That's our vision.

Unified communications is one of the pillars of our intelligent communications strategy at Avaya. We are a leader in IP telephony, in voice messaging, and in conferencing, and our intelligent communications and unified communications strategy, then, is to link those capabilities with the instant messaging and email capabilities that are provided by the IBMs and the Microsofts of the world, and to integrate with them, and also on the video front with the Polycoms of the world, so that we can ultimately provide a completely unified experience.

**RT:** How essential is unified communications as part of a business' communications strategy?

**ER:** We believe it is very essential, and it's certainly an essential part of our strategy. But we believe companies are increasingly looking at it in the context of their other business challenges or opportunities, and as telephony and real-time communications have moved to IP, they're now seeing the kinds of opportunities that are available to them to use real-time communications integrated with email and other applications as way to meet their communications needs. This wasn't feasible in the past. It would have been extremely complicated and difficult, and could have been done only in very specialized applications, like in the contact center. But, with the move to IP, there are many new possibilities for companies to address these challenges.

**RT:** As an early innovator, what unique capabilities does Avaya bring to the unified communications space and how will Avaya leverage its expertise to help businesses gain the full potential of UC?

**ER:** Our uniqueness has been our leadership in the real-time communication space, which comes from having the most fully featured products that are the most reliable and sellable. With our

**“With our Unified Communications Center, we're looking to extend unified communications to video.”**

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**Eileen Rudden,**  
VP & General  
Manager –  
Unified  
Communications

## Executive Suite

Unified Communications Center, we're looking to extend unified communications to video. We are integrating it with the other components of UC, like instant messaging, email, and calendaring, and are making all of those forms of communication available via the office phone, the PC, or the cell phone.

But where our strategy is truly unique is that we push a multi-vendor solution. Companies already have an email system, and they may already have decided on their instant messaging infrastructure, and they may have decided on a video conferencing vendor. We are enabling them to move forward in a way that protects their investments by linking very closely to those choices, to the other leading vendors in the communications space. That's a key part of our strategy as well.

**RT:** What strengths does the acquisition of Traverse bring to Avaya in UC?

**ER:** It brings us strength, particularly in the ability to offer our enterprise communications capability on a cell phone. Today, when you use your cell, people are just calling you and leaving you separate voicemails and you don't have access to your enterprise directory. With the acquisition of Traverse, we now have a server and client functionality that will enable our customers to get access to that information from a cell phone. They can instruct people to call their office numbers, and they can configure from a cell phone when the call will ring at the office and when it's going to ring the cell or any other number. They have control over where their office number rings and then, if they leave a message, users will be able to see that on their cell phones. Then, because it's part of the office voicemail, they can forward it or do anything they can do from their office phone, from their alternative phones. They will also be able to manage conferences from their cellphones.

It really brings so much of the enterprise capability right to the convenience of the cell phone of a mobile worker, including all the richness that comes with having access to your enterprise communications system.

**RT:** What kinds of UC applications or capabilities make the workplace more productive for employees?

**ER:** When you start with something that's been around for more than 20 years, like voicemail, and you provide access to it from any device, to basic enterprise telephony features, from wherever you are, it's amazing. It creates more productivity and cost savings.

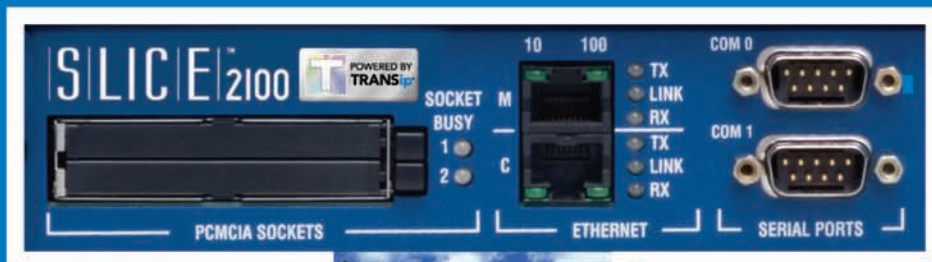
If you're working in a hotel room and you're on the web, you can make phone calls from your PC, using our systems and the telephone in the hotel room, but have the telephone calls travel over the Internet, so you can save money and get more productivity. And it becomes even more valuable if you can see each other — some studies say as much as 50% more information is gained when you're actually able to see the person with whom you are talking. We have many examples of how businesses have become more productive through the adoption of UC.

**RT:** Will unified communications cause companies to spend more on communications per seat?

**ER:** There is a lot of controversy over that in the industry. To the extent that companies are going to get richer functionality and provide it to more employees, there could be greater software spend per seat. But, I think, when you look at the total cost of ownership, that may not be the case.

Many companies today use hosted audio conferencing facilities, and we are finding that many of our customers are getting payback in less than a year when they bring that software in-house, so it might cost them \$10 per user, in terms of the software cost to bring the conferencing in-house. But, they're probably spending anywhere between \$.02 and \$.09 a minute, so there is a large external charge that they may save, especially when they run many of these calls over their own network.

To read Rich's interview with Eileen in its entirety, please go to <http://www.tmcnet.com/856.1>. **UC**



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# Shimano Gears Up for UC



by Erik K.  
Linask

## Case Study

**In an age where businesses have a growing number of traveling and off-site employees, many of them are struggling to understand how they can best make use of technology to make their changing business environment more effective. Most businesses have a large number of workers in various groups dealing with different people and different tasks — but they are all ultimately working toward the same end goal. In order to keep them all tightly connected and focused on that goal, many companies are seeking out unified communications solutions to create the most effective business process.**

According to David Leach, [Siemens Communications' \(news - alert\)](#) (Senior Public Consultant, Shimano, which produces high quality equipment for bicycling, fishing, and various other outdoor activities, is the perfect example. Across the globe, the Shimano is equated with top-of-the-line products, and Shimano's goal was to find a way to leverage its technology to ensure it can retain its place in the market.

Shimano was looking to create tight connectivity between its customer facing staff and its back office personnel, which it ultimately concluded could be most effectively achieved through a unified communications solution. With unified communications, Shimano felt it could create a more efficient way for both internal staff and customers to connect with the most appropriate staff to resolve any issues that might arise. For companies like Shimano, unified communications enables increased levels of customer responsiveness and drives effective, real-time business processes.

Bill Crane, Shimano's IT and Telecom Director, said that, knowing its North America presence would be expanding, Shimano had been

contemplating evolving its communications system for over a year. According to Crane, there was nothing wrong with the existing system from Siemens, and the company had been contemplating a new VoIP system, mostly as a novelty. However, Crane realized that the communications industry had reached the point where developers and manufacturers were slowing, or even ceasing, the development of new products for their older systems, and understood that IP was really the way to do it if Shimano wanted to be ready for the future.

One of the new features, which would have been impossible with an older system, was the connectivity with Shimano's operation in Canada. In fact, Crane said connectivity with other locations was the single biggest driver of Shimano's decision to deploy a new IP-based communications system from Siemens.

"With UC, it was just a thought at the time, but it's really becoming real. We had Siemens system, which is why they looked to them again, said Crane. "We had confidence they would be able to support such a major change, like completely replacing the system with a new technology. We did look at other systems, but it came down to the comfort level we had with our relationship with Siemens."

Crane added: "We changed out all of our phones and went completely VoIP. We did it because it was convenient and we were looking to do it, but VoIP was what everybody was doing. If you wanted any future advancement in technology, you had to go with a VoIP phone system. We were looking toward the future, for a system that would last for some time and one that we would be able to add onto."

Shimano moved forward carefully and methodically.

Shimano began with Siemens' HiPath 4000 communications platform, and the Expressions unified messaging platform, the OpenScope converged communications solution, the ProCenter contact center solution, as well as both optiPoint and OpenStage endpoints. The heart of the system, the HiPath 4000, gives Shimano a unified business communications platform that is capable of connecting any combination of TDM and VoIP technologies. It has allowed Shimano

the flexibility to deploy VoIP where it made sense and where the networks were ready for it, and to roll over additional sites at their convenience.

