Digital Transformation – the UC&C Approach

Establishing a communications foundation for Digital Transformation

A Wainhouse Research eBook

Wainhouse Research

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Topic Overview and Methodology

This Wainhouse Research eBook investigates Unified Communications and Collaboration (UC&C) as an enabler of Digital Transformation. We're focusing on the broad, enterprise-wide impact that a well deployed, integrated, and expanded UC&C experience delivers, and its ability to enable a larger Digital Transformation strategy.

How we researched: This eBook provides an objective, unbiased, and detailed overview of UC&C Transformation, backed by the following research:

- In-Dept Interviews – with product teams, IT Decision Makers (ITDMs), and executives with experience transforming their enterprises with the use of UC&C tools and solutions.
- Wainhouse Research Data – we reference data points from end-user and ITDM surveys, briefings with technology vendors, and insight gained from enterprise consulting engagements.

Full disclosure: This eBook was sponsored by Tata Communications. However, this is an objective and unbiased overview, and does not endorse any specific vendor's product or service. We recommend the reader continue the discussion with their partner of choice.

Digital Transformation

Introduction and Definitions

This eBook investigates UC&C as a Digital Transformation enabler. Of course, Digital Transformation is a broad term that may cause more confusion than solution in practice. We think this definition provides a good starting point to the discussion:

*"Digital transformation is the **integration** of **digital technology** into **all areas of a business**, fundamentally **changing how you operate and deliver value** to customers."*

Changing how you "operate and deliver value" is a key element in this definition. Deploying digital technologies without changing the way you operate, or your user and customer experience, may change your cost model – *but it doesn't transform your business.*

The challenge for the average enterprise, in our experience, is scope – **if I'm going to 'impact all aspects of my business', where do I start?**

UC&C Transformation

The Foundation

Unified Communications and Collaboration (UC&C) refers to solutions that "unify enterprise communications, including messaging, audio, video, and meetings, into a consistent user experience." By design, these are digital platforms and tightly integrated ecosystems that serve as the foundation to a digital transformation strategy:

*"UC&C transformation is the **implementation of a digital communications platform**, connecting **users, partners, customers, and systems,** to fundamentally **change how you communicate and collaborate** as a business."*

Changing how teams "communicate and collaborate" is often the primary objective, as most teams focus on their internal user experience – enhanced messaging, integrated audio, ubiquitous video, and increased collaboration.

When done right, however, UC&C will enable transformation far beyond enhanced communications – by establishing an intelligent, data-driven platform that will automate cost from the business, digitize legacy workflows, reinvent the customer experience, and ultimately transform more of the business than you may realize.

Transformation Drivers

Reactive Risk

The challenge with Digital Transformation's broad scope hasn't stopped some enterprises from proceeding head-long into a transformation strategy. In practice, the strategy is often segmented and prioritized by areas of the business that will benefit most from a new technology. Other times, the strategy is reactive, dictated by pressures to transform elements of the business. In both cases, the enterprise can find itself updating parts and pieces, but not actually transforming much. In fact, a segmented strategy may end up building barriers to a larger transformational opportunity, as conflicting technologies must be integrated, updated, or replaced at a later date.

Competitive Pressure	Competitive pressure often drives focus and investment into customer touch-points – updating websites, mobile apps, and the contact center. However, updating your external services while neglecting your internal solutions may not actually transform experience – you end up "looking digital, but acting analog".
Aggressive Drive to the Cloud	While the cloud certainly offers a host of transformation opportunities, some enterprises find themselves simply moving services, without transforming anything. This may result in a transformed cost or support model, but moving the same bits from your datacenter to a provider's won't transform your overall business.
Complex Communications	If you're like most enterprises, you support multiple PBXs (often from 2 or more different vendors), a range of redundant meeting services, and more than one presence and messaging platform. The result: lost productivity, a sub-par user experience, and excessive costs. Deploying a UC&C platform can help – but if you're simply consolidating communications on a standard platform, are you really transforming the business?
Aging Infrastructure	Sometimes, that old PBX actually does catch on fire. Aging infrastructure can drive a surgical transformation strategy, perhaps more-so than anything else. The risk is this can create a reactive transformation strategy – and if the updated platform isn't aligned with the big picture, you'll likely be reacting again in the future.

