



Top 10 Benefits: of Unified Communications as a Service (UCaaS)

*Microsoft Teams and Direct Routing
for Business Cloud Telephony*



in the cloud
TECHNOLOGIES



in the cloud
TECHNOLOGIES



Last year was a genuine test of business resilience. We were forced to put away our distractions and to focus on things that really mattered.

I have great optimism that someday we'll look back at this and recall some good things, like all the lessons we learned. And how it made us stronger. And that we did, in fact, survive.

This transformation of the traditional business landscape has brought about new opportunities and technologies, all centered around business communication and enterprise uniformity.

We are a Cloud Service Provider (CSP) who provides augmented, Tier 3 IT support for clients in Boston, New Hampshire, Las Vegas and beyond!

Where Will the #Cloud Take You?
Let's Find Out Together.



Demetrius Cassidy
President/Founder

"If the pandemic has shown us anything, it is that we all need the face-to-face interaction we had prior to lockdowns. This need has reinforced the value of video conferencing when we interact with peers and clients, proving how truly important body language is in communicating effectively."



Top 10 Benefits of UCaaS Unified Communications as a Service

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Working Towards Unified Communication and Collaboration

Throughout the pandemic era of 2020, communication and collaboration applications saw unparalleled growth as companies rushed to provide for remote workers.

As these developmental stages took place, the timing coincided with the already growing acceptance and use of the cloud. Notions of Unified Communications (UC), especially VoIP and traditional telephony, began to be examined regarding efficiency, usefulness, and providing the same user experience across multiple channels.

More of a long-term trend, UC has shown continuous benefits to businesses, employees, partners, and vendors in a true global setting. Results and feedback show consistent, uniform, and better experiences for everyone, while at the same time lowering costs and improving reliability.

Unified Communications refers to the way different forms and tools in the digital workforce interact. By unifying phone calls, web conferencing, SMS, and email among others, users are able to share and access data and collaborate in real-time, while avoiding issues of dissimilar platforms and applications.

“Unified Communications drives efficiency and usefulness, providing the same experience for everyone.”

We examine this developing trend of porting communications and user functions to the cloud and ask will it as a service become the standard for years to come? Unified Communication as a Service (UCaaS) is picking up speed and seeing great returns on investment, especially when combined with support and other service stack offerings. Let’s begin by examining the current state of technology for remote/hybrid workers.

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Let’s Find Out Together!

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The State of Unified Communications

Unified Communications



► Discovering the Power of UC & Teams

The Covid pandemic quickly showed what our business strengths were, and how we were set to handle adversity. Our business resilience you might call it. But even more importantly, it showed us where our weaknesses lay. And it forced us to finally have discussions regarding employee location, accountability, and productivity measures. Harder still, it exposed new issues with security and accesses and even personal responsibility that we had never asked.

Adopted out of necessity and validated time and time again throughout the Covid-19 era, Microsoft Teams quickly became the platform of choice for an estimated 145 million daily users. As organizations raced to plan and implement processes for remote working, Microsoft Teams continued to pick up market share. Teams now holds a very commanding lead over competitors like Zoom and Google.

Had it not been for Microsoft Teams and other communications/collaboration tools saving the day, we would surely have a much harder time getting back to normal. Or back to more of a New Normal as these tools proved their usefulness and will forever be a part of all business moving forward.

With the immediate crisis behind us and work routines now requiring less of a traditional office setting, opportunities for communications integration are at the forefront of business forecasting. Companies are actively looking to continue improving productivity and finding ways to enhance business performance with flexible and scalable solutions.



Most notable, is the trend towards building a Unified Communications platform. Embraced for enterprise-wide uniformity and elimination of hardware costs / fees. Companies are reporting better productivity and more reliable communications for less money. Unifying your platforms will also free up valuable IT resources like time spent on monitoring and maintaining on-site hardware and user accounts.