“Shimano liked the suite of products and felt it was in its best interest to buy a whole solution set from a single vendor that would address the various parts of their communications challenge,” said Leach.

Now, with the new system in place, Shimano's Irvine, California North American headquarters is connected to its facilities in Canada, South Carolina, and Washington. It also ensures its mobile workforce can easily stay connected while on the road. Though the communications hub is in Irvine, other facilities have been added to the voice mail system, to the ACD facility, to the corporate directory, and to various other pieces of the Siemens solution that enable physically disparate operations to effectively operate as one. Currently, Shimano has some 250 North American staff on the OpenScape platform.

When Shimano needed to add its South Carolina and Washington operations to the system, the phones were configured by Shimano and shipped to the sites, according to Crane. “The people there just part of the system, merely as extensions configured over the Internet. We just shipped them the phones and they were off and running.”

Crane explained that one of the benefits is, in fact, that Shimano can do all of its own provisioning using a simple client assistant. Each phone, he said, takes about ten minutes — and it only takes that long because most have multiple numbers and routing sequences to configure. As for user training, he said the learning curve is such that new users can easily be trained by their office neighbor.

“There are a lot of things that we do now that we would never have thought of previously,” explained Crane.

In fact, he explained that, what took longer than originally expected was the



OpenScape and ACD configurations — and that was because it took some getting used to the new features that were available to Shimano on the new system.

“With OpenScape, you have a new freedom, and it takes a little while to understand what you have. You sometimes first try to do things the ‘old’ way, and then learn there are many new possibilities,” he said.

Among those new features is the presence awareness capabilities provided by OpenScape. In fact, Crane said the he had never considered presence awareness as a value added feature, but when Shimano first decided to use OpenScape for its sales force, it quickly became evident that, in order to fully realize the benefits of the platform, there had be other people on the system as well.

Now, Crane says, the presence capabilities

have introduced a whole new experience to the Shimano team.

The presence capabilities help users not only identify the appropriate people to contact, but also provides insight into their availability and their preferred method for contact. Most communications are a blind guess, but unified communications eliminates the guesswork, creating time savings and increased responsiveness.

“It really enables a more fluid and direct business transaction,” said Leach.

For Shimano, the biggest benefit since installing the new system has been the single number, single point of contact capabilities offered by OpenScape. However, from a more functional perspective, according to Crane, the greatest benefit might be knowing the opportunity exists to easily expand the system with many of the new features and products that are being developed.

“We couldn't have even approached that with our old system,” he said, “So it's really the ability to move into the future.” UC

*Erik Linask is Associate Editor of INTERNET TELEPHONY, IMS Magazine, and Unified Communications.*

# The Customer is Right



by Erik K.  
Linask

Sounding Off

**As TMC launches *Unified Communications*, one of the things that I marvel at is the disparity between different people's definitions of Unified Communications. Depending on which service provider, vendor, or customer you ask, their definitions are likely to vary as greatly as the weather each day in New England. Largely, of course, that's due to their own needs — what they market, what they develop, what they use internally.**

Those differing theories, which are only natural with new technology, foster the competition that helps drive acceptance and the development of increasing numbers of alternative products and solutions and peripheral offerings. When you factor in the various types and sizes of businesses, the potential exists for many, many solutions to the same dilemma.

I recently spent several days with the folks at UK mobile operator O2, and one of the things that impressed me was O2's heavy focus on customer satisfaction and retention — and it is what has brought O2 to the top of the most competitive mobile market in the world. Most carriers — certainly the major U.S. carriers — are perceived to care more about new customer acquisition than subscriber retention, and though some might argue that, it is immaterial, since perception outweighs reality.

In terms of customer satisfaction, second only to the actual service quality is the quality of customer service. Indeed, at some point, it's a safe bet that most customers will have cause to make that dreaded call to the customer service center. When that happens, the rate of first call resolution is a critical factor in the overall success of that call center operation, and the overall success of the organization as a whole, and that is what has helped O2 climb in the ranks.

How is this relevant? A few weeks ago, I moderated a Webinar sponsored by Zeacom, which specializes in UC solutions for call centers, when it occurred to me that high percentage of businesses have yet to consider

the value of unified communications to their call center operations. But, the truth is that, while most unified communications products and solutions have been developed with the enterprise employee in mind, they have at least as much relevance and value in contact centers.

Many of the same benefits that unified communications solutions bring to mobile workers and other enterprise employees can be extended to the contact center. For instance, customized call handling features based on time of day, caller ID, and other factors, combined with presence management capabilities, for instance, can significantly enhance first call resolution rates and customer satisfaction. The solutions that are available today combine such call handling capabilities with other multimedia, IVR, unified messaging, and caller profile features. Together, the pieces fall into place to help make the first point of contact for a customer with your call center a productive one.

Whether your business has fewer than a dozen users or several thousand, whether you have a dedicated contact center or a few employees all handling customer calls as part of their many duties, solutions like Communications Center are worth a look. Importantly, while solving customer problems must be a priority, without buy-in from employees, it is difficult to make any new program a success. Fortunately, the benefits of unified communications extend both inward to your agents and other employees, as well as outward to the mobile workers and customers, making it easy to win buy-in. After all, who would argue against a solution that makes his job easier?

When it comes right down to it, though they may not sit in front of customers, call center agents possess the power to define the face of the business. Because of the relationship of the call center agent to the customer, and the satisfaction of that customer to the success of the business, it's hard to imagine why businesses wouldn't ensure they have the tools at their disposal to create an environment that fosters customer satisfaction above all else. Today, that means, at the very least, considering the benefits unified communications offers your business. The customer is not only right, after all; he is also the only thing that matters. **UC**

*Erik Linask is Associate Editor of INTERNET TELEPHONY, IMS Magazine, and Unified Communications.*



**Most telecommunications solution providers have three things in common:**

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# Today's Businesses Need More Than VoIP to be Competitive



by Steve  
Grassie

Now UC It

**VoIP has been a hot commodity among large-scale companies with experienced IT organizations for over a decade; but few groups outside of the IT community fully understood the concept, knowing only that it was supposed to save them money.**

Today, more and more small-to-medium-sized businesses have begun to see VoIP as an integral part of their unified business communications services. As the number of ways in which people can communicate continues to grow, how people are contacted, where, and on what device becomes more of an issue for those businesses that pride themselves on delivering great customer service as a means of differentiating themselves from their competitors.

Just as the Internet has leveled the playing field for small business in the global economy (i.e. websites and advertising), Unified Communications has the ability to extend one's image beyond the web by converging business process with business communications in a way that previously only the largest of enterprises could afford. Still, that is not to say that VoIP alone will solve every business' communications problems. So, why are so many SMBs taking a more serious look at Unified Communications?

## Cost Savings

VoIP ([define](#) - [news](#) - [alert](#)) can save businesses money every month. Not only can they leverage long-distance savings, but they can also save on hardware. With a VoIP solution, a business can opt for the cheaper, faster, general-purpose hardware to deliver on their voice and fax requirements. There's no more relying on proprietary or separate pieces of hardware, with their own interface to the PBX and separate management interface.

**But if the system's difficult to manage, cost savings and increased productivity can evaporate quickly.**

## Leveling the Playing Field with Unified Messaging and Unified Communications

Whether a business sells services or goods, today's economy emphasizes agility and mobility, and SMBs in particular have always prided themselves on their customer service. But over the last two decades, only bigger players have been able to afford the very expensive, state-of-the-art PBX systems that can deliver Unified Messaging, Unified Communications and other collaboration features to teleworkers, mobile employees, and networked branch offices.

As a consequence, more and more SMBs are looking to a VoIP solution to level the playing field between themselves and larger, less nimble competitors. The right communication solution for SMBs should integrate Unified Messaging (getting all voice, email and fax messages in one place) and Unified Communications (getting your calls wherever you want to take them) and other features that improve business process, increase productivity and facilitate customer service.

