

# Channel Manager's Playbook

**Volume 3:** Cloud Contact Centers & UC



## ‘Broaden’ Your Horizons with the HX4E ATA and MX8A Gateways



- Now BroadSoft Certified for Easier Provisioning
- Smart FoIP® (Fax over IP) for PSTN Success Rates
- 2 - 8 Configurable FXS/FXO Ports

**NETGEN**  
Communications

Powered By



**ITEXPO Booth 513**

770-449-7704 [www.netgencommunications.com](http://www.netgencommunications.com)

# MILLIONS OF DOLLARS PAID FOR MULTI-LOCATION DEALS



## **318-loc. auto parts supplier**

POTS, DSL, Cable and Network Security

## **106-loc. property management company**

Hosted PBX, IP-VPN, Internet, 3G Backup and Broadband Aggregation

## **528-loc. quick service restaurant**

Digital Voice, Internet and POTS

## **267-loc. sporting goods store**

POTS

## **135-loc. grocery chain**

POTS

## **BullsEye Has You Covered. Every Service. Every Location. Nationwide.**

- POTS
- Hosted PBX
- Integrated Voice
- SIP
- Network Security and Managed Services
- IP-VPN
- Virtual Number/Auto-Attendant
- Telecom Expense Management

**Make BIG sales with BullsEye!!!  
Call today to get started.**

877-298-4539 • [agents@bullseyetelecom.com](mailto:agents@bullseyetelecom.com)

**BULLSEYE**  
TELECOM 



# Break out of the Box

## OF YOUR OUTDATED PHONE SYSTEM

## Introducing Tele IP – Agents can now take advantage of Customizing Hosted Services

Telegration agents can now take control of their customers with Tele IP, private branded Hosted PBX services. Telegration's certified sales engineers and project managers work with our agents to design a hosted solution that meets the needs of the customers and the agent's desires for customized rate plans, leading edge equipment options and feature benefits. **Tele IP – yet another reason why it's better here.**

Tele IP comes with the Tele IP Portal which allows our agents to manage and change their customer's hosted design, ensuring total control. Telegration agents can also determine pricing and margin. In addition to Tele IP, we help your customers compare pricing and solutions from other leading providers, such as Star2Star, Fonality and Vonage, to meet the most basic or complex customer solutions.

**Even better...Telegration's pre- and post-sales support help solve your customer issues, make moves, adds and changes.**

**If you love serving customers and want to be a part of one of the fastest growing telecommunications teams in the nation, apply at [www.telegration.com/agents/](http://www.telegration.com/agents/) or call our Partner Program at 1-800-TEL-GRTN**

THE  ALLIANCE  
PARTNERS

CompTIA

**Telegration**



# CONTENTS



## 6 Unifying Demand

UCaaS directly addresses much of the reluctance behind slower-than-expected unified communications adoption

*By Martin Vilaboy*

## 10 Omni-Channeling

The case, and sales pitch, for intelligence in the contact center

*By Martin Vilaboy*

## 16 UC User Realities

Unifying IT assumptions with user experiences

*By Martin Vilaboy*

## 18 Making Contact

Fusion looks to cloud to transform the contact center market

*By Tara Seals*

## 20 Global UC Moves

Mobility to drive global UC uptake to new heights

*By Tara Seals*

## Advertiser Index

NetGen	(www.netgencommunications.com)	1
BullsEye Telecom	(www.bullseyetelecom.com)	2
Telegration	(www.telegration.com)	3
Jenne	(www.jenne.com)	5
LSi	(www.linesystems.com)	9
Fusion	(www.fusionconnect.com)	11
NexVortex	(www.nexvortex.com)	13
Ooma	(www.ooma.com)	15
NetCarrier	(www.netcarrier.com)	21
CSF	(www.csfcorp.com)	22
Visualware	(www.visualware.com)	22
Star2Star	(www.star2star.com)	23
Powernet	(www.powernet.com)	24



Martin Vilaboy  
**Editor-in-Chief**  
martin@bekapublishing.com

Tara Seals  
**Contributing Editor**  
tara@bekapublishing.com

Percy Zamora  
**Art Director**  
percy@bekapublishing.com

Berge Kaprelian  
**Group Publisher**  
berge@bekapublishing.com

Rene Galan  
**Associate Publisher**  
rene@bekapublishing.com

### Beka Business Media

Berge Kaprelian  
**President and CEO**

Neil Ende  
**General Counsel**

Jim Bankes  
**Business Accounting**



**Corporate Headquarters**  
14700 N Frank Lloyd Wright Boulevard,  
#157  
Scottsdale, AZ 85260  
Voice: 480.503.0770  
Fax: 480.503.0990  
berge@bekapublishing.com

© 2017 Beka Business Media, All rights reserved.  
Reproduction in whole or in any form or medium  
without express written permission of  
Beka Publishing is prohibited. ChannelVision  
and the ChannelVision logo are trademarks  
of Beka Publishing



# Your Value Added Distributor for Communication Products and Solutions

Jenne, Inc. is a leading value-added distributor of technology products and solutions focusing on voice, video, data networking, premise security and the cloud, including equipment and software for the Enterprise and SMB markets.

**MORE  
INFORMATION**

## Operational Support and Excellence

- Jenne provides unparalleled operational support—we are experts in distribution.
- Same day shipping from Jenne's large on-hand, in-stock inventory for orders placed before 7 p.m. EST.
- An industry-leading order rate of 99.98 percent.
- On-time shipments rate of 99.89 percent.
- Staging and provisioning services, such as preliminary configuration, licensing, and upgrades.

Request information on Jenne's value added programs and services, and manufacturers which Jenne partners with in Cloud Solutions and Unified Communications.

**MORE  
INFORMATION**

# UNIFYING UC DEMAND



## UCaaS expected to drive next adoption wave

By **Martin** Vilaboy

**T**he need for unified communications is fairly ubiquitous. Across just about every vertical and SIC code organizations are faced with sprawling employees and devices, fast and agile competitors, empowered and demanding customers and a need to control cost, be it in real estate or telecom expenses. Tools that unify communica-

tions and facilitate collaboration specifically address all those issues.

Yet unified communications as a packaged service, despite its relative maturity, remains far less than universally adopted, particularly outside of larger enterprise accounts. A recent survey of more than 400 enterprise and SMB IT decision-makers, performed by UBM Tech for XO Commu-



nications, found that only one-third of organizations had fully embraced UC. On the other side of the spectrum, a separate survey performed by Osterman Research for ConnectSolutions found that about as many IT decision-makers (26 percent) and business decision makers (39 percent) are either “somewhat” or “very fearful” of migrating to UC. Nearly half of those surveyed admitted that they don’t fully understand the full impact UC would have on their organizations. These fears and trepidations come despite the fact that 71 percent of those surveyed by Osterman believe there are “significant” or even “enormous” benefits that can be realized from the deployment of UC.

Once again, the cloud comes to the rescue.

Of course, cloud or hosted UC is nothing new either. The concept of cloud communications and the basis of UC-as-a-service (UCaaS) go back at least 15 years. But it’s only more recently that UCaaS has hit performance and feature levels rivaling on-premises solutions. And many pundits and proponents believe the cloud is ready to push a powerful second wave of UC adoption.

“Private and public cloud-based UC-as-a-service solutions are expected to fuel the next phase of growth,” says BCC Research analyst Nandita Bhotika. “The cost efficiencies and operational flexibility of these shared services are proving a potent model for market players. Although challenges in its adoption are still a concern, UCaaS is expected to give the UC&C market its needed boost.”