Cost Savings and Uniformity with Teams



► Fixed Cost Telephony Service

Some organizations may choose to do this themselves, but most will use a managed service provider like In the Cloud Tech for a cost-effective, complete, and end-to-end, unified communications solution. Specialist providers like us offer it as a fully managed service, which includes everything from planning, implementing, migration, training, and even techniques for enterprise-wide adoption. Faster, smarter, and better.

► Experience Innovation in all Areas

- Infrastructure Management
- Service Management
- Applications Management Services
- Automation and Devops
- Cyber Security, Risk and Compliance
- Optimization and Transparency

► Benefits of Managed Cloud Operations

In the Cloud Tech can help design, build, and manage comprehensive Cloud Solutions that address the relevant components to fit your needs, that also fit your budget. With Managed Cloud Operations, leave the complexities of the process to us and enjoy new benefits at a fixed cost:

- Rapid, effective deployments specifically configured/managed to your needs/budget.
- Enhanced, leading security and compliance.
- Reduced and fixed costs, with On-Demand models to enable both stability and agility.
- Improved performance and efficiency with newly freed up resources.
- Ongoing guidance and adoption success measures from deployment to ongoing use.
- Availability to scale service levels up or down.



SECURE EDGE NETWORK



TEAMS ENDPOINTS

Our enterprise-grade PSTN solution delivers secure and reliable, unified cloud communications using Cloud voice with Microsoft Teams and Microsoft Direct Routing. Our fully managed voice network was built for the high demands of professional services and uses only carefully chosen Tier 1 carriers, with autofailover and real time carrier redundancy. The service is secured by encryption and delivered 100% from the cloud.



Cloud Computing is **the #1 in-demand skill**, according to LinkedIn. Half of the most promising jobs require good knowledge of this emerging technology.



The **median salary** for professionals in the cloud computing field is **\$146,350**.



67% of Enterprise-level IT infrastructure and software is now cloud-based as of the end of 2020.



Top reasons companies trust the cloud are:

71% = faster speeds,
63% = greater flexibility,
57% = better customer support



Cloud technology is considered so much safer that **94% of businesses reported significant improvements** in online security after porting data to the cloud.

Statistical Sources



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OneDrive, the popular free cloud storage service by Microsoft has **450 million users globally**.

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According to IDC, the three sectors planning to spend the most on cloud computing:

- Manufacturing - (\$19.7B)**
- Professional Services - (\$18B)**
- Banking - (\$16.7B)**

.....

80% of companies report **operation improvements within the first few months** of adopting the Cloud.

.....

Cloud technology is so much more reliable when it comes to safety that **94% of businesses report significant improvements** in online security after moving their data to the cloud.

Statistical Sources

Unified Communications as a Service

► Benefits of Unified Communications

Research and forecasting show that unifying collaboration tools with business telephony is the next step, as businesses continue to move more and more functions to the cloud. This can be accomplished with Microsoft Direct Routing and Teams.

With a cloud-based telephony system, users can make and receive calls on their existing business numbers, through the same provider, from any location, using any internet-enabled device like PC's, desk phones, cell phones and tablets, just to name a few. While VoIP technology is hardly new, tying it to and using it with Direct Routing and Microsoft Teams is, and it is creating a lot of movement.

► UCaaS with Direct Routing

Simply put, Microsoft's Cloud Telephony offering brings together both internal collaboration and external telephony, all routed directly through the Microsoft Teams interface.

By harnessing the power of Microsoft Direct Routing, companies are now able to receive Unified Communications as a Service (UCaaS), using the well-known and easy to use Microsoft Teams interface.

► How Teams Changed Cloud Telephony

Cloud telephony is replacing a physical Private Branch Exchange (PBX) system. Until IP based phone systems were validated for business use, a PBX was the only way to integrate telephony into a business. Rife with issues, limitations and fees, traditional PBXs came with their own proprietary phones, with no way to re-use them with a different system. This made changes difficult and costly.