The Internet has leveled the playing field for small business in the global economy with websites, web advertising, and 24/7 global e-commerce. VoIP solutions that provide simple, but powerful productivity and collaboration tools stand to do the same. But if the system's difficult to manage, cost savings and increased productivity can evaporate quickly.

Businesses need to capitalize on opportunities to grow and expand their customer base as the opportunity presents itself. Email, websites and other data center technologies have easily kept pace with these changing requirements, but telephone systems largely have not. They have remained proprietary, closed, hard to manage, and very difficult to integrate with other IT data systems, which in the end, not only add up to higher costs — but also slower growth and missed business opportunities.

## Hassle Free Customer Service

Utilizing multiple products from multiple vendors can save you money, but it can also cause headaches when and if a problem should arise among one of the links in the chain.

Traditionally, you would have to contact the customer service department that manufactures the product causing the problem — which can be a real hassle if they are not familiar with the other products you are using in your setup.

With the Objectworld Connect™ Interoperability Program, this is no longer an issue. This one-of-a-kind program certifies and provides support for partner products and/or services as interoperable with Objectworld Unified Communications Server™.

For Objectworld partners, resellers and customers, the program provides an opportunity to deploy an open, certified and supported, end-to-end unified communications solution. For customers, that means unprecedented choice of hardware and software with the assurance that the pieces will work together.

The program consists of two designations, Objectworld Connect™ and Objectworld Connect PLUS™. Program designations are awarded to products based on levels of interoperability. With a Connect PLUS product, customers will be able to add the device or service during their install of UC Server without any configuration on their part. Connect designates a product that requires minimal configuration for a customer to add the device or service to their install of UC Server. Objectworld provides second level, system-wide support for all Connect-designated products and services.

Connect makes VoIP deployment simple and flexible.

## Easier Management is the Future

The right communication solution should allow an SMB to turn the equipment and investment it already has in place (e.g., the same servers that run Windows, Exchange, and other IT software), add a wide range of phones and gateways, cut costs, improve productivity, and meet the needs of the business. In short, the right communication solution should be software just like every other piece of IT software, and it should be managed just as easily by a business' existing IT team.

**Most VoIP systems are not  
any more open and  
interoperable than traditional  
legacy PBXs...**

Integration with management tools like Microsoft Active Directory, faster and less expensive hardware and the wide-spread adoption of SIP has made it possible to migrate the telephone system into the IT data center as software. The communications solution that businesses need today is one that delivers a feature-rich, easy to manage phone system that does Unified Messaging, Unified Communications, Interactive Voice Response, and more. . . for a fraction of the cost of a traditional PBX.

For small to medium-sized enterprises, in particular, the right communication system provides an unparalleled opportunity to turn their phone system into a competitive advantage and to cut costs and complexity at the same time. At Objectworld, we believe the future of VoIP lies in a simple, flexible software solution that provides feature-rich, easy-to-manage Unified Messaging, Unified Communications, Interactive Voice Response and other services to business customers at a reasonable cost.

With today's highly reliable networks and data centers, there are no substantial reasons for a business not to deploy VoIP — except for the lack of simple, flexible and cost-effective VoIP solutions thoroughly integrated with the IT data center. In this respect, the market is still outpacing many vendors. Most VoIP systems are not any more open and interoperable than traditional legacy PBXs, and as a result, don't offer the value either to VARs or to their end users. Most VoIP systems still only support phones from a single vendor. Many still require specialized and separate administration. Few if any provide simple GUI tools for end-users and system administrators to make system management point-and-click.

The phone system as we have always envisioned it — as a line running from the PSTN to the PB — is already in its last days. The benefits to a company's operating efficiency and improvements to client interaction through collaborative applications like Unified Communications, will dictate that voice applications as software residing in the IT data center will become the expected approach. **UC**

*Steve Grassie is the Vice President of Business Development and Marketing for Objectworld. ([news - alert](#)) For more information on the company, visit <http://www.objectworld.com>.*

# SIP SPECIFIC



by Jonathan  
Rosenberg

Speaking SIP

## The Great Thing About Standards

**Everyone who has worked in the telecom industry has heard the quip: “The great thing about standards is that there are so many to choose from!” While it is funny, it points to a real problem in our industry. The problem, of course, is the frequent lack of interoperability between vendors or between networks, despite the plethora of standards. Why is that? Why are we doing all of this work in standards if it’s not resulting in interoperability?**

The answer is not a simple one. Interoperability suffers for many reasons. First and foremost, vendors implement, and network designers deploy, only parts of a standard. This is not due to stupidity or malice, but rather engineering reality. Standards, by their nature, must be designed to meet a superset of the requirements of the players that come to the table to craft that standard. As a consequence, any particular standard ends up being much more complex than any one vendor needs for any one customer or any one product release. Since engineering resources are always limited, a subset gets implemented to meet the requirements immediately in front of each team. If two vendors implement different subsets, there is a good chance they won’t interoperate.

A related problem is that vendors often have to meet requirements that the standards don’t address. If you consider the breadth of network providers, market segments and services available today, this should be no surprise. It is one reason that standards bodies sometimes grow around segments of the market – ones for cable providers, for European cellular providers, for landline providers, and so on.

However, sometimes the problem is that there are just too many ways of doing something. SIP has received a great deal of success in the marketplace because of its flexibility. However, that strength comes with a penalty – it tends to complicate interoperability.

As an example, take something as seemingly mundane as a call transfer. SIP has several ways in which a transfer feature can be implemented. One way is to use the REFER method. Transferors can send a REFER to the transfer target, or they can send a REFER to the transferee. It is also possible to accomplish a transfer using third-party call control techniques. What happens, however, when one phone in a system does a transfer using one technique, but a different phone has been developed using a different technique?

If both phones are fully compliant to the SIP specification and to the REFER specification, the transfer will work. That’s the beauty of SIP – one side of a call can do a feature one particular way, and the other side doesn’t have to even understand it in order for the feature to interoperate. That is one of the key ideas behind the SIP vision for how to provide innovation: by standardizing a set of tools that can provide key primitives, and then allowing implementers to build more complex features around those primitives while maintaining interoperability.

But most phones aren’t necessarily fully compliant to the SIP or REFER specifications. A vendor interested in transfer probably picked a technique, implemented that, and ignored those parts of the specification that would be used by someone implementing transfer in a different way. Similarly, a vendor implementing transfer using third-party call control may have omitted REFER support entirely. In those cases, there isn’t going to be interoperability.



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by Jonathan  
Rosenberg

### Speaking SIP

What is needed to fix this problem? A standards organization needs to look at the various ways any particular feature can be implemented, and for each one, must define a minimum set of functionality that everyone has to support. This minimum set of functionality would be in the form of specifications or portions of a specification that need to be implemented. That minimum set is chosen so that vendors can implement the feature in a few different ways, yet still ensure interoperability overall.

This may sound like a simple process, but it is not. The challenge is in balancing the needs of interoperability with a desire for innovation. Without a doubt, the way to maximize interoperability would be to explicitly enumerate all of the features that are supported. Then, for each one, a series of call flows and functional behaviors would be defined. In this way, it would be very clear to vendors of equipment exactly what they need to do to support each and every feature. Interoperability would be great! There would be no ambiguity in how the feature works, no way two vendors could make differing assumptions on the flows to use, and no confusion on what the role of each box was for each feature.

Of course, this interoperability would come at high cost. The only features that would work in such a system are those explicitly enumerated features. Indeed, even for those features, they would work only as described in the standard. Variations and tweaks would not be supported. This defeats the entire purpose of choosing SIP, though! If all a network designer wants is the existing set of telephony features, there are already plenty of existing technologies that do that quite adequately. The promise of SIP are the new features it can bring to the table. Not just presence and IM, but improvements upon even the most common of features.