BCC researchers expect the market for UCaaS to total nearly \$18 billion by 2020, up from \$6.5 billion in 2015 and reflecting a five-year

CAGR of 22.5 percent. Much of the growth, say BCC, will be driven by wider adoption among SMBs, which tend to find cloud-based services more accessible due to smaller capital outlays.

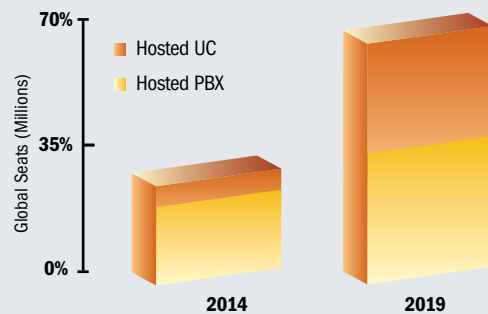
According to Diane Myers, senior research director at IHS, Inc., hosted UC seats, which made up 22 percent of the unified communications market in 2014, will jump to 46 percent of the market by 2019. Myers says hosted PBX and UC services are being pitched alongside SIP trunking as more multi-site businesses seek out hybrid solutions. Markets and Markets, meanwhile, makes an even more ambitious forecast, putting the UCaaS market at \$24.88 billion by 2020. Here again, the research firm attributes much of this growth to SMB adoption as these buyers look to update and simplify communication processes at an affordable cost.

In a bit of a twist, the optimism around future cloud UC adoption has a lot to do with the reasons why businesses have not adopted UC up to this point. And, not surprisingly, the top barrier to UC adoption, at least according to UBM Tech’s findings, has to do with perceived costs and subsequently getting an ROI on those expenses, both of which were named by about three-quarters of respondents. For more than two-thirds of non-adopters, UC implementations are perceived as posing a risk of disruption to the business, while 62 percent cited a lack of in-house technical expertise.

“The cloud may well provide one possible answer,” say UBM Tech analysts.

Indeed, more than half (54 percent) of respondents who don’t yet have UC in production believe cloud can

#### Hosted UC seats made up 22% of the unified communication services market in 2014, growing to 46% in 2019



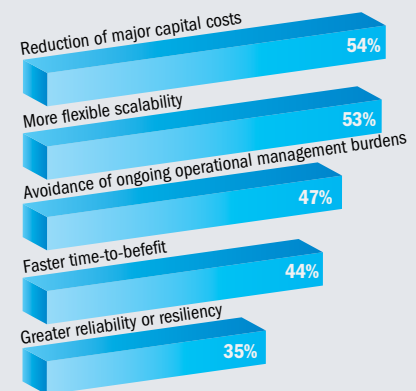
Source: IHS, Inc.

help overcome their top obstacle to implementation: cost, while about the same percentage (53 percent) see the cloud as offering more flexible scalability – a key concern for incremental UC rollouts, say UBM analysts.

In addition to addressing objections about upfront capital investment, the as-a-service model also is known to alleviate issues with internal IT skills shortages, while allowing firms to bypass technical implementation issues and, in turn, start delivering results to the business sooner. A cloud-based deployment also can

#### Next Wave of UC

Which of the following do you perceive as advantages of cloud-enabled UC?



Source: UBM Tech, XO

facilitate the kind of smaller-scale pilot that can provide the proof-of-value executives need to green-light broader enterprise adoption, UBM Tech researchers point out.

“These advantages, combined with ongoing advancement in cloud technology and market acceptance of the cloud model, are making it

#### UC&C Market Size and Expectations

Service Type	2015	2020	CAGR
Global UC&C market total	\$26.5 billion	\$62 billion	18.5%
On-premises deployments	\$18.2 billion	\$37.8 billion	15.7%
Hybrid deployment	\$1.8 billion	\$6.2 billion	28%
UCaaS	\$6.5 billion	\$18 billion	22.5%

Source: BCC Research

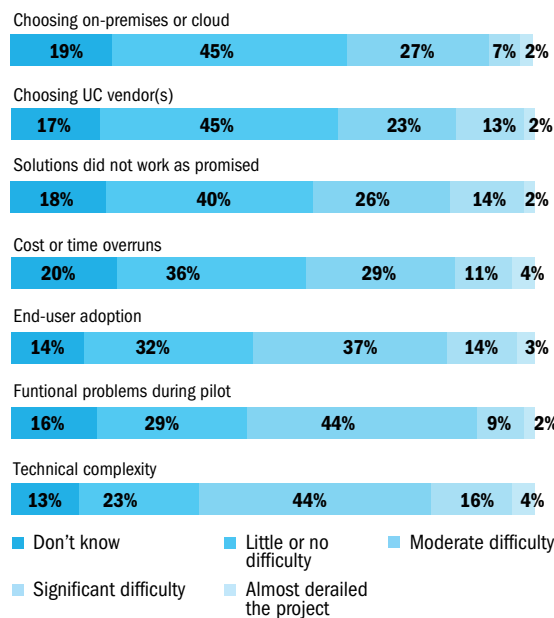
more likely that future adopters will opt for some type of UC-as-a-service offering,” says the UBM Tech study.

Among respondents who made their decisions to implement UC a year or more ago, for instance, only 35 percent even considered the cloud, and just 19 percent wound up going with a cloud-based solution. Of respondents who are still contemplating their UC implementations, on the other hand, more than half say they are now likely to consider cloud. “In fact, 15 percent have already made up their minds that if and when they implement UC, it will definitely be cloud-based,” found UBM Tech researchers.

Of course, a cloud delivery model, in and of itself, is not enough. UCaaS providers also have stepped up their games.

“UCaaS offerings are increasingly functionally competitive with their premises-based alternatives,” write Gartner analysts Daniel O’Connell and Bern Elliot in the firm’s most recent Magic Quadrant report on the category. Key improvement in 2015, says Gartner, include an improved UCaaS user experience, API connectivity with leading cloud applications and mobile-

### How much difficulty did each of the following present during your organization’s UC implementation?



Source: UBM Tech, XO

first user deployments.

Among specific providers, Star2Star recently introduced StarBox CCM 2.0 to facilitate onboarding and support for large enterprises with specialized or complex dialing needs. The company also introduced StarBand to its UCaaS offering, which supports primary and secondary circuit support, traffic prioritization and automatic failover and service quality monitoring. Recently added capabilities also include Android mobile support, screen sharing and an automated quoting tool.

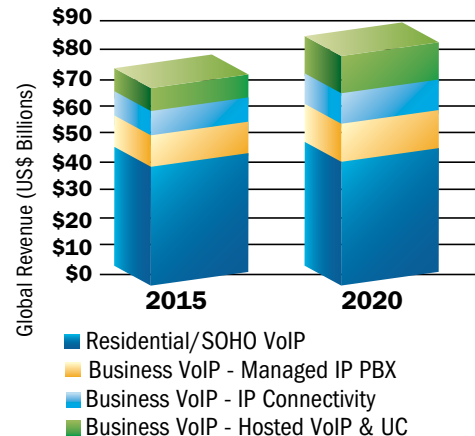
In 2015 Mitel, for its part, acquired Mavenir to enhance its mobility capabilities. The Mitel Open Integration Gateway (OIG), meanwhile, supports integrations with Salesforce, SugarCRM, Google, Microsoft, NetSuite and Zoho, as well as custom integrations. And a partnership

with Vidyo has improved Mitel’s video capabilities, says Gartner, while also enabling integration with Polycom and Cisco video.