UC&C Transformation: Reality Check

Establishing your vision is critical to a successful UC&C transformation. However, your vision needs to align with reality in order to solve the right problems, improve your customer's experience, and transform your business.

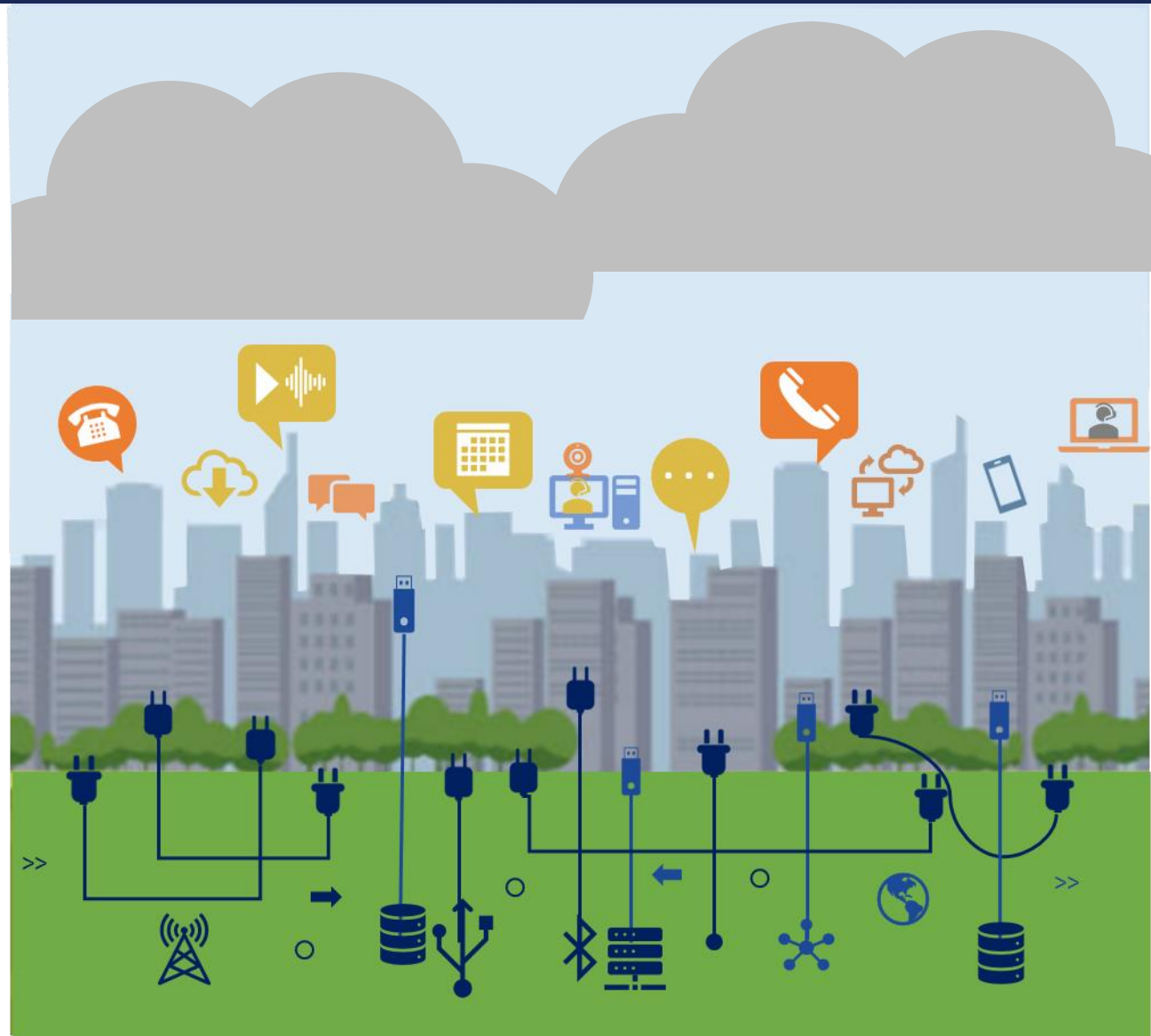
Understanding your current reality is therefore a key to establishing your transformative vision.