**BLISS will be looking at groups of related features, and for each one, look at the call flows utilized for those features, determine where things fail, and then define a minimum interoperability recommendation for that group of related features.**

Fortunately, to achieve interoperability, it is not necessary to specify every detail of how a feature works. For example, consider Do Not Disturb (DND). In this familiar feature, an endpoint signals to its server that it would like incoming calls to be diverted in some way, so that the phone does not ring. In order for this feature to interoperate between the phone and the server, there needs to be a standard way to signal activation and deactivation of DND. However, once activated, it doesn't really matter whether the server sends the call to voicemail, rejects it, plays a multimedia file, or redirects the caller to a web page.

The trick, therefore, is to specify only this tiny bit of the feature – how activation status is signaled to the server – without constraining how the feature works.

Recently, a new working group has been proposed in the Internet Engineering Task Force (IETF) to do exactly this. This new group is called BLISS – Basic Level of Interoperability for SIP Services. If all goes well, BLISS will be approved and on its way to solving this problem by the time you read this article. BLISS will be looking at groups of related features, and for each one,

look at the call flows utilized for those features, determine where things fail, and then define a minimum interoperability recommendation for that group of related features. Its charter covers features such as shared line, call park, do-not-disturb, and call completion to busy subscriber.

Once BLISS is done, we'll have even more standards to add to an already long list of standards to choose from. This time, however, it really will be a great thing. **UC**

*Jonathan Rosenberg is the co-author of SIP and SIMPLE. He is currently a Cisco Fellow and architect for the IP Communications Business Unit in the Voice Technology Group at Cisco ([quote](#) - [news](#) - [alert](#)) (<http://www.cisco.com>).*



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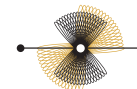
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# SIP SPECIFIC



by Peter  
Saint-Andre

## Presence Enabled

### Presence Gets a Life

**Poor presence! People treat it as just a catalyst for communication, a kind of universal dialtone for instant messaging (IM), Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP), video chat, and other real-time interactions. I know I've been guilty of that too. At industry talks, I've said that presence is boring because no one picks up the phone to listen to the dialtone, so why should they pay attention to "mere" presence? Well I was wrong!**

Recent developments in the "Web 2.0" space show that thousands of people are indeed interested in pure presence information. However, it's not basic network availability that they're interested in, since always-on connectivity is almost considered a given these days. Instead, people want to see what their friends and co-workers and even total strangers are doing (Twitter, Jaiku), what music they are listening to (last.fm, Pandora), where they are traveling (Plazes), what photos they are taking (Flickr), what websites they are visiting (Me.dium), what they are blogging about (RSS and Atom feeds), and a dozen other aspects of their online and offline existence.

This is really a kind of "social presence". In IM systems, presence has always been social because it's been shared with the people in your

buddy list, and creative IM users have used presence status messages to report that they are "in a meeting" or "at lunch" or "working on a big report" or doing something else that might be of interest to their contacts.

But these new services have liberated the status message from the confines of IM and have given it a life of its own. Now you can post your status on a special website via a browser, IM client, or mobile phone, enabling your buddies (or the whole world) to see your status and subscribe to updates about what you're doing. Some of these services also take your existing RSS feeds (from blogs, music sites, geolocation services, and the like) as further input, bringing us closer to realizing Yale computer scientist David Gelertner's concept of the lifestream.

Is social presence a passing fad? Don't bet on it. Many "serious" industry observers thought IM (the original presence application) was only teen chat — until this supposedly frivolous technology started turning up on the desks of Wall Street investment bankers and the communication consoles of naval weapons officers. The same was true of blogging, which was thought of as a form of teenage narcissism until corporate CEOs and presidential candidates were forced by the pressure of societal change to start weblogs of their own. Ditto for wikis, online auctions, virtual worlds, and many other cutting-edge technologies.

How might social presence infiltrate the enterprise? Since social presence is a something of a cross between lightweight blogging and multi-user text chat, we could envision a corporate lifestream in which salespeople and sales engineers track each others' rich presence to produce and share in team success:

Bob: "at the DooDads account in Atlanta"

Steve: "@bob tell 'em Widgets Inc. is rolling out next week"

Bob: "@steve will do"

Bob: "any deployment issues on OpenBSD with Berkeley DB?"

Julie: "@bob nope, GewGaws has that setup and it's been rock-solid"

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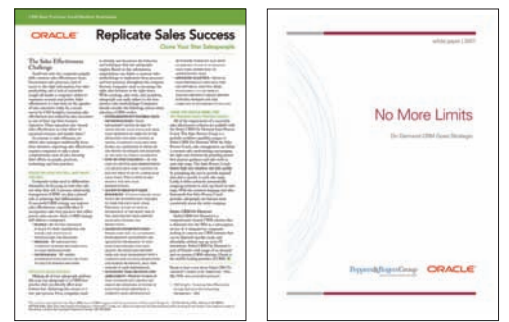
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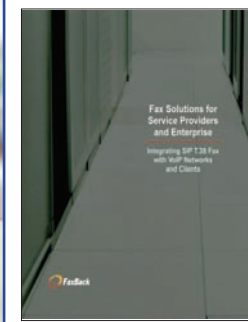
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Bob: "@julie thanks!"

Bob: "hmm, can we roll out a 10k user pilot by end of Q2?"

Dave: "@bob should be doable"

Bob: "@dave great"

Bob: "OK DooDads 10k pilot signed!"

Karen: "@bob congrats!"

But this kind of social interaction is not limited to people. Status data might be automatically generated by teams, product lines, investments, factories, purchase orders, shipments, and many other aspects of an organization's lifestream. Open, innovative companies who push that data to appropriate individuals (even to partners and suppliers) will improve communication and gain competitive advantage.

As we've discussed in previous columns, there are many challenges involved in gathering, deploying, and using presence in a productive fashion. Event-driven presence middleware needs to handle the flood of transient notifications generated by thousands or millions of points of presence in an organization. IT managers need to become comfortable with "good enough" delivery to achieve low latency in an environment where the useful half-life of presence information is constantly shrinking. Application developers need to use flexible data formats (such as XML) that can be easily extended to address a constantly-changing set of information requirements.

Paradoxically, perhaps the least difficult aspect of presence-enabling organizations will be to educate end users regarding the possibilities and pitfalls of presence technologies, because they are already dipping their feet into the water (or diving in head first!) by experimenting with the rapidly emerging social presence applications available on the Internet today. End users are leading the way, and IT is increasingly playing catch-up in a fast-changing world that is made ever faster by the roll-out of presence-enabled technologies for real-time communication. But that's the power of presence in action! **UC**

*Peter Saint-Andre is Director of Standards at Jabber, Inc. ([news - alert](http://www.jabber.com)) For more information, please visit the company online at <http://www.jabber.com>.*

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by Peter  
Saint-Andre

Presence Enabled



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# FEATURE

by Richard  
“Zippy” Grigonis

## Feature Article

### From IP Communications to Unified Communications

**Years ago, my former boss had a “right-hand man” named Rose. If you wanted to know where the boss was, Rose knew. If you wanted to send the boss a file, Rose knew that he was in a meeting and didn’t have his laptop with him, so instead of emailing a file to him you’d have to settle for a voice call on his cell phone. Rose knew that once the boss let her know he was back at his hotel in the afternoon, you could then send him a fax.**

All wealthy and successful people have a Rose, an intelligent assistant. The rest of us have had to figure things out for ourselves, at least until recently. Indeed, the difficulties have increased since we all have more and more ways of communicating with each other: desktop phones, PC softphones, instant messaging, IP phones, email, faxes, cellphones, collaborative whiteboards, PDAs, videoconferencing equipment, pagers, text messages, and on and on. Each of these deal with different media and have differing bandwidth requirements.