RingCentral likewise continues to expand its capabilities and in 2015 added integration with Google Apps for Work, Microsoft Office 365, and a RingCentral-branded contact center developed with inContact.

The good news for all providers and resellers of unified communications: UC adopters are seeing results. According to UBM Tech findings, 82 percent of adopters reported they their UC deployment met or exceeded their expectations for improved team collaboration, which was the number one expected benefit. Eight in 10 said UC met or exceeded expecta-

### Over the next 5 years, hosted VoIP and UC will be the segment with the largest growth in the global VoIP and unified communications market

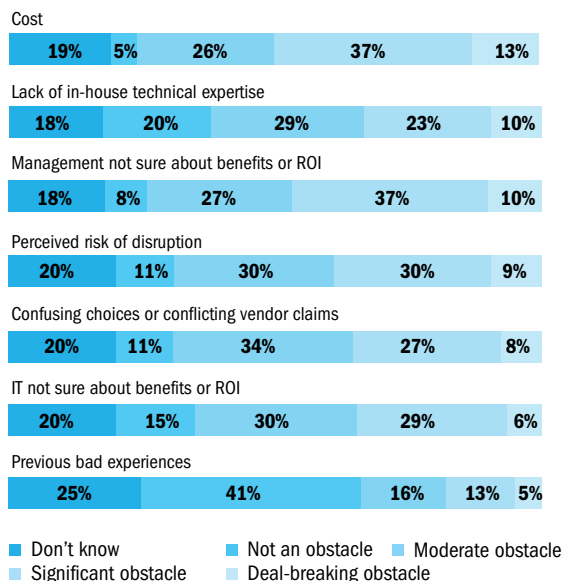


Source: IHS, Inc.

tions in terms of improved user productivity, while three-quarters said the same about lowering technology ownership cost. All told, 87 percent of adopters say UC met or exceeded their expectations.

And even more good news for UCaaS providers, according to UBM Tech findings, whereas 47 of current users opted for on-premises UC, only 13 percent of future adopters are likely to choose on-premises. □

### How much of an obstacle is each of the following to your organization’s adoption of UC?



Source: UBM Tech, XO



# LSI ALL STAR ★ SPIFFS 2017

## ★ MONTHLY

- 1x ON ETHERNET - ALL MARKETS
- 2x ON HPBX - RENTAL MODEL
- 2x ON SIP PRI AND ANALOG LINES - DEAL VALUE MUST BE GREATER THAN \$500
- 3x ON SIP TRUNKS
- 5x ON HPBX - PURCHASE OR BYOD MODEL

## ★ QUARTERLY

- \$2,500 - CHOICE OF A MICROSOFT SURFACE PRO 4 OR A 60 INCH ULTRA HD TV
- **\$10,000 - ALL STAR LEVEL - QUARTERLY TRIP**

**★ Q1** TRIP FOR 2, WITH \$300 AIRFARE CREDIT,  
TO THE KENTUCKY DERBY

**★ Q2** TRIP FOR 2, WITH \$300 AIRFARE CREDIT,  
TO THE MLB ALL STAR GAME

**★ Q3** TRIP FOR 2, WITH \$300 AIRFARE CREDIT,  
TO A SELECTED GAME OF THE WORLD SERIES

**★ Q4** TRIP FOR 2, WITH \$300 AIRFARE CREDIT,  
TO THE NBA ALL STAR WEEKEND

## ★ ANNUALLY

- **\$75,000 BY NOVEMBER 1, 2017**

**★ 17** TRIP FOR 2, WITH \$300 AIRFARE CREDIT,  
TO THE SUPER BOWL



Line Systems  
A DIVISION OF  
Telesystem

\*CERTAIN AGENTS MAY HAVE CONTRACT PROVISIONS THAT WILL EXCLUDE THEM FROM MONTHLY SPIFFS. THESE AGENTS WILL BE ELIGIBLE FOR QUARTERLY AND ANNUAL TRIPS. SEE YOUR LSI/TELESYSTEM CHANNEL PARTNER MANAGER FOR DETAILS.

\*ANY ELITE MASTER AGENT THAT HAS 3 QUALIFYING SUB AGENTS IN ANY QUARTER OR 3 QUALIFYING SUBS FOR THE ANNUAL GOAL WILL QUALIFY FOR THE TRIPS.

\*SPIFFS THAT EXCEED \$20,000 ARE SUBJECT TO EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT APPROVAL AND WILL BE SUBJECT TO REDUCTION AT THE SOLE DISCRETION OF TELESYSTEM.

\* SPIFFS ON DEALS BELOW STANDARD PRICING ARE SUBJECT TO EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT APPROVAL AND WILL BE SUBJECT TO REDUCTION AT THE SOLE DISCRETION OF TELESYSTEM.

\*QUARTERLY AND ANNUAL TRIPS MAY NOT BE SUBSTITUTED FOR A CASH PRIZE.



# Omni-CHANNELING

## The pitch for intelligence in the contact center

By **Martin** Vilaboy

Nearly six out of 10 businesses recently surveyed by Aberdeen Group say they use at least eight channels of communications when interacting with customers who are looking to make a purchase. A separate study from Adobe Digital Index likewise found that 79 percent of people admit to switching devices during a single online interaction.

It's largely why the term "call center" no longer adequately describes today's customer contact center, and it speaks to the complexity today's omni-channel businesses face in terms of customer communications and interactions, from marketing to sales to support.

"The contact center is the nerve center of the business," writes Omer Minkara, Aberdeen Group research director. "Much like how the human brain functions, it collects and interprets numerous signals." While the human brain collects signals through five sense, "the contact center collects data through channels of customer interaction."

Of course, how a company uses that structured and unstructured data can be the difference between strategic success and failure, as Aberdeen research suggests those that have grasped the notion of intelligent contact centers are reaping enterprise-wide rewards. Indeed, the research firm identified numerous key performance indicators where performance of intelligent

# Fusion brings it all together in the cloud.



**Cloud Communications**



**Cloud Connectivity**



**Cloud Computing**

Fusion's Single Source Solutions deliver everything our Partners need to succeed in the cloud. Experience it for yourself! **Visit us at Channel Partners in Las Vegas Booth 237.**

To learn more contact us at **888-301-1721.**

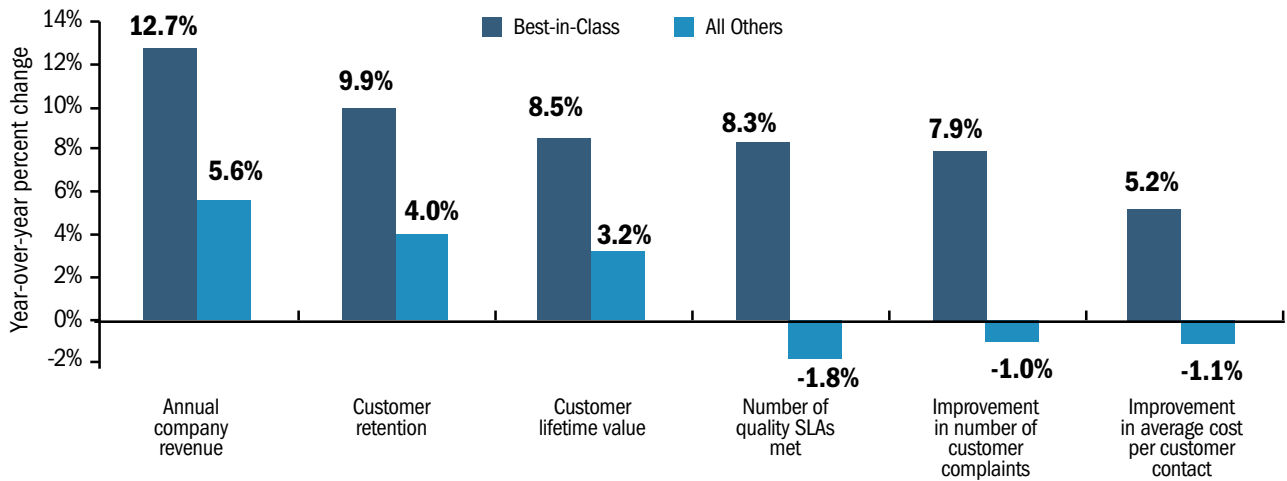


[www.fusionconnect.com](http://www.fusionconnect.com)

**fusion**<sup>SM</sup>



## Performance of Intelligent Contact Centers Outpace “All Others”



Source: Aberdeen Group

contact centers, depicted as “best-in-class,” outpaces all others, including year-to-year improvements in revenue, retention, satisfaction, cost per customer contact, first call resolution and number of SLAs met.