IP based phone systems (VoIP) are now beginning to be used in conjunction with Microsoft Direct Routing, through Microsoft Teams. This is a new and growing trend of how companies connect their systems to a telephony network, resulting in a more secure, better managed system with premier High Definition quality video and audio.

Modernize and Streamline Environments



► Teams Makes Telephony Better

With the shift to distributed and remote workers, Direct Routing through Microsoft Teams is an ideal way to modernize all working environments and to streamline communication for any workforce, especially those with multiple locations. This managed service is more flexible and cost-effective, as the managing provider brings technical support and expertise as well as PSTN integration via Direct Routing, to be sure of a smooth transition and a successful implementation.

Organizations with more than 100 people systematically choose a managed provider to connect their calls using the Direct Routing option. Popular because a company can keep their existing phone numbers (and provider), which will enable moving to a Cloud voice solution. The entire Cloud Telephony system is managed centrally in a fixed-cost scenario, so charges for the whole organization are included in one agreement.

Direct Routing turns Microsoft Teams into an enterprise-wide telephony solution that is fully integrated with the widely used Microsoft 365 software suite. It provides a uniform experience to everyone everywhere, through a MS Teams interface that is available on multiple devices and platforms.

► Advanced Tools that Help Employees

Cloud telephony has already become popular with users wanting to keep in touch from anywhere they happen to be. Technologies offer the entire, full set of business telephony features from any location or device, allowing employees the ability to manage their own communications needs, be it making or receiving phone calls, accessing voicemail, instant messaging, call forwarding or groups.



With Cloud Telephony, each employee can use their own preferred internet-connected device and can easily switch between computers, softphones, cell phones, tablets or even group meeting rooms. It also means that all of your collaboration and communication, internal and external, now use the same interface. This is very beneficial for international or even multiple office needs, as it enables easier, more efficient communication on one uniform platform, resulting in businesses moving faster.

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The public cloud computing market will be worth **\$800 billion** by the end of 2025.

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By 2024, Enterprise cloud spending will make up **14% of IT revenue** globally.

.....

Platform as a Service (PaaS) will **grow by 26.6%** during 2021.

.....

70% of companies using the cloud plan to increase budgets in the near future.

.....

For the full year of 2020, Azure cloud infrastructure **spending grew 33% to \$142 billion**.

Statistical Sources



Why Use Cloud Telephony with Teams?

Microsoft Teams added **95 million** users in 2020 and is one of the top 3, fastest growing apps of the pandemic.

Teams currently has **145 million daily users**, up from 75 million last year.

From March to June 2020, Microsoft Teams noticed **894 percent growth**, as compared to Zoom.

Over **500,000 groups** use Microsoft Teams as their default messaging platform.

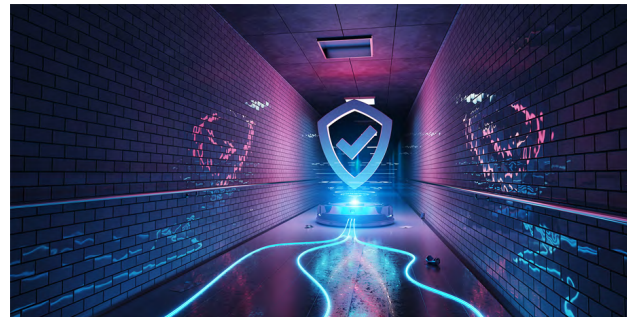
It's estimated that Microsoft Teams generated **\$6.8 billion in revenue in 2020**, a 700 percent increase year-on-year.

Statistical Sources

► Why Businesses Add Cloud Telephony

Moving telephony to the cloud allows a more modern approach to an environment that is standardized across all offices and is based on the familiar Microsoft 365 platform. It allows employees to be more flexible and creates a viable business model that is not location specific.

Employees they can move around, switch desks, work from home and even answer quick questions when on break or vacation. By having everyone in the organization using one centrally controlled platform, it provides the same user experience across the board. This network is controlled and monitored by the parent company so any reliability or quality issues can be addressed immediately.