But wait, you say. It’s true that in the past applications were ‘siloe’d’. If you bought, say, an H.263/ISDN-based videoconferencing system, it wasn’t

going to ‘converge’ with anything else — or even interoperate with a competing H.323-based videoconferencing system, for that matter. Whole dedicated networks were built for the exclusive use of specific devices such as the analog phone, each with separate costs and management methodologies. Heck, there were even *subnetworks* dedicated to particular devices, such as the old hard-wired PBX in your office that communicated solely with the PBX vendor’s digital phone sets. Moves, Adds and Changes (MACs) were a big deal, even if you were moving just 20 feet to a different office or cubicle. (Trying “roaming” in that environment!)

However, today most of your communications devices and applications are now IP-enabled. What about “convergence”? Isn’t IP Communications all about “converging” these devices and media somehow to make it easy for all of us to communicate amongst ourselves? Now that we can integrate an IP-enabled application with other IP applications, we can make the whole environment more seamless, yes?

That’s true — but only partly so. Actually, the IP-enabling of devices and applications that’s going on today is merely the first step toward true convergence. Indeed, the first attempts at convergence occurred back in the old circuit-switched days, when computer telephony developers tried to unite voicemail, email and faxes with what they called Unified Messaging (UM) technology, also called Integrated Messaging or Integrated Email. We all thought that our desktop PC or laptop (when it was in the desktop docking station) was going to be our new all-purpose phone in those days (remember “the PC as Phone”?), and so monolithic applications, typically running in conjunction with such things as a Microsoft Exchange server, were developed to collect voicemails, email and faxes and list them on one interface.

There were several problems with Unified Messaging. Ye Olde circuit switched technology was finicky and not totally logical. Combining different media (at very low bandwidths) in one application in such an environment was, as the British would say, a “dodgy” affair. Moreover, even when it worked perfectly, UM simply gathered information in one stationary place, the desktop — what if the user wanted to be continuously mobile? It also didn’t solve the problem of how to get a hold of somebody immediately if they were moving about the landscape, and

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by Richard  
"Zippy" Grigonis

### Feature Article

connect to them using whatever device was most convenient for them at that moment. That brings us to the next step toward true convergence, Presence.

#### The Powers of Presence

Although VoIP and video-over-IP are real-time communications, that's only true once both parties are connected. Getting the initial connection can be a hit-or-miss affair — if the person with whom you're trying to communicate doesn't have with them the particular device you've signaled, the best you can do is try another device (cellphone, PDA, laptop, etc.) or else leave a message, which can lead to such non-amusements as "voicemail jail" and "voice tag", or perhaps email getting lost in a sea of spam.

Obviously, we need a more "psychic" version of Rose the personal assistant. And we can have one, too, thanks to that special form of event-driven middleware known generically as "presence".

The first glimmerings of presence came in the form of the first primitive Instant Messaging (IM) applications that are still heavily used today: AOL's Instant Messenger (AIM), CuSeeMe, Yahoo Messenger, and similar offerings from Microsoft and Google. With IM you can first ask someone if they are available for a phone call. Or you can start chatting with them using text and then "upgrade" or "escalate" to a phone call or web conference. Thus, IM acts as a signaling system and provides meta-data about the "state" of the person at the other end of the line.

Actually, it's the person at the other end who's providing that information, by setting his or her "status". Ideally, the processes of setting and disseminating an individual's presence information should be automatic and intelligent, an electronic version of our old friend Rose the secretary. For example, we want to know if an IP phone is "off hook" indicating that the user is talking with somebody else and is unavailable for a conversation. Fortunately, developers are enabling applications to communicate presence state-changes to other applications, which ultimately enable a semi-automated way of determining where people are, what devices they have around them, and if they're available to communicate at all, given their busy schedule. Think of it as a more

sophisticated, futuristic version of find-me/follow-me services.

Thus, presence is the "glue" that helps tie applications, terminal nodes and people together into a seamless communications fabric and is a major step toward genuine convergence and *Unified Communications* (UC), a communicating environment where anyone can reach anyone else, at any time, anywhere. In such an environment, the all-important "presence manager" software takes the place of Rose, our intelligent human assistant.

#### UC Yields Collaboration to the Nth Degree

Once UC becomes pervasive, communications between individuals becomes less inhibited. Just as IP peering technology has penetrated the corporate firewall and allows various partners to federate their collective information, so too does UC further drive the extended enterprise to higher levels of productivity. The whole business ecosystem — vendors, partners, suppliers, customers, channel partners — becomes more active, since any member of this ecosystem can communicate with any other member quickly, efficiently and with greater flexibility. For example, a customer "call" to a contact center agent can now occupy multiple channels. It can start out as an IM chat, and the contact center's customer service representative (CSR) can right click on the individual's instant messaging icon, and data can be pulled up from the company's CRM system listing the last three or so interactions the company's sales force has had with that person, such as the most recent products purchased and/or any previous help desk calls. The CSR may then decide to "upgrade" the communication into a voice call, then perhaps upgrade again to a video call if the customer wants to actually show something to a customer service representative using a webcam.

Instead of the monolithic unified messaging applications of the past that handled just voice, email and faxes, the new world of UC technology — thanks to the IP-enablement of endpoints and applications — can now deal with "mash ups", collecting, processing, displaying and acting upon inputs from any form of media.

This ability to have back-office, business application-derived data tied into a UC system and made available over different "channels" globally,



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by Richard  
"Zippy" Grigonis

### Feature Article

depending on when and how you want it, is the true vision not just of unified communications, but of "convergence" too, not to mention the fundamental activity of human collaboration itself. That's because, at a certain point, the increased interactions between all of the members of the extended enterprise brings about a synergy that reaches a sort of "critical mass". Instead of simply expending time and effort into merely *communicating* with each other, we're now all effortlessly *collaborating*. Business can now proceed at warp speed, enabling a huge competitive advantage.

### Changing the Corporate Culture

At ShoreTel ([news - alert](http://www.shoretel.com)) (<http://www.shoretel.com>) Director of Product Management Jeff Ridley says, "Customers now are starting to take a look at the higher level values afforded by unified communications. In the early days, IP communications was all about bypassing long distance, then people realized it was more about the 'network efficiencies', improved management and improved total cost of ownership for deploying voice as a service throughout the enterprise. As we move forward, it's now more about taking a look at the productivity benefits of new applications that perhaps can be leveraged with voice. The concepts that stick in my mind around defining UC have a lot to do with the ability to do 'mixed mode' or support multiple media types, bringing them together for users. The second big concept is leveraging and starting to take advantage of presence in the infrastructure, thus making presence more usable for people to help them make intelligent decisions."

"The third and crucial component, though it tends generally to be less discussed, is business process integration," says Ridley. "The ability to tie your communications systems into your business systems is where there's a lot of activity at the moment."

Ridley reminded Yours Truly of Nortel often talking about business processes being affected by UC and Avaya talking about "intelligent

communications" relating to business. UC if nothing else does affect a business' workflow.

"Companies want to make everybody more productive," says Ridley. "And let's say that the employees can now do things in five minutes instead of ten minutes. Will they do more work in the same time interval, or will they just go home early? We want to make people more effective as they connect to information, which drives productivity, but doing so will also drive customers to be more satisfied with the business in general."

Business process integration first appeared in call centers, and indeed much of what is appearing now in UC appears to give users call center-like capabilities and "personal Automated Call Distributor (ACD)" features.

**"We're taking technologies and capabilities historically seen only in call centers and making them more broadly used in the UC framework..."**

"We're taking technologies and capabilities historically seen only in call centers and making them more broadly used in the UC framework," says Ridley. "For example, take our pre-built integration with Salesforce.com. This is very direct — it connects the inbound caller to the Salesforce record. People receiving calls from callers have the usual benefits. They now know the person calling, and they can

provide better service. They can improve the productivity of the service they require, but also leave the person that called you more comfortable with the service they received because they spoke with somebody knowledgeable that was better able to handle their request."

"It's like an intelligent ACD that works on a personal level," says Ridley. "At a very basic level, if I were asked to describe this in the 'old days' I would have called it a screen pop in a call center. In general, it's one of those valuable components that bridges the gap between the person calling you and what you already know about them, so that you can better respond to what they're looking for."