All told, Aberdeen cites three main categories of performance benefits that intelligent contact centers provide. For starters, they enjoy superior customer experience results indicated by the ability to decrease the number of customer complaints year over year (7.9 percent for best-in-class vs. -1.0 percent for all others).

“As such, they observe substantial annual growth in customer retention rates and customer lifetime value,” argues Minkara.

Secondly are the benefits that relate to operational results, including metrics such as agent utilization, number of quality SLAs met and average handle time. “Managing operations to improve these KPIs ultimately help contact centers reduce customer service costs,” continues Minkara.

Aberdeen figures show “that intelligent contact centers maximizing operational efficiencies reduce service costs by 5.2 percent year-over-year, compared to 1.1 percent increase by all others,” said Minkara’s research report. Put together, the results suggest that intelligent contact centers improve the customer service experience while simultaneously lowering customer service costs.

Even better, the third area of benefits is financial results. Aberdeen figures suggest that companies with best-in-class contact centers enjoy more than twice the year-over-year growth in annual company revenue than the all others group (12.7 percent vs. 5.6 percent).

## THE CORNERSTONES OF INTELLIGENCE

So how does a company determine the IQ of its customer support resources? Aberdeen researchers have identified four building blocks that businesses can use to help construct a performance-enhancing, intelligent contact center.

Being that customer support resides in an omni-channel world, where multiple systems (CRM, ACD, IVR) and channels (phone, SMS, live chat, email) are integrated across the enterprise and experience to provide a unified view of the customer, it’s no surprise that the first building block is the seamless flow of data across the organization, or workflow optimization. And one of the primary upsides of workflow optimization is a personalized customer experience.

In turn, intelligent contact centers are 31 percent more likely to use customer contact data to direct customers to the appropriate channels, show Aberdeen surveys. “This is done by using ACD data in combination with account data within

the CRM system to optimize customer routing,” Minkara explained.

Companies also can build specific workflows so clients within higher-spending categories are quickly connected to a high-touch channel (i.e. phone) without having to go through IVR, or a workflow can route clients to a preferred support channel, assuming that information is available within the CRM platform. Companies with intelligence contact centers also are 61 percent more likely to route support interactions based on complexity, showed Aberdeen.

Beyond customer interaction, optimized data flows can help businesses streamline operations, such as with agent scheduling. Aberdeen found that intelligent contact centers are 77 percent more likely than all others to use self-service data when forecasting agent demand across all channels, meaning companies actively monitor the number of customers using self-service portals such as a website, IVR or an online community, and apply this insight when projecting agent demand across channels.

The next principal component of intelligence in the contact center, says Aberdeen, is the empowerment of agents.

“Data shows that intelligent contact centers truly understand the importance of empowering employees with timely and relevant insights needed to do their jobs,” said Minkara.

# Uncommon Cloud Communications, Now with Guaranteed Quality of Service.

nexVortex **mSIP** with definitive troubleshooting.

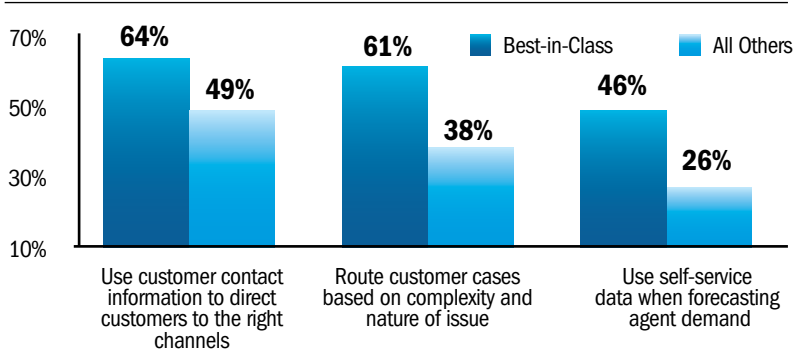
*Because voice quality matters.*

See how we do it. Visit us at [www.nexVortex.com](http://www.nexVortex.com).



Learn More About **nexVortex Managed SIP Trunking.**  
[www.nexVortex.com](http://www.nexVortex.com) • 855.639.8888 • [sales@nexVortex.com](mailto:sales@nexVortex.com)

## Personalize the Customer Service Experience



Source: Aberdeen Group

Best-in-class firms, for instance, are 17 percent more likely than all others to have access to detailed historical account data, often preventing the need for agents to ask more exploratory questions or for customers to provide and repeat basic information – an issue that often tops lists of customer support complaints. Likewise, intelligent contact centers provide workers with unified desktop capabilities, whereas, on average, contact center agents traditionally have used three screens to find relevant data needed to serve customers.

“This consumes 15 percent of agent time,” said Aberdeen. “Hence, a 300-seat contact center with a fully loaded annual labor cost of \$50,000 incurs \$2.25 million each year in un-

necessary costs due to poor information management practices.”

Customer service reps in an intelligent contact center also are empowered with easy access to relevant knowledgebase articles, said Minkara. “Such easy access to relevant insight ultimately helps the intelligent contact center reduce handle times and improve first contact resolutions.”

Empowered agents lead to happier customers, and improving customer experience results is a top objective for 96 percent of contact centers surveyed by Aberdeen. Here again, intelligent contact centers are known for allowing executives to manage performance through the lens of the customers. In other words, the top-performing companies use a mix

of activities to track customer experience outcomes and ensure agents are meeting and exceeding client needs.

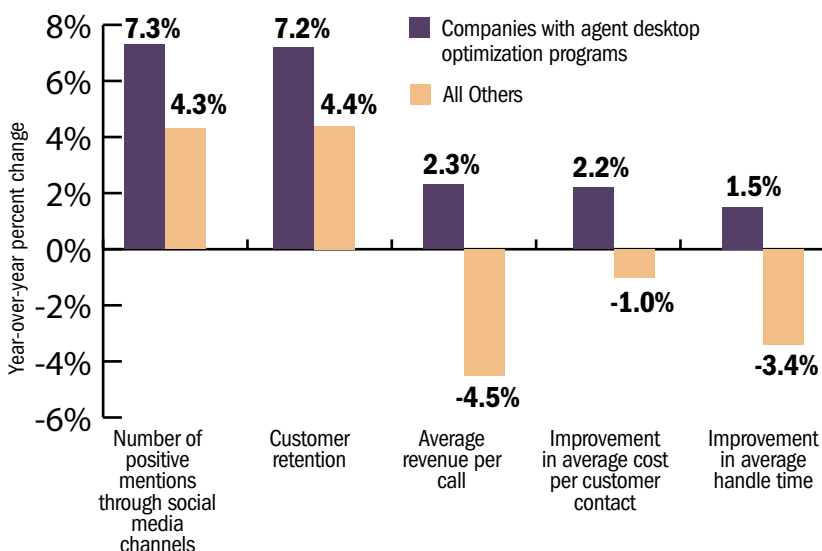
Best-in-class contact centers, for instance, are 28 percent more likely to enable supervisors and executives with real-time views of activity results. This provides decision makers with the ability to detect positive or negative trends in a timely fashion and take corrective action when necessary, say Aberdeen analysts. The best-in-class also are 30 percent more likely to use customer feedback when measuring and managing agent performance, and are 37 percent more likely to use voice of the customer (VoC) data as a way to build agent competency profiles, compared to all others.