Transformation Reality

Today's Enterprise Environment

Consolidating communications to a unified platform has been a key objective for organizations. However, most enterprises are still a long way from a fully unified communications environment. Complexity, cost, shifting priorities, and internal politics often combine to serve as barriers, resulting in partially deployed solutions and low user adoption rates.

Before we dig into best practices, benefits, and UC&C transformation opportunities, we'll describe the typical communications environment in a mid-to-large enterprise – based on our enterprise consulting engagements, interviews with IT decision makers, and enterprise end-user surveys.



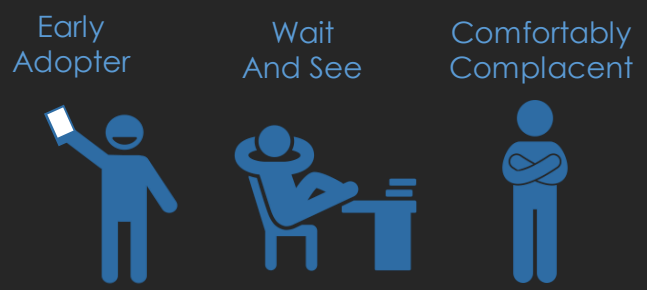
Transformation Reality

Today's Enterprise Environment

Locations – Increasingly multinational, with core sites in one or more regions and satellite offices across the globe. Expansion driven by international acquisitions, global customer opportunities, and distributed partner engagements.

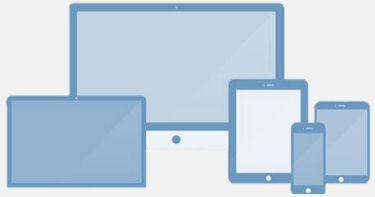
Result: High costs - providing a global-but-consistent voice and collaboration experience is difficult, and expensive. Some teams revert to Mobile-Only in hard to reach locations. Teams tend to collaborate regionally, instead of globally.

Users – Tech Saavy: while most users resist change, they are increasingly tech-savvy, if not opinionated. Many voice a positive relationship with IT, but equal frustration with their communication tools. "I have better technology on my personal phone than at work!"



Result: Adaptable yet resistant to change, & vocal in the process. **Complaints and issues** with new or outdated tech drain IT resources.

Personal Devices – most users still receive a desk phone, using it as their primary device. However, most also bounce between their desk phone, cell phone, and PC for business communications. Driven by old habits, for both IT and end users.



Result: new solutions must live seamlessly across all devices. When they don't, users rely on their desk phone, **decreasing adoption** of the new service.

Platform Fragmentation – most IT teams find themselves supporting an increasingly complex communications environment, supporting multiple PBX vendors, disparate messaging solutions, and often 5 or more different meeting platforms. This fragmentation is driven by long depreciation cycles, mergers and acquisitions, slow migrations to new solutions, and users bringing their own apps into the enterprise.

Result: **increased security risk** as sensitive information is stored across various platforms. Also a **primary barrier to UC&C transformation**, driving platform debates, complex integration plans, and expanding training plans for users who are often reliant on the unique solutions they have grown accustomed to.

Transformation Reality

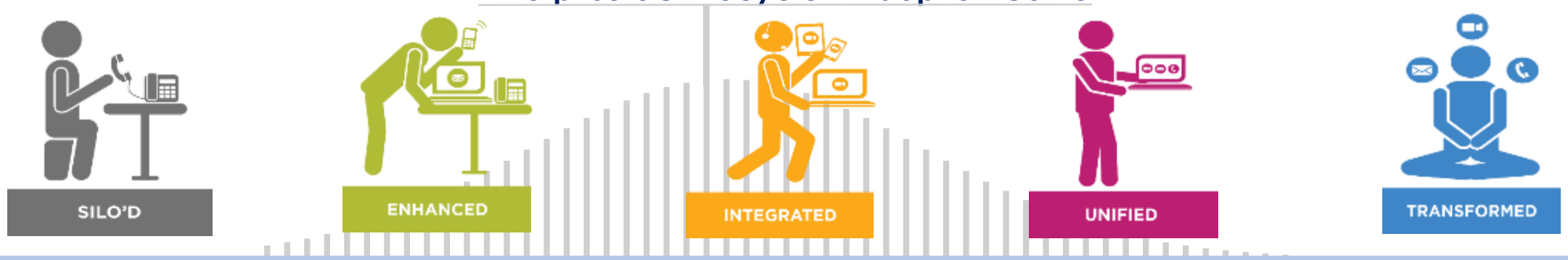
Today's Enterprise UC&C Adoption

We've identified five stages of the UC&C lifecycle, mapping the common stages of UC&C deployment and adoption within the average enterprise. The Lifecycle identifies the current level of enterprise UC&C adoption and serves as a mechanism for planning and roadmap activities.