"Making these things network-wide is another important concept," says Ridley. "Let us consider the more general case of real people working with

## From IP Communications to Unified Communications

lots of other people and the notion of extending telephony presence across the enterprise. There's a lot of efficiencies and productivities that can be gained when you don't necessarily have to worry about physical boundaries. A secretary or an assistant that may be sitting at one location and with presence technology can pretty much see what's going on with another person. Calls can be handed off and calls can be covered as necessary. So another dimension of convergence is to make it so that it's not so different working in the branch office as in the headquarters office. You can define a single communications environment with flat features, having the ability to share information about people's availability across that network. That's also a part of the equation of unifying everything, so to speak." Today ShoreTel offers a distributed VoIP system.

"Voice is distributed across the entire enterprise," says Ridley, "and we do it in a way to achieve what we call 'feature transparency'; you maintain your set of capabilities as you move from one site to another. It's designed to be a highly reliable system and, because it's distributed, elements that are situated at the remote office can both provide

standalone services and be part of the total system. So if a backhoe digs down somewhere and breaks your WAN connectivity, the individual offices can keep working."

"On top of that we also offer a solution we call Converged Conferencing," says Ridley. "That adds traditional audio conferencing of course, but also includes a web conferencing component, instant messaging and a presence system. The web conferencing includes document sharing as well as application or desktop sharing."

Companies such as Avaya, Microsoft, Nortel and Siemens are laboring mightily to bring about a new world of communications for SMBs (Small and Medium-sized Businesses), enterprises and other organizations. Furthermore, unified communications shall ultimately reach into the home and change the way we communicate in much the same way that it will transform the business world. UC technology will become as commonplace and as vital to everyday life as its great progenitor, IP Communications. **UC**

*Richard Grigonis is Executive Editor of TMC's IP Communications Group.*

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# FEATURE

by Richard  
"Zippy" Grigonis

## Feature Article

### Collaboration and UC – Group Productivity Applications

**The whole point of collaboration is not for workers to maintain a spirit of camaraderie, but rather to achieve significant gains in productivity. One might therefore more properly refer to such technology as telecom-enabled group productivity applications. The "group" doing the collaborating could be workers in the same organization, or a logically-defined group of people at federated companies working together across organizational boundaries. The collaboration technology can be as simple as instant messaging (IM) or more complicated teamware or web conferencing technologies. UC allows participants to be drawn into a collaborative effort.**

We've come a long way from the early 1990s, when Yours Truly marveled at the earliest attempts at such unified messaging/communications group productivity boosters. For example, picking up the first issue of *Computer Telephony* magazine in October of 1993, the miraculous new killer app vaunted on its pages was "unified

messaging", embodied by the then-pioneering product called CallXpress. Today, Applied Voice & Speech Technologies, Inc. (<http://www.avst.com>) recently announced the newest and most advanced version (7.9) of CallXpress. It now includes something for businesses

of every size and type: SIP integration, enhanced localization features, and the ability for enterprises to define a specific unified messaging architecture that meets particular security, storage and access needs. You can choose from among four different UM architectures based on the nature of your business and its requirements: server-based, client-based, secure and simplified. You can also mix-and-match these architectures depending on particular departmental or user requirements.

CallXpress 7.9 also provides familiar user interface emulations for Avaya Intuity AUDIX, Octel Aria, Octel Serenade and Mitel NuPoint with the Centigram interface.

Another early player was Active Voice (<http://www.activevoice.com>). Today, Active Voice's ([news - alert](#)) (Windows-based Kinesis UC system provides advanced desktop and call control functionality, utilizing a Microsoft Exchange server so that you can access your messages through the telephone or PC. Workers now have a single point of access for all voice, fax and email. Even mobile employees can access their email and schedule information while traveling. Users can share physical telephone extensions, but can be allotted individual mailboxes. Active Voice's Kinesis is scalable and can handle organizations having many branch offices.

#### In the Year 2006. . .

Interestingly, it may be that 2006 will be remembered as the year when major vendors began a series of far-reaching unified communications-related announcements that continue through the present day.

In June 2006 Microsoft announced that it was taking both UC and Real-Time Collaboration (RTC) head-on in a massive effort. Microsoft's expansive UC roadmap proved to be a user-centric plan. Their idea is to

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by Richard  
“Zippy” Grigonis

### Feature Article

make UC and collaboration easy-to-use and to voice-enable business processes (including Microsoft Office and third-party software applications), particularly people-driven processes (“I need somebody to make a decision. I need somebody to sign off on this. I need information from an expert on what I have to show them.”) that usually involve simply communicating from within the context of the work that the user is doing, which can involve a document or spreadsheet. In fact, Microsoft Business Division President Jeff Raikes has predicted that by 2010 more than 100 million people will make phone calls from Microsoft Office system apps such as Outlook, Word and Excel.

Indeed, UC in the Microsoft universe got quite a boost thanks to companies that have optimized their devices to work with OCS 2007. Microsoft recently announced a unified communications qualification program which currently lists 15 devices that when qualified will seamlessly integrate with OCS 2007 and Office Communicator. These include the Polycom CX700 IP Phone, a full duplex, hands-free speakerphone that has an embedded Office Communicator 2007 client and Windows CE interface, offers high-quality wideband audio and features a large touch-screen color display (big enough to read your personal calendar or other text). Expect it in 3Q 2007. Nortel is also well-represented with devices such as the LG-Nortel IP Phone 8540, which also has an embedded Microsoft Office Communicator 2007 client. It supports name-based dialing, presence information, a 5.7-inch TFT LCD touch-screen display and a fascinating fingerprint reader for the ultimate in secure logins — the less paranoid among us can still use a PIN, which loads user profiles, voicemail, call logs, etc.

Indeed, Nortel has gained much publicity over its grand alliance with Microsoft. Officially called the Innovative Communications Alliance (ICA), it's a four-year agreement whereby both companies will help

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bring UC to enterprises by integrating their respective technical abilities (Microsoft's desktop/server software and Nortel's telephony expertise) into products and sharing marketing and business/channel acumen. For example, Nortel's Call Server 1000 integrates with Microsoft's LCS/OCS, with Nortel furnishing the integration services.

Nortel's hand in OCS 2007 (which should appear shortly after you read this) guarantees that it will accommodate Nortel's contact center, IVR and audio conferencing applications.

Nortel has also announced its Nortel Hosted Solutions portfolio, which enables business to partake of such next-gen applications as UC, IP telephony, automatic call distribution, contact centers, etc., without investing heavily in customer premise equipment and staff. Customers can use the services long-term or

temporarily on a “try before they buy” basis,

becoming acclimated to these services before making the transition to their own IP networks based on Nortel equipment. And even though the apps are driven by Nortel's Communication Server 2000, Unified Messaging 2000, and Multimedia Communication Server 5200, service providers won't have to make any large capital investment, since Nortel will take on the job of hosting and managing these solutions from facilities worldwide.

### Other UC Movers and Shakers

Cisco's own UC initiative was also announced in 2006. It now includes the following:

- Cisco Unified Personal Communicator that transparently integrates with applications and network services to tie together voice messaging, video, instant messaging, conferencing, and presence information. With it you can share documents, perform voicemail playback, hold voice/video conferences and use directories, all in a single interface. An

integrated toolbar is used for click-to-call or IM within your Outlook contacts and email.