So far, we have seen how intelligence in the contact center improves agent interaction with customers and upper management, as well as their own performance. The forth building block involves smarter interaction between customer care and IT departments. Aberdeen surveys found that best-in-class companies are 44 percent more likely to have a formal process where customers care executive and the CIOs work closely to manage customer data. (Incidentally, they are also significantly more likely to regularly back up customer data.)

“A collaborative data management process includes determining the roadblocks in making better use of data, mapping data flows, and determining how to incorporate new channels within the current customer interaction channel mix,” Minkara stated. “While each business will face unique issues at different points in time, it is regular collaboration that ultimately helps the intelligent contact centers outpace all others and drive maximum results through effective use of data.”

Ultimately, in the era of the empowered consumer, who typically is armed with a single device by which they can communicate with a business in multiple ways, an intelligent contact center becomes less a differentiator and more a necessity. □

## Focus on the Agent Desktop to Create Happy Customers & Minimize Costs



Source: Aberdeen Group





# We're ready to talk small business.

Join the Ooma Office Partner Program  
and earn 4x MRR and more.

4x  
MRR

It's a great time to sell Ooma Office. Not only is it one of the most flexible small business phone systems available, but PCMag readers selected it the #1 VoIP provider for small business for three years running. **Not a bad calling card.**

## Calling all Partners

Ooma Office is a perfect fit for small businesses with 20 users or less—with all the enterprise-grade features your customers need, none of the pricey bells and whistles they don't. Even better, the Ooma Office Partner Program makes selling and referring the Ooma Office system a smart business decision for you.

## Partner with the enterprise-grade phone service built for small business

Learn more about the Partner Program, territories, and payment plans. Visit [ooma.com/office-partners](http://ooma.com/office-partners) or call our representatives at 1-888-9500-VAR.



# UC User

## Unifying IT assumptions with user experiences

By **Martin** Vilaboy

It's fairly well-established, including in numerous surveys and studies, that unified communications capabilities improve worker productivity, and workers like using them.

Indeed, satisfaction levels are solid among both users and IT departments. Even so, a survey by Unify Square suggests that IT departments lack accurate insights into the UC end user experience. IT departments, it turns out, have some misconceptions about the type of tools being used, the degree to which UC tools are employed and the struggles users face.

"This discrepancy shows early signs of a lack of understanding on the part of IT regarding how end users are using UC and common challenges they face in fully integrating the system into their day-to-day," surmised the study.

Perhaps it's not surprising. UC is a complex area, with lots of fast-moving and quickly changing parts, plus the added complexities of BYOD and distributed workforces. At the same time, IT departments are largely going at it alone. Nearly two-thirds of enterprises default to what Unify Square calls the "brute force" method of assigning dedicated IT staff to manage the UC system. Only one in 10 of those surveyed leverages a third-party partner, while 6 percent leverage a managed service and just 4 percent have access to any type of operation software to help with the overall management,

monitoring and analytics of UC systems.

Considering the disconnect uncovered by Unify Square's survey, IT departments may not only see the need for increased attention and investment in UC enablement but also may admit they need more help from partners and providers.

For starters, user productivity due to UC systems and satisfaction levels may be higher than IT departments think.

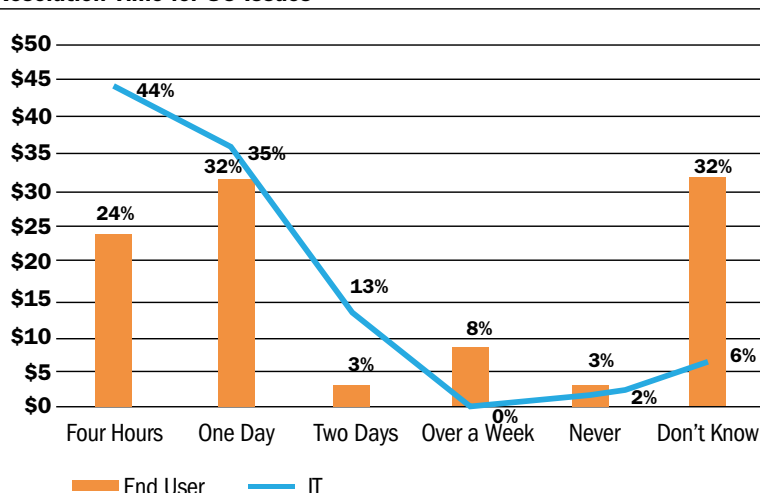
While nearly three quarters of IT departments surveyed believe their users are more productive due to UC systems, a

full 80 percent of actual users credit their UC systems for improved productivity. All the while, IT believes that only slightly more than 1 percent of users are "very satisfied" with the UC system. Among those that have been surveyed for satisfaction, however, a full quarter of end users report to being "very satisfied," while only about half as many users are dissatisfied as IT believes.

Incidentally, 70 percent of users have never been surveyed, or don't recall being surveyed, about their UC system satisfaction, so here's one area where solution partners can quickly help.

"If IT isn't taking the pulse of both system and end users on a regular basis, how are they supposed to

Resolution Time for UC Issues



Source: Unify Square

# Realities

effectively train end users or spot issues?” asked Scott Gode, vice president of product marketing at Unify Square. “By not looking deeply enough into UC system health and user satisfaction, IT is acting as their own worst enemy. But lucky for them, visibility is easily attainable and can fast-track UC ROI.”

Satisfaction levels are somewhat surprising when looking at perceptions versus realities in instances where there are problems or issues

vices at the first sign of trouble, while, even worse, 21 percent will ignore the issue entirely and not even try to fix it. Further complicating matters, more than a quarter of users admit to using other communications apps in combination with their UC system more than half the time.

“This ‘dual use’ makes it easier to give up on the UC system should things not function as expected,” concluded the study.

The good news is, more than 40 percent of UC users say they never encounter any issues that need to be pushed up to IT troubleshooting.

It’s possible that rate could be even lower if users took better advantage of training resources, something both users and IT departments believe is directly related to healthy adoption. Yet majorities of workers aren’t even aware that various training opportunities exist, show Unify Square’s survey.

“The silver lining is most organizations do have a myriad of training options,” said the study, “so the process of simply connecting users to training is a fairly low bar for IT and could lead to large returns.”

It’s also another area where partner providers seemingly could quickly help.

Perhaps most surprising, IT is underestimating the extent to which certain UC tools are utilized. Both video and desktop sharing are being used at higher rates than IT believes, while voice and conferencing are used slightly less than assumed.

“This shows that increased visibility into how end users are using the UC functionality could result in even more dramatic usage and productivity success,” concluded Unify Square.