Our research shows that the average enterprise is still a long way from a fully unified communications environment. Most have deployed initial IP-based communications (Enhanced stage), and many have deployed integration between multiple communication and collaboration platforms (Integrated stage) – but the average enterprise falls between a 40% and 50% adoption rate for their UC&C solutions, relying on separate telephony and meeting solutions instead.

The final Transformed stage of the UC&C lifecycle requires a fully deployed and adopted UC&C environment – without which, the benefits of integration, automation, and intelligent communications are relegated to those users who have access to the UC&C platform.

Enterprise UC Lifecycle – Adoption Curve



SILO'D	ENHANCED	INTEGRATED	UNIFIED	TRANSFORMED
The initial stage of the Lifecycle is the **Silo'd** stage – identifying organizations that have not yet deployed IP communications, and that leverage inde-pendent, disconnected collaboration solutions.	As the enterprise adds IP communications, it moves into the **Enhanced** stage – a stage that includes the deployment of VoIP and enterprise-class IM and presence platforms.	The **Integrated** stage includes enterprises that have integrated their independent communications platforms – think room to desktop video, and integrated audio and web conferencing.	The **Unified** stage describes those enterprises that have consolidated IM / presence, audio, video, and web collaboration services into a fully unified platform – for all employees.	The final stage identifies the **Transformed** enterprise – those that have completed their UC migration, and successfully integrated UC into existing business process and key workflows.

UC&C Transformation: Key Steps & Best Practices

"Every journey begins with a single step" – a traditional phrase that applies directly to the UC&C transformation journey.

Experienced leaders point to a common set of key steps and best practices as detailed in this section.