Employees no longer need to use multiple devices for multiple reasons and there is never an issue with compatibility, because everyone is using the same technology on the same platform.

User training and support can be centralized and using a provider to manage this service brings additional personal support and local language support. For organizations that open and/or close offices regularly, a cloud telephony solution offers far more flexibility than on-premises solutions.

If we factor in the increasing numbers of employees who work remotely, or move between offices, it makes zero sense to lock-down business phone numbers to one physical location. Cloud Telephony brings better uptime, better system performance and the ability to quickly scale service levels up or down as necessary.

As with all Microsoft technologies, use is easy to understand, navigate, update and to implement changes. User management for example, allows employees to be added, removed, and managed centrally, in a flexible and secure environment.

Having a Cloud Telephony system tied to Microsoft's security and access solutions reduces complexity and at the same time improves control, security, and awareness. Direct Routing with Microsoft Teams is hosted in the cloud, so there are never any local outages or downtime and if there is a sudden flood of calls, it is very easy to manage capacity and load balancing.

UCaaS Implementation and Adoption



Discovery / Planning



User Licensing



Implementation/
Integration



Training / Adoption

► Implementing Teams for Telephony

Licensing is the first aspect of implementation, and while minimal, does require a license for using a Microsoft based system. Each user needs a base license like a Microsoft or Office 365 E1, F3 or E3 to which a phone system license add-on is quick and easy. Microsoft or Office 365 E5 includes the phone system as part of the existing license.

Users only need to have the Teams application on each of their devices, which can be Windows, iOS or Android. If a company is already using Microsoft 365 for email and work functions, this is a very easy transition. If organizations are already using any form of unified communications, like the outgoing Skype for Business platform for example, then moving their telephony to Teams is also not a very major change. The old and new systems can even operate together and allow users to gradually be migrated to the new cloud-based system.

The final important step in integration and migration is user training and adoption. As the new cloud-based system will offer many more functions than the traditional phone PBX headset, it is very important that everyone understands the change and is ready to embrace the benefits brought by unified communications.

► Training and Adoption Support

In the Cloud Tech places so much importance to this that we have assembled a premier group of Subject Matter Experts (SMEs), who are there to ensure enterprise-wide adoption through training and support, which is included in the project cost to guarantee a seamless transition.



As a managed service offering, it is secure, global, and tailored to every individual organization's needs. Each organization can decide how it wishes to use phone numbers, voicemail, calling ID, call flows, advanced call routing, IVR, security and compliance. From there users are free to harness many new functionalities like voice capabilities, call transfer, forwarding and voicemail, as well as video calls, meetings, chat and other collaborations.

Expert Integration with MS Teams



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▶ **Achieve Truly Unified Communications**

The real value (and beauty) of a fully managed cloud telephony service is that everything is handled, from system design, integration, migration, training, and support. This comes at a fixed monthly rate and is easily scaled up or down, depending on the needs of an organization.

As more and more organizations adopt Microsoft Teams for internal collaboration, it makes great sense that integrating external voice calls would be the next step. By adopting Microsoft Direct Routing, enterprises can consolidate their telephony infrastructure and leverage a single platform for organization-wide external communication.

Implementing external communications through Microsoft Teams can dramatically improve productivity and collaboration across any organization.

▶ **Provide Employees Flexible Tools**

Employees can have the flexibility to use Teams on any device, from anywhere in the world. Meanwhile, the managed provider and IT staff can manage the centralized cloud infrastructure and adapt it or scale it as the workforce changes into the future.

In the Cloud Tech has simplified the process for implementing Microsoft Teams Direct Routing and offers it as a fully managed service with fixed costs. We have extensive experience in integrating and providing cloud communication capabilities through public and private global networks and our UCaaS is a very reliable solution for truly unified communications.

This fully managed service can be used with existing PSTN connectivity, so users can keep their existing phone numbers and making this a truly seamless and unified solution.



Where will the Cloud Take You?

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