Presented all together, Unify Square’s findings should make IT decision makers reconsider the allotment of resources and investments in UC. It also seems to suggest they could use a good UC partner. □

## Training Availability Awareness for UC Systems

Option	End User	IT
Don't Know	29%	3%
Nothing	23%	17%
Online videos	21%	23%
Reference materials	26%	44%
Online tutorials	36%	45%
Instructor led	15%	35%

Source: Unify Square

with UC components. IT departments, for instance, believe that 85 percent of end users will notify IT when they need assistance, and just 10 percent will try to fix the problem themselves. In actuality, only about half of end users will turn to IT when they need assistance, while nearly a third of users will try to fix matters on their own. What’s more, nearly a quarter of end users will simply “give up” and turn to alternate applications or de-

When assistance is requested, and users are on the phone with IT help desk, the disconnect continues, shows the survey. IT executives surveyed, for instance, believe that nearly half of help desk calls are resolved within four hours or less, but only about a quarter of end users claim they experience such a quick resolution. And nearly a third of users “have no idea how long a resolution takes,” said the Unify Square study.



# MAKING CONTACT

## Fusion looks to cloud to transform the contact center market

By **Tara** Seals

**F**usion, which has a history of providing innovative cloud solutions to businesses of all sizes, is taking aim at a large, growing segment with significant pent-up demand: contact centers for mid-sized businesses.

The high-priced, premises-based solutions that were the norm for decades have traditionally reserved the most sophisticated, feature-rich solutions for the very largest enterprises. But the cloud enables the delivery of enterprise-level solutions to the mid-market, giving agents, VARs and other sales partners a raft of fresh opportunity.

In fact, global cloud service revenues were forecasted to reach \$106 billion in 2016, increasing 21 percent over projected 2015 spending levels, according to Goldman Sachs.

"The cloud is not just changing the contact center industry but is instead completely transforming it," said Fusion CEO Matt Rosen. "We saw the opportunity within our advanced, high-availability service platform to enable the integration of cloud communications, connectivity and analytics for an end-to-end contact center approach that sales partners can use to give mid-sized

businesses the ability to provide customer service that equals or in many cases surpasses their larger rivals."

This competitive boost can be critical, especially in industries where large market players dominate the landscape. Fusion's Contact360 platform includes the integration of features such as outbound as well as inbound campaign capabilities; softphone and mobility options; screen pops; simultaneous screen transfer; business analytics

and customized reporting; and CRM integration. Taken together, these give medium-sized companies significant productivity and collaboration improvements, which in turn allows them to better serve customers.

That means putting an end to the common frustrations that cause customers to move away, such as long hold times and the multiple calls to resolution often caused by disjointed interactions and re-directs.

To address the former, customers are offered options for callback, scheduled or ASAP, reducing average speed of answer and abandon rates. To address the second common frustration, Cloud360 integrates resources and information to eliminate swivel chair responses, and instead allows for data-driven, schedule-based, statistics-based, priority-based, multimedia-based, skills-based routing. In other words, calls are directed to the right agent at the right time for faster issue resolution.

There's another selling point too: moving mission-critical communications to the cloud also reduces the cost, footprint and significant administrative and IT staffing required to



maintain supporting systems, communications, network and data infrastructure. Ultimately, cloud contact center solutions reduce customers' cost of ownership and deliver new levels of security, flexibility, scalability and speed of deployment. Moving the contact center to the cloud also means that businesses can scale resources on demand, allowing them to master peak periods, both planned and unplanned.

"This means that businesses can re-orient their resources to support their primary business," Rosen noted.

Fusion's cloud-based, single source solution also is unique in that it integrates advanced, enterprise contact center features with hosted voice, unified communications-as-a-service (UCaaS), collaboration, mobility and the connectivity required to access the services. It also includes managed network services and live, 24x7x365 monitoring, maintenance and support.

"We have a robust, secure and diverse national network that delivers access to fully integrated cloud communications and our contact center solutions, which minimizes the headaches for both our sales partners and their customers," Rosen said. "Access, data and fully managed network services can be built in: DIDs, toll free and circuit solutions including Internet access and MPLS to connect multiple locations. We offer one contact, one contract, one invoice – and that's an immense value for partners looking to retain and then grow loyal, lifetime customers. That's the special value that Fusion brings to the table."

Fusion's solution also helps contact centers of all sizes record, measure and improve performance—another big competitive differentiator for companies. Smart analytics, when applied the right way, translates into better customer segmentation, and the ability to evaluate customer satisfaction and process effectiveness. In turn, that data can be used to improve first call resolutions, ensure service levels and drive better campaign results.



Fusion facilitates this with business analytics and advanced real-time and historical reporting that can be customized to meet customer's specific requirements, including cradle-to-grave call analysis. This includes support for integration to other systems, including CRM, ERP, Workflow, customer profiles, call recording and so on, providing access to metrics on key performance indicators. And, the analytics engine supports the integration of telephony, messaging and customer information data sources to enable better outcome strategies.

Further, in a boon for channel partners and midsize businesses alike, Fusion provides a flexible migration strategy to the cloud, accommodating existing investments, adoption readiness and appetite for change. It also offers a hybrid solution that can accommodate existing PBX – Fusion is fully certified with virtually every premises-based provider.

Channel partners are increasingly recognizing that cloud solution adoption is a question of when, not if, thanks to the cost-saving and productivity-enhancing benefits that migration provides.

"With service enhancements and business continuity built-in, eliminating costly end-of-life concerns and providing insurance against natural or man-made disasters, tapping into the cloud means that partners can confidently count on Fusion to deliver a full complement of services through our powerful partner and customer portals, exceptional 24x7x365 support delivered by highly trained and experienced technology professionals, and consistent revenue streams from loyal, satisfied customers," Rosen noted.

Going forward, Fusion plans on increasing investment in sales and marketing to accelerate its own growth and that of its sales partners. To that end, the company recently hired John Hendler as senior vice president of sales. Working with Sta-

cy Conrad, the company's vice president of channel sales, Fusion plans to continue to extend its geographical coverage with channel sales managers and directors deployed in key markets. The company is also rolling out a series of increasing incentives and rewards with spiffs and promotions, culminating in recognition in Fusion's "Power Circle."

Fusion also offers support and participation in joint events and joint marketing activities, a series of webinars on topics of interest in cloud thought leadership, as well as training on new initiatives, products and promotions.

In addition, Rosen said that Fusion will continue its steady growth through acquisition: "With six successful acquisitions in three years, Fusion is making sure our partners will continuously have new products to sell and new markets to explore," Rosen said.

In addition to taking the contact center to the cloud, the company is also using its platform to offer virtual datacenter solutions that reduce IT resource requirements in space and staffing. That in turn facilitates the integration of a full range of cloud-based services and applications managed in the Fusion cloud, including storage, and back-up and recovery integrated with cloud-based voice, UC and connectivity for a disaster recovery as a service (DRaaS) solution.

"Fusion relies on our extraordinary network of partners to help fuel our growth as the industry's leading single-source cloud services provider," Rosen said. "That's why we are fully committed to advancing our sales partners' success with a comprehensive and integrated portfolio of solutions that will help them, and our mutual customers, benefit from the many advantages of the cloud. To achieve that goal, we are committed to providing the sales and technical support, industry, product training and ongoing development that will help them find new ways to sell, make money and grow." □

# Mobility to Drive Global UC Uptake to New Heights

By **Tara** Seals

The global unified communications (UC) market size is expected to reach \$143.49 billion by 2024, according to a report by Grand View Research, largely driven by increasing workforce mobility. The substantial growth prospects of the unified communications market also can be attributed to the rapid international expansion of organizations and an increasing need for real-time and efficient communication systems that enhance the inter-organizational exchange of information.