Transformation Journey

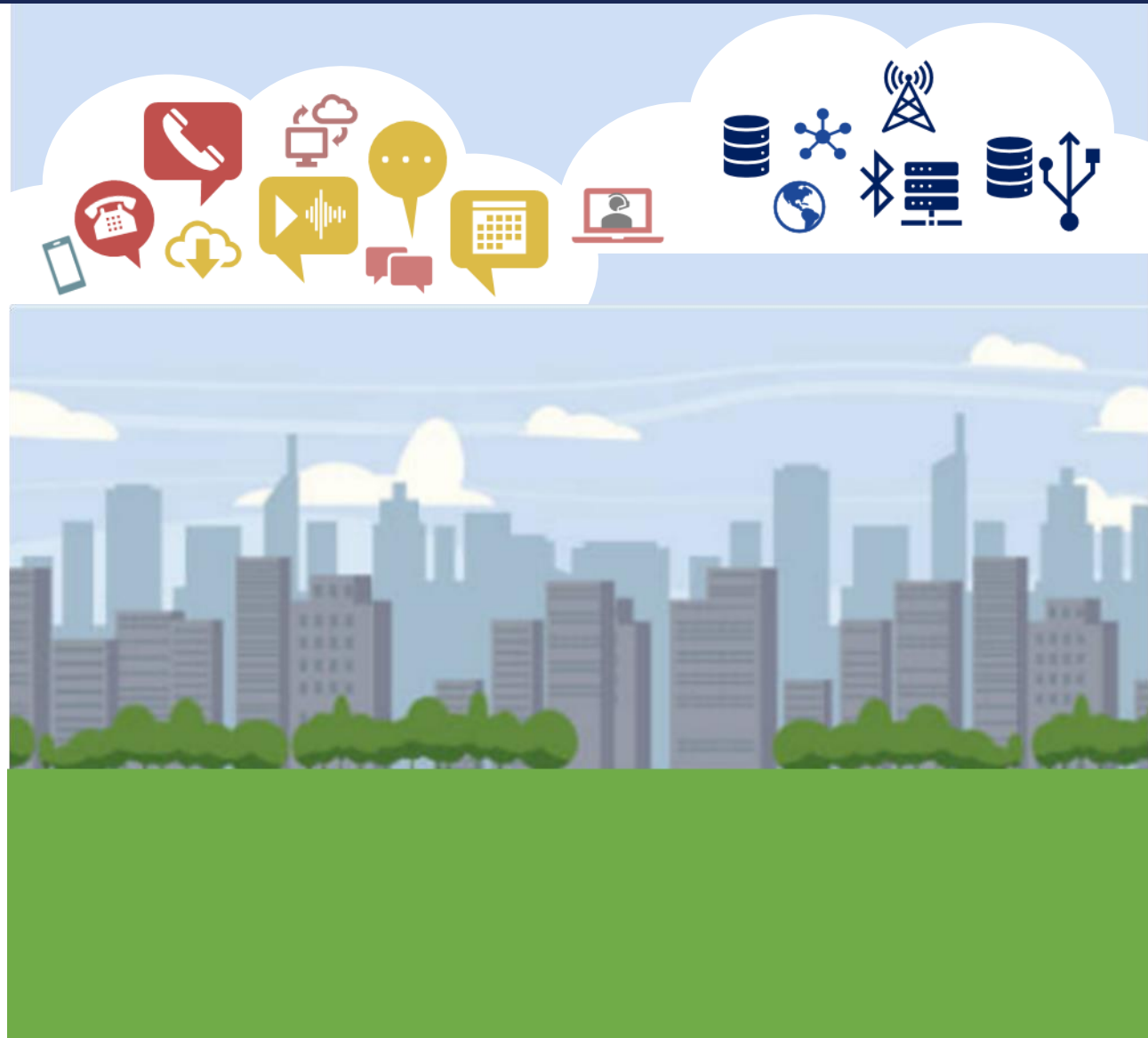
Moving from fragments to platforms

Let's establish perhaps the most critical point up front:

"UC&C Transformation is a journey, not a specific action."

You should expect an increase in benefits as you take action, but your journey will continue on, past specific milestones and achievements. Each UC&C journey is also unique to the enterprise taking it, and specific steps, details, and solutions will be driven by the organization's vision for transformation, available resources, and business environment.

In our experience, however, there are many milestones and best practices that are common to a transformative UC&C environment. We'll dig into these findings next.



Transformation Journey

Planning for Success

1 Align the Executive Team

A successful transformation must start at the top – it requires support and alignment across all functions. Your executives must be committed to this journey – prepared to fund it & tackle obstacles as they arise.

Best Practice: establish a C-level champion and a cross-functional executive committee responsible for success. Plan to adopt from the top down.

2 Establish your Business Vision

Before you consider specific technologies and solutions, it is critical to document the transformative change you are driving for. Consider what your company is aspiring to, step back, and think big: "engage every employee", "eliminate information silos", and "reinvent the customer experience".

Best Practice: establishing your business vision can be as difficult as it is critical to your success – consider engaging an experienced partner at this early stage. Once established, document your vision, gain executive consensus, and validate alignment throughout your journey.

3 Establish Target Business Outcomes

How will you measure your success? When achieved, your target business outcomes will deliver on your vision. In the context of UC&C transformation, think "cost savings targets", "project timeframes", "adoption metrics", "increased margins", and "customer satisfaction".

Best Practice: ensure your target outcomes are measurable and closely aligned to your vision. Use them to validate you are on track, and adjust course when necessary

4 Engage the Right Partners

UC&C transformation requires a broad range of expertise, across data center, network, platform, user experience, deployment, adoption, and support – you may need more than one to deliver on your vision.

Best Practice: engage your partners early in the project, and possibly in stages. Find a team to help establish your vision and technology strategy, and can recommend implementation, hosting, and support partners to match.

Transformation Journey

Planning for Success

Engage your Users

Up front, document how your users communicate and collaborate today, the tools they rely on, and the gaps in their current communications environment. Persona mapping is a critical step – identify user groups by common requirements and align your UC&C solutions and devices accordingly.

Best Practice: create a plan for user adoption that includes quantified success metrics, training, and communication plans. Establish champions to assist with rollout, support, and training activities.