- Cisco Unified CallConnector for Microsoft Office that installs a toolbar in Outlook and Internet Explorer that helps makes it possible for you to connect with callers on the first try by using presence information to determine whether they're available and how they prefer to be contacted. You can find contacts and quickly start a call, email or IM. It also lets you place or receive call on your Cisco Unified IP phone.
- Cisco Unified MeetingPlace, an integrated voice, video, and web conferencing solution for medium-to-large organizations. It securely integrates with various enterprise applications.
- Cisco Unity Connection provides voice or integrated messaging with advanced features such as speech recognition and personal call transfer rules. Messages can be managed "hands-free" using voice commands. Voice messages can be viewed, prioritized and listened in conjunction with the Cisco Unified Personal Communicator, an email client or web browser. The Cisco Unity Connection Phone View lets you use a Cisco Unified IP Phone display to view, sort, search, and play back voice messages. You can also use voice commands can to list and attend Cisco Unified MeetingPlace Express meetings. Moreover, you can set up a sort of personal auto attendant by defining personal call transfer rules by caller, time of day, and Exchange calendar status.
- Cisco Unified Conferencing for TelePresence is Cisco's new solution that can link three or more Cisco TelePresence systems in a meeting. Participants can be viewed in high-def (1080p), life-sized images and heard in CD-quality, spatially-correct audio, adding a face-to-face ambiance to your online meetings.

Other companies such as Mitel (<http://www.mitel.com>) and Avaya ([www.avaya.com](http://www.avaya.com))

have also jumped into the fray (see Rich Tehrani's interview with these companies earlier in this issue).

Just around the time that Microsoft announced its own initiative in June 2006, it also revealed a collaborative effort with Siemens Communications (<http://www.siemens.com>) to accelerate the integration of technologies around Microsoft Exchange Server and Microsoft Office Live Communications Server, such as Siemens' HiPath 8000 softswitch real-time telephony, which allows enterprise customers to transition from conventional PBX and voicemail systems to OCS 2007 and Exchange Server 2007.

Siemens' own well-known UC platform is OpenScape. Recently, they released three new members of the portfolio: First, the entry-level, OpenScape VoiceLink solution that telephony-enables the Office Communicator client on the desktop, thus giving desk-bound users mini-call center abilities such as receiving screen pop-ups on incoming calls and picking up calls by clicking on an icon. This SIP-imbued OpenScape VoiceLink also supports Siemens's HiPath 8000 IP PBX and analog phones. Second, a new release of OpenScape Enterprise facilitates Web Services integrations with enterprise applications, and furnishes a new toolbar client for the Windows desktop facilitating access to multimedia presence,

IM, voice and web conferencing. Users can now partake of OpenScape's communications tools without cajoling the IT staff to integrate them into the apps — although the software development kit is now easier to use, if someone should want to do some integration work. Third, is OpenScape Enterprise Hosted, a joint venture with Accenture ([news - alert](http://www.accenture.com)) (<http://www.accenture.com>) and Ensium Corporation ([news - alert](http://www.ensim.com)) (<http://www.ensim.com>), wherein Siemens formulated the provisioning, billing and management software interfaces needed for quick and cost-effective deployment of OpenScape Enterprise into service provider environments.

Whatever the favored interfaces UC, it's obvious that groups of people working in collaboration will become more commonplace as UC proliferates throughout the enterprise. **UC**

*Richard Grigonis is Executive Editor of TMC's IP Communications Group.*

**Nortel's Hosted Solutions portfolio enables business to partake of such next-gen applications as UC, IP telephony, automatic call distribution, contact centers, etc., without investing heavily in customer premise equipment and staff.**

# FEATURE

by Richard  
"Zippy" Grigonis

## Feature Article

### Get a Move On — Mobility's Effect on Unified Communications

**The well-known consulting and research company Frost & Sullivan tells us that only about 20% of today's workers actually work at their desk anymore. Amusingly, half of the average worker's cell phone bill is spent on intra-company calling, with a third of the bill accounting for calls made inside the worker's business premises. This is why the desktop-based unified messaging paradigm has been infused with the mobility afforded by FMC (Fixed-Mobile Convergence) technologies to yield today's highly flexible and mobile unified communications platforms.**

There are various ways of imparting mobility to UC available to enterprises and carriers. One example is Siemens HiPath MobileConnect, offering an end-to-end enterprise FMC solution that delivers seamless roaming between Voice over Wireless LAN and cellular networks.

This paradigm can be subdivided into systems that rely on a dual or even triple-mode phone (if we include WiMAX or some other future wireless broadband technology), as opposed to a system that can be

directed to forward calls to separate devices; e.g., IP or circuit-switched desktop phone to a WiFi phone or to a cellphone) as the user roams. Sophisticated real-time routing controls such as "find-me follow-me" can be found in the UC solution of Interactive Intelligence (<http://www.inin.com>) called Communité, an Interaction Mobile Office™ application, which runs on Exchange or Notes. Communité also offers personal interaction management software that runs on PDAs such as Palm OS devices, RIM BlackBerries, and those using the Microsoft Pocket PC operating system. Users can update their presence status over the phone, via the Internet using a web browser, or from a PDA such as a Palm Pilot.

Regardless of the technological framework, the general trend has been to extend corporate IP PBX features to remote and/or roaming users, and to go beyond them by providing speech recognition and text-to-speech functionality so that a person driving their car or otherwise occupied can engage in both "hands-free" and "eyes-free" perusal and response to any item on a unified messaging list. For example, users of Objectworld Communications' ([news - alert](http://www.objectworld.com)) (<http://www.objectworld.com>) UC Server platform can check their email on the road by simply phoning in and listening to it over the phone with speech-to-text. Also, Interactive Intelligence's Communité has a speech-enabled auto-attendant and speech-enabled menu for message retrieval, status changes, and company directory access. Similarly, the Personal Communicator from Inter-Tel ([news - alert](http://www.inter-tel.com)) (<http://www.inter-tel.com>) can be accessed by voice using speech-recognition and/or any mobile device with the Inter-Tel Personal Communicator for Mobile Devices software.

Cisco has also tackled UC mobility with its Unified Mobile Communicator, an app that runs on mobile phones and smartphones, bringing with it enterprise communications capabilities and services. With it you can place and receive calls, access company directory contacts, check presence information (by looking at the phone display an employee can easily see who is available and who is busy), review voice mail messages, view a list of messages on the "visual voicemail" display and select one for playback, and conference and collaborate via the Unified Mobile Communicator's integration with Cisco Unified MeetingPlace.

Microsoft's big push into the UC market includes partnering with major telecom-related companies (Nortel, Siemens, etc.) to integrate Microsoft software with these partners' telecom technologies, giving Microsoft products greater mobility. Microsoft has addressed mobile messaging with Microsoft Exchange ActiveSync and the upcoming Microsoft Exchange Server 2007. Exchange ActiveSync runs on an increasing number of devices, including Microsoft Windows mobile-based phones and hardware and software from third-party providers, such as Nokia Siemens, Sony Ericsson, Dataviz, Palm, Motorola and Symbian. Thanks to this duo, HTML mail is now supported on mobile devices, and rich formatting can be viewed right on the device display. Instead of depending on a mobile device's limited memory, Microsoft-inbued devices enable you to search through all of your inbox messages on the Exchange server, retrieving them at will.

### Nortel's Converged Office

Microsoft and Nortel have joined forces in their Innovative Communications Alliance, and one exciting result is the Nortel Converged Office solution, which integrates Nortel Communications Server 1000 with Microsoft Office Live Communications Server (soon Office Communications Server) and Microsoft Office Communicator. Users can initiate desktop calls from Office Communicator using the Nortel Converged Office Remote Call Control capabilities. More importantly, remote users have enhanced mobility capabilities with full access to the corporate network, dial plan and PSTN, as well as support for extended business-grade IP PBX features from within the client software. Incoming calls to deskphones can be automatically forwarded, based on the user's location, ensuring that calls aren't missed when out of the office. The system supports various system-level features of Nortel's Communications Server 1000, such as Least Coast Routing and network class of service restrictions, and extends them to Office Communicator.

### Which iPhone?

Amusingly, there are two mobile devices in the news these days called the iPhone. The one getting the most publicity is Apple's, which relies on sophisticated "Multitouch" technology (i.e., your fingers and a touchscreen) instead of a keyboard or stylus. Amazingly, the iPhone runs Mac OS X, which means it supports multitasking, networking and desktop Mac applications. iPhone syncs up your personal data (media, through iTunes), contact information, email accounts, calendars, notes, photos and

bookmarks. The Apple iPhone is only 11.6 millimeters thick, has a 2 megapixel digital camera and a 3.5-inch, 160 pixel-per-inch color screen. AT&T has exclusive rights to market iPhones for five years.