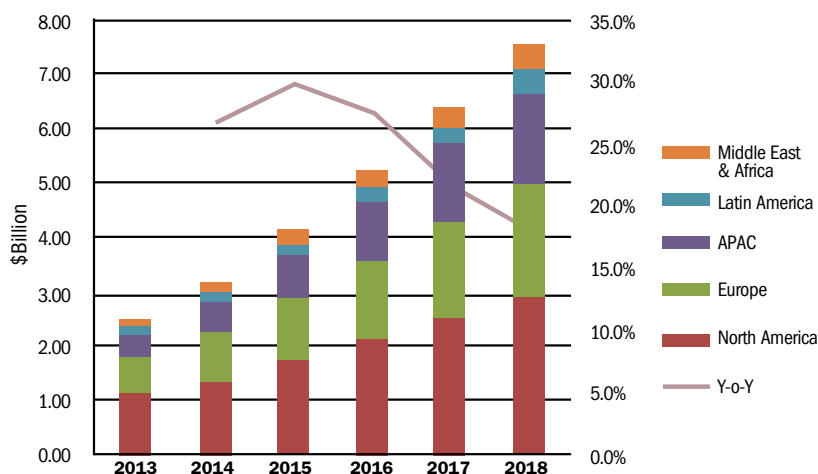
The firm also said that favorable government and institutional initiatives worldwide supporting the introduction of UC deployment across various industry sectors are expected to positively impact the market during the forecast period. Grand View also stressed that UC allows firms to have better operational agility, better customer engagement and connected employees – all strategic business goals that offer a conversation for savvy channel partners.

Some verticals are particularly hot right now: Global Market Insights pointed out that the government sector has witnessed increased adoption of UC systems, especially when it comes to public safety. These solutions help governments to effectively deal with emergencies and support effective crisis conferencing. The report estimates revenue from this segment alone to exceed \$20 billion by 2023.

## RISEING TIDE

UC integrates real-time communication services such as presence information, telephony, conferencing, instant messaging and so on with non-real time services such as SMS, email and voicemail. As such, Intense Re-

Global UCaaS Revenue by Region

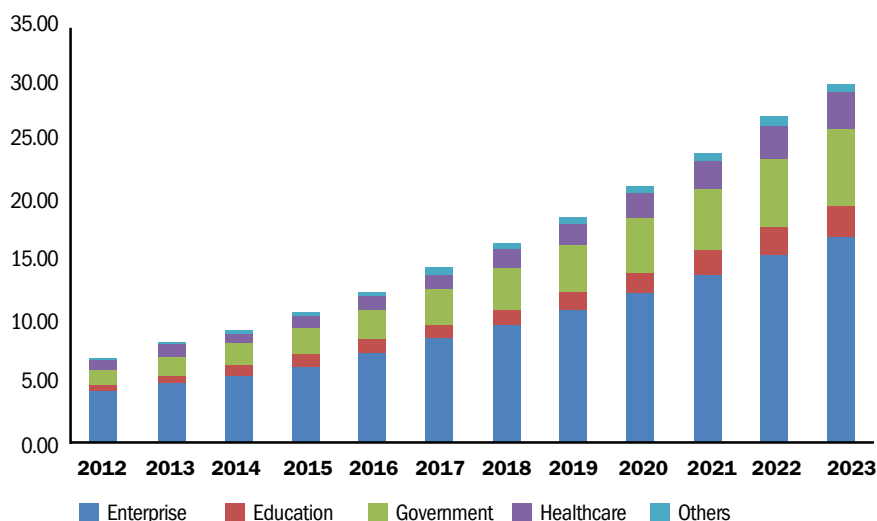


Source: MarketsandMarkets

search said that the sustained growth of the information and communications technology (ICT) market overall is expected to enhance the growth of UC markets, as it is generating lot of

interest in software and application development communities as well as enterprises. In the latter segment, large investments in communication and collaborative technologies

Europe UC Market Size, by Vertical 2012 - 2023 (\$B)



Source: Global Market Insights



by government, telecom and IT, and financial services sectors are leading the way.

Grand View found that on-premises UC solutions accounted for nearly 60 percent of the overall market share in 2015 owing to the ease of customization and control they offer.

"Moreover, such solutions bring in a sense of security within the organization as critical business infrastructure resides in-house curtailing on security concerns," the report noted. "However, such systems require adequate maintenance and well-trained IT staff, thereby adding to their operational expenses."

Hosted unified communications systems on the other hand accounted for near 40 percent of the overall UC market revenue share in 2015 and is projected to overtake on-premises systems over the forecast period, according to Grand View.

This is a trend that's echoed by others.

"Development of cloud-based/ hosted and cloud technology systems

is expected to drive the market," Hexa Research noted in a recent report. "They are easier to maintain, faster and offers flawless scaling abilities and decrease capital expenditure."

Businesses' ongoing move to the cloud is meanwhile driving unified communication as a service (UCaaS). Intense Research pointed out that after a successful implementation of software as a service (SaaS) for, say, CRM purposes, many organizations are more open to transitioning their mission-critical communications to the same model to capitalize on the no-capex, pay-as-you-grow benefit of eliminating the need for high upfront investment.

## MOBILITY, A DRIVING FACTOR

Increasing enterprise and workforce mobility will be the important factors leading the global unified communications market to attain revenue of more than \$75.5 billion by 2020.

The rising penetration of smartphones will augment demand for UC products, thanks to the fact that

smartphones represent the easiest medium to use the services offered by UC technologies. The increasing acceptance of bring your own device (BYOD), development of UCaaS and growing usage of mobile devices on a global level are expected to boost the market growth during the next five years, Hexa Research said.

And, even though high initial costs for such solutions and interoperability issues are presumed to challenge growth (and in the U.S., ambiguous VoIP-related regulations by the FCC may affect the industry dynamics in the coming years), in the globalized corporate world, workforce mobility has increased manifold, and UC allows easy connectivity to individuals anytime, anywhere.

Increasing usage of high speed broadband and availability of wireless connectivity networks is also expected to drive the UC market during the forecast period, Hexa Research said. Advancements of technology such as 4G and, soon, 5G are also expected to witness substantial



**netcarrier™**  
telecom

**EARN UP TO 3X MRC!\***  
*Customer Focused, Channel Driven*

**100% Dedicated to the Channel**  
**No Competition with a Direct Sales Force**

- Traditional, Dynamic & Cloud Based Services
- Redundancy, Reliability & Scalability
- Custom Solutions & Managed Deployments
- Channel Manager, Engineering & Support Teams Committed To Helping You
- 24/7/365 Never Outsourced Tech Support
- A National Network That You Can Trust

855-nCloud4  
[www.netcarrier.com](http://www.netcarrier.com)

\*Please contact your channel manager for terms and conditions.



growth during the next few years. Conversely, a lack of robust telecommunications infrastructure, particularly in the emerging nations, is a factor that limits the market growth. In some countries, the regulatory framework restricts connection between public-switched telephone lines with VoIP, which is another factor limiting the market growth.

## A GLOBAL PHENOMENON

The European and North American UC markets are expected to grow at a significant rate thanks to a mature penetration of broadband communications infrastructure, according to Hexa Research. But Asia-Pacific is likewise expected to grow considerably during the forecast period thanks to mobility uptake. High-speed wireless data networks and large population bases in regions including India and China will all provide favorable opportunities to market growth in this region, the firm said.