5

Establish your Technology Roadmap

Only Now it's time to identify your target UC&C solution, in close alignment with your vision, target outcomes, and user requirements. Most enterprises take a stepwise, multi-year approach – targeting a platform for consolidation, and interim solutions that will solve short-term needs while moving users towards the target platform.

Best Practice: the right solution will drive a transformed communication experience while aligning with your larger enterprise ecosystem – easy to integrate, support, and train your users on.

6

Assess your readiness

With a focus on the network, devices, and process. Leverage the right tools and partners to evaluate your network early in the process – and be prepared to remediate.

Best Practice: select a performance management solution that supports the initial assessment and ongoing monitoring of your UC&C environment. Once deployed, conduct regular assessments to proactively identify and eliminate issues.

7

Build from the Ground Up

Key to your success: deploy your services on a network you trust – and never use a live customer experience to validate network readiness. Build out your network to support your target experience, including global voice access, managed networks, and your internet edge. Most enterprises leverage a cloud partner who can manage, monitor, and support the UC&C service.

Best Practice: the right network and hosting partner will meet both short and long-term technology requirements – ensure they align with both ends of your vision.

8

UC&C Transformation: Use Cases and Opportunities

The decision to transform your communications environment should only be done with the expectation of delivering a range of benefits – to your end users, your IT team, and the enterprise in general.

This section provides a series of "day in the life" use cases, detailing the immediate benefits and long-term opportunities delivered by a UC&C experience.

Transformation Benefits

Results and Opportunities

As analysts, we're continuously surprised at the range of benefits that a fully transformed enterprise achieves. Some are easily identified and often included somewhere in the project's roadmap and business case. Others, however, are uncovered through the course of the deployment, or based on actual use of the new platform.

More importantly, when UC&C is done right – deployed on the right network, delivered to all users, and fully adopted – it can serve as a platform for enterprise-wide digital transformation. While the UC&C industry has historically focused on the immediate benefits, we want to expand the conversation to these larger transformation opportunities.

Rather than deliver the standard "benefits and opportunities punch list", we'll use a series of persona-driven use cases to explore the transformed experience. For this discussion, we've created Deltech, a fictional mid-sized, high-tech enterprise. We'll walk through yesterday's pre-UC&C challenges, today's UC&C benefits, and tomorrow's transformation opportunities from the perspective of three key personas: Tim the IT manager, Dave the field sales rep, and Mary, Deltech's CEO.

A Day in the Life – IT Manager

Yesterday's Challenge

Tim is an IT manager at Deltech. Before he implemented a standard UC&C solution, he described his role as a 'Fire Fighter' – "find the fire, put it out, find the next one – lather, rinse, repeat!" Tim spent most of his time working through a trouble ticket backlog, leaving little time to think about strategic, long-term solutions.