At the moment, the Apple iPhone looks interesting, but wait and see how well this device interoperates with existing and future UC systems.

Amusingly, soon after the Apple iPhone announcement, Cisco sued Apple for using the iPhone name, which Cisco owns. The companies settled amicably, resulting in a multi-iPhone world, since Cisco and its LinkSys subsidiary offer not one, but a family of seven of their own "iPhone" VoIP handsets. Given the experience of Cisco and Linksys in the UC area (think of the Linksys One platform that can serve businesses of up to 100 users with integrated data networking and VoIP), Apple has some catching-up to do in terms of UC, though Yours Truly hears that is already starting to happen.

### The Service Provider Route

One way to deliver mobility to enterprise employees quickly is to rely mostly on a service provider instead of entirely on customer premise equipment.

Nuance Communications ([news - alert](http://www.nuance.com)) (<http://www.nuance.com>) provides a mobile search and messaging subscription-based service called Voice Control that complements devices such as the much-vaunted iPhone, obviating the need for a keyboard. Voice Control is ranked as the best-selling BlackBerry title based on units sold from all Handango storefronts for the first quarter of 2007. Users can direct Voice Control entirely by natural voice commands, instructing it to create calendar entries, dial a contact, play music, obtain directions, search for business listings, news, weather, stock quotes and sports scores. You can even dictate something and have it text-messaged.

### Get Moving Today

Whoever said "the race is not to the swift" obviously never worked in a modern business environment. The mobility aspects of today's unified communications systems bestow a welcome competitive edge to any organization's efforts in the marketplace. **UC**

*Richard Grigonis is Executive Editor of TMC's IP Communications Group.*

**One way to deliver mobility to enterprise employees quickly is to rely mostly on a service provider instead of entirely on customer premise equipment.**



Net Payne,  
VP of North American  
Enterprise Marketing

Nortel

Q & A

## 60 Seconds with Net Payne, VP of North American Enterprise Marketing, Nortel

**Net Payne has been with Nortel Networks for two-and-a-half years. Previously, he worked with Sprint in Kansas City as Director of Business Marketing at Sprint PCS, which was later folded back into Sprint proper.**

Richard "Zippy" Grigonis recently spoke with Payne about [Nortel's](#) ([quote](#) - [news](#) - [alert](#)) (new UC campaign).

**RG:** Tell me about UC 1-2-3.

**NP:** A year ago we launched a program called IPT 1-2-3, primarily designed to upgrade our installed base of customers from TDM to IP. We offered a series of pre-engineered, preconfigured packages, made enhancements to our sales tools and created a robust commercial offer wrapped in various marketing elements. This was dramatically successful: our growth in the enterprise during the second half of 2006 was 34% and in 1Q 2007 has been 31%.

But a year ago we didn't have a relationship with Microsoft as we do now with our Innovative Communications Alliance, nor did we have our robust alliance with IBM, focused on SameTime and Notes integration. Reflecting that change, we've moved to our UC 1-2-3 program, the next stage in our evolution of integrated campaigns for Nortel, to really take advantage of Nortel's unique market position and to focus on providing unified communications products to our customers.

We're leveraging the model we put in place with IPT 1-2-3, because we don't want to mess with a proven entity. We've taken the concept of pre-engineered and pre-configured packages that include voice and data applications and services, have continued those, and now we've updated them. Our UC-enabled solution upgrades are founded on the new Release 5 of our CS 1000 communications server phone system. To that we add line upgrades and IP phones. Importantly, we add in various UC elements, which depend on whether you're a Microsoft or IBM desktop-oriented organization. We've developed the ability to

package-in for no cost our Converged Office Starter Kit which we developed with Microsoft. We provide 25 user licenses so that every package we sell is UC-enabled and our customers merely have to turn it on with Microsoft LCS to enjoy a true UC experience.

Options within these packages include our CallPilot 5.0, our Contact Center and our MCS 5100, our multimedia portfolio's cornerstone for quite some time.

Our ordering tools have also been improved significantly. We've put rich commercial offers on the table which help drive our channel partners' increase in sales by avoiding a long, customized pricing scenario. Instead, we're giving them something they can quote and order and articulate very quickly and easily.

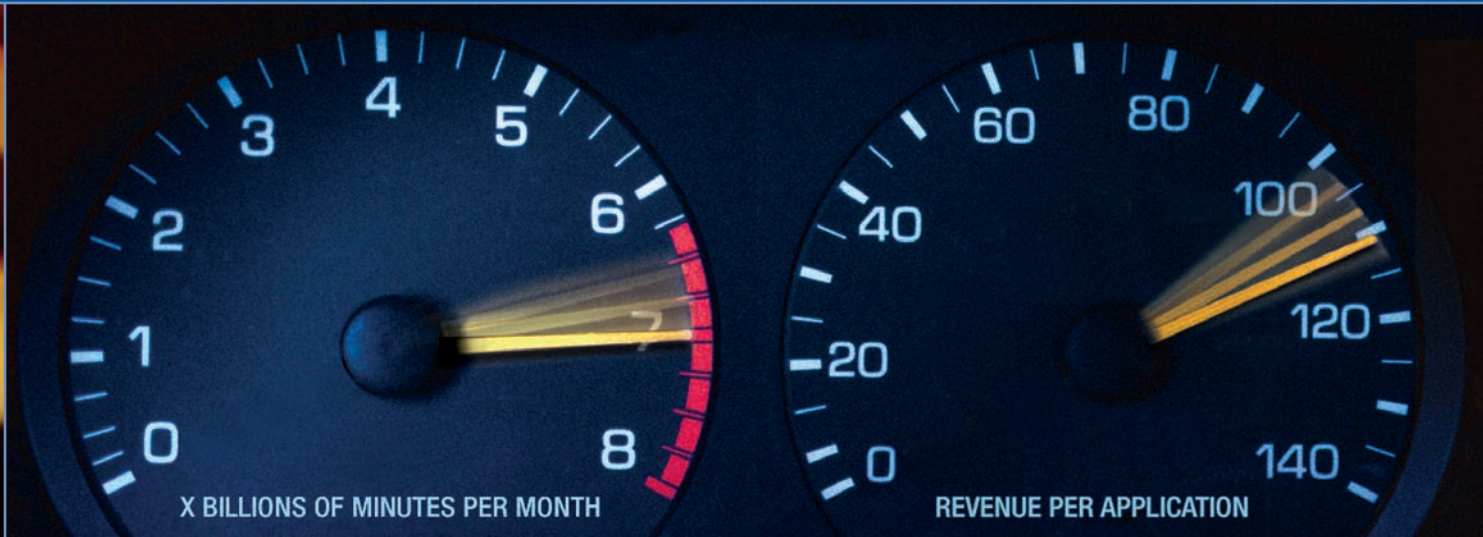
**RG:** What are the surrounding marketing elements?

**NP:** Training for our channel partners and our Direct Touch organization, customer-facing events and road shows across North America, and sales tools demand generation. There's also a tactical group we call the UC 1-2-3 War Room, who help with deal-specific opportunities for our channel partners against our competitors and ensure that we tie all the different campaign elements together.

The program and its incentives also encourage partners' sales reps to attach data and applications to sales. We have more of an opportunity to attach more data when we're selling these packages than we did in the past. We focus on PoE [Power-over-Ethernet], our Nortel Secure Router, and our Wireless LAN portfolio. We round that out with services aligned with our overall strategy of helping our channel partners in areas where they don't necessarily have competency in offering Nortel services to enable UC for our customers, or in tech support, installation and maintenance.

Ultimately, the UC 1-2-3 program helps customers tame and even leverage the hyperconnectivity chaos resulting from the proliferation of devices and applications across the network. For more information, visit <http://www.nortel.com/uc123>. **UC**

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