Grand View said that the UC market in Asia Pacific region accounted for more than 25 percent of the overall market share in 2015. The firm also expects the region to witness substantial growth during the next eight years. Grand View's view is that developing economies such as India and China from the region are expected to offer extensive growth avenues, owing to increasing industrialization and modernization of business processes eventually leading to a surge in the adoption of UC solutions.

Key market participants include Alcatel-Lucent, Avaya, Cisco Systems and Microsoft. Leading vendors are emphasizing simple-yet-customized business communication offerings targeting everything from small and medium-sized organizations to larger enterprises.

Enterprise end-use applications dominated the overall UC system industry last year. Grand View said that they accounted for nearly 50 percent of the overall market owing to the surge in adoption in SMEs

across various industry verticals. Governments from countries such as the U.S., Canada, UK, Japan and New Zealand are investing in the adoption of such solutions, along with schools, colleges and universities. The government end-use segment is expected to witness substantial growth at a CAGR of nearly 20 percent through 2024, according to Grand View.

Providers are committed to helping channel partners tap this market as well. For instance, UC vendor Swyx recently announced its SwyxWare range is now fully supported by SIP trunking services provided by BT Wholesale, extending the choice of suppliers for voice termination for its UK channel partners.

"This provides even greater choice for our channel partners, who in turn can pass on the combined benefits of our latest unified communications platform together with cost-effective connectivity services provided by the UK's premier carrier," said Swyx International cloud manager Michael Landin. □



**Toll Free Provisioning Made Easy"**

## Toll-Free Provisioning, TeXTing, & LCR Software

- Provision SMS/800, your voice carrier, and TeXT enable toll-free 800, 888, 877, 866, 855, and 844 numbers quickly and easily
- 8MS saves you money and is used by over 100 carriers and RespOrgs to manage more than 50% of all toll-free numbers in the industry



[www.csfcorp.com](http://www.csfcorp.com) • [8MSSales@csfcorp.com](mailto:8MSSales@csfcorp.com)  
+1.732.302.0222  
Contact Frank Lauria +1.732.713.3562



## Visualware®

*Network Efficiency, Quality and Performance*

Sales & Partnering with Carriers,  
Resellers & Enterprises  
making your Users' Experience #1  
download  
[www.myconnectionserver.com](http://www.myconnectionserver.com)

**Special Jan.15- Feb.15, 2017**  
**15% off for new users**

Contact Us for a Demo @  
[sales-vw@visualware.com](mailto:sales-vw@visualware.com)  
[www.visualware.com](http://www.visualware.com)  
1-209 262-3491 Ext 302 and  
330/ Toll Free 1-866-847-9273



## Soar To The Top

### The Best Partner Program In The Industry

- ✦ 99.85%: The Industry's Highest Retention Rate
- ✦ Premium Sales & Marketing Support
- ✦ Residual Evergreen Commissions
- ✦ Full Service Quoting Support
- ✦ The Most Reliable System With 99.999% Uptime Guarantee

**Start Earning More Today!**

Register For Training:  
[www.star2star.com/events](http://www.star2star.com/events)

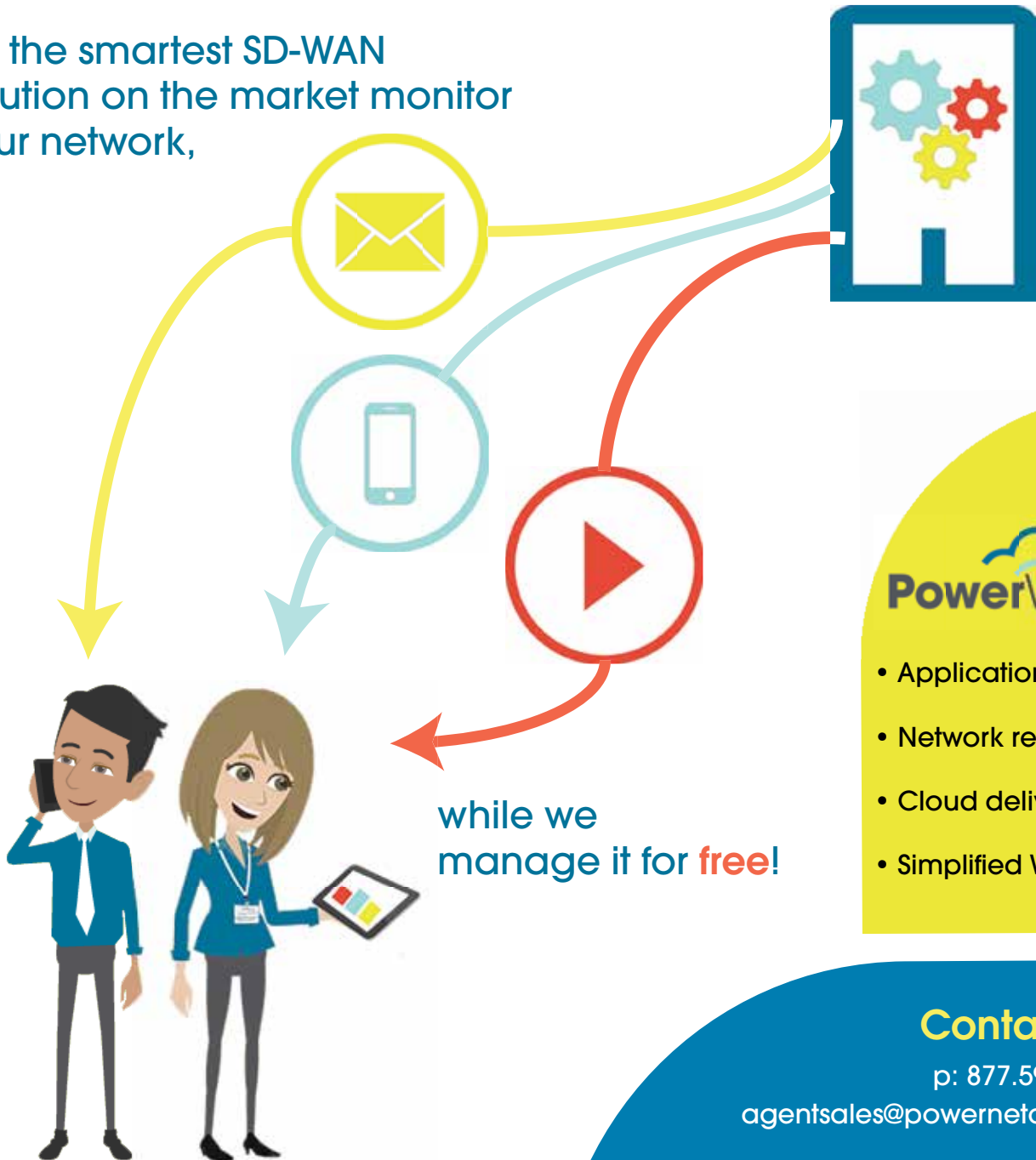




Enabling you to connect.®



Let the smartest SD-WAN  
solution on the market monitor  
your network,



- Application aware
- Network remediation
- Cloud delivered
- Simplified WAN

## Contact us

p: 877.599.3095

[agentsales@powernetco.com](mailto:agentsales@powernetco.com)

Voice • Data • Wi-Fi • IT Managed Services |     | [powernetco.com](http://powernetco.com)

8805 Governors Hill Drive Suite 250 Cincinnati, OH 45249

© 2017 PNG Telecommunications, inc. All rights reserved. Powernet and "Enabling you to connect" are trademarks of PNG telecommunications, inc.