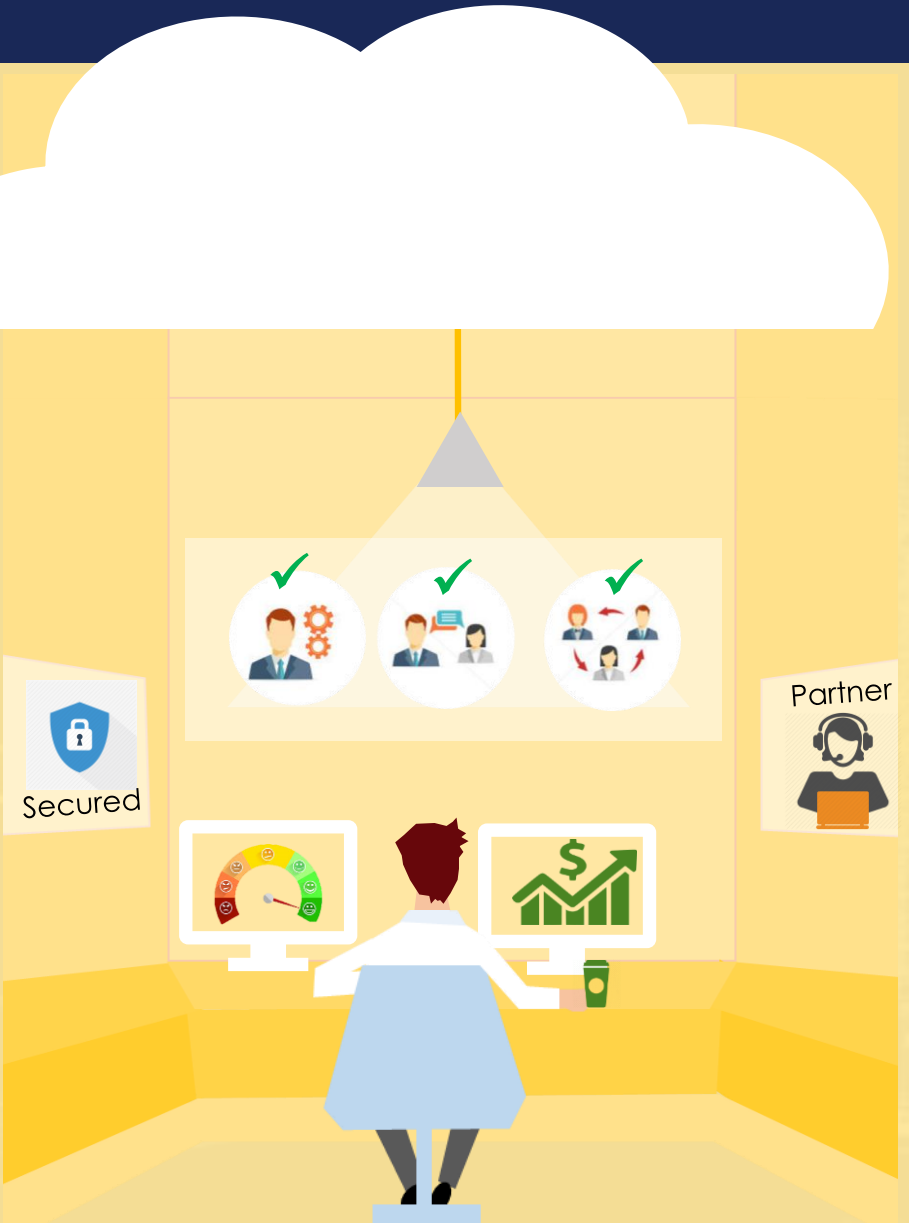
Tim is a "Power Collaborator" – spending 5+ hours on conference calls every day, meeting with his team and other Deltech resources. His desk phone is constantly connected, while he multitasks in email, his ticketing app, and monitoring systems.

Tim's primary challenge is Deltech's complex environment. With PBXs from 4 different vendors, 8 different meeting services, an outdated video solution, and an aging network, Tim's team is constantly looking for the source of user issues. Managing the user lifecycle requires manual process across many of his systems, and his budget is tight – headcount, access, licensing, maintenance, and troubleshooting are all constant sources of pain.

Tim's biggest concern, however, is data leakage. Security is Deltech's number one priority, and Tim stays up at night wondering what corporate data is being shared and stored across this fragmented environment. Legal discovery and user data requests take a lot of time, and he often wonders what he's missed.

A Day in the Life – IT Manager

Today's Benefits



Deltech's CEO made the decision to deploy a UC&C platform, and Tim's team did it right – engaging their network provider to host the platform, updating their network to support VoIP and video, and consolidating all messaging, telephony, and collaboration services to the new solution.

The new platform delivered Tim a range of immediate benefits, starting at his budget - moving off the old PBXs meant no more expensive TDM circuits, replaced by VoIP and SIP trunks. Maintenance costs were reduced as he consolidated aging voice and network infrastructure to his partner's cloud. And as he moved meetings to the new UC&C solution, Deltech saved a bundle in conferencing costs.

Tim spends less time troubleshooting as his partner supports the new platform, and new performance monitoring software has reduced the number of issues and resolution time. Admin is much easier now, as he adds, changes, and deletes users on one platform – and much of this is automated, thanks to integration with Deltech's existing directory services. Tim's security concerns are minimized, as his users are sharing data on a platform he monitors and controls.

But Tim's biggest benefit, if you ask him, is the user experience. He is delivering a cutting-edge solution to his users, with audio, video, collaboration, and team messaging – across PCs, mobile devices, and the conference room. His partner keeps the platform current, and new features are delivered much faster than was possible in the old, fragmented environment. He's moved from "problem child" to "office hero" as a result – a welcome change from Tim's chair!

A Day in the Life – IT Manager

