



WEEKLY MESSAGELINK

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INTEGRATING UC WITH LEGACY INFRASTRUCTURE

There is a growing consensus that enterprise communications is moving towards a Unified Communications (UC) endpoint, at which voice, email, instant messaging and video are linked to each other and to enterprise productivity applications. Microsoft is now aggressively marketing its OCS platform and this has brought UC into the mainstream. However, enterprises typically start towards UC from the position of having a complex legacy infrastructure, including PBXs from multiple vendors, separate email and conferencing systems and often widespread, unauthorized use of Instant Messaging. UC functionality integrates existing voice, email and messaging infrastructure, both fixed and mobile, and builds on platforms such as email, CRM, Salesforce automation tools, as well as TDM and/or SIP based PBXs and VoIP services. Based on this, many organizations struggle with what are the ideal starting points for deployment of UC, and considers possible migration paths and styles of UC architecture. Many organizations see the value of UC, but do not understand how to truly migrate the unification within their infrastructure. The reason is many leading UC providers mandate a *rip and replace* strategy or even a migration strategy that begins with IP telephony or VoIP migration first. As this is a valid starting point it may not be in many cases the most feasible one as the cost of migration and user training may cause too much disruption to an organizations day-to-day operations. Looking at key revenue generating areas such as mobile workforce, CRM may be a better way to engage the starting point and see immediate return on investments in the form of productivity and increased sales.

UC vendors that are infrastructure agnostic and focus on the application that provides organizations more choice and flexibility on what is the best starting point for their company and this provides them with the tools to pick applications that can drive immediate value from their existing infrastructure. Application providers vs. hardware providers truly understand the value of what UC is and how it can change the way a business communicates without changing the business!

Davide Petramala
VP, Sales & Marketing | Esna Technologies Inc.
Tel: 905-707-9700, say "David"
Email: davidep@esna.com