



UNIFIED COMMUNICATIONS

DO WE GET IT YET?

All this talk and hype but at the end of the day do we really get it? On a recent trip to the VOICECON event in Florida, no one in the industry could say enough of what it is and how it will change the industry (telecom). Nevertheless, as I watched a large UC vendors' commercial running on CNN and listening to the value statements - unified data, unified control, access, blah blah blah, I thought wow that is boring, why would any business owner care? It dawned on me that we in the industry are so out of touch with business that we forget TECHNOLOGY does not sell or even raise interest. How can we give this market the respect it deserves if we cannot even explain the value and get people to understand and listen?

I go back to the idea of explaining what we do in one sentence or less, and I can say after being at the industries biggest event, we fail to provide the power value. Nothing that was discussed and promoted really drives the need for the average business to change what they do today. Unified Communications is supposed to change the way we communicate! The key question is whether that change will have a dramatic effect on our productivity and improve our business or simply add complexity and costs in terms of managing technology vs. people.

The good news is that there is *technology* in the UC field that will change the way we communicate for the better; the industry has just failed to articulate it well enough. We need to put consumers and businesses in the message so they can visually see how it will improve their lives. For example, I am sitting down to draft up this weekly message when I receive an *instant message* because my partner sees my "online" status. He tells me a customer needs a demonstration today and I have a deadline due at the same time. I send an *instant message* blast to my sales team that pops-up on their computer and cell phones asking them to please let me know who can help. Alex is in the car and replies "yes" and asks for the customers name. I SMS the contact name, Alex then logs into the UC platform and says the customers name and sends the customer a voice e-mail confirming his availability and he asks the UC system to call the customer as well so he can confirm live. Once the call ends, Alex is back with his UC system and he says "conference" at which time the UC system launches him into the conference bridge so he can setup the event.

This whole scenario took place, from start to finish in less than 30 minutes. I think about this and wonder how the hell we did this 10 years ago? It just wouldn't happen. UC Links us together so we can communicate and execute our daily tasks. It enables workers to be

messageLINK



LINKING
all your daily communications

effective and strategic as it eliminates mundane tasks that eat up valuable time we could use enjoying life. Unified Communications is freedom, as it allows us to communicate, get our jobs done and free up time for our personal lives. UC should not be a technological burden on an organization but more of an enhanced service that enriches our daily lives. This is why enabling *messaging*, *calendar*, and *collaboration* as a service could pay bigger dividends in the long run versus investing in infrastructure and equipment that would burden your business with infrastructure cost and management.

Unified Communications has arrived! But, we need to make it real and put people in the technology to see its real value to them. UC is about Live Communications, it is about linking you to your customers and connecting you to co-workers and being able to express yourself the best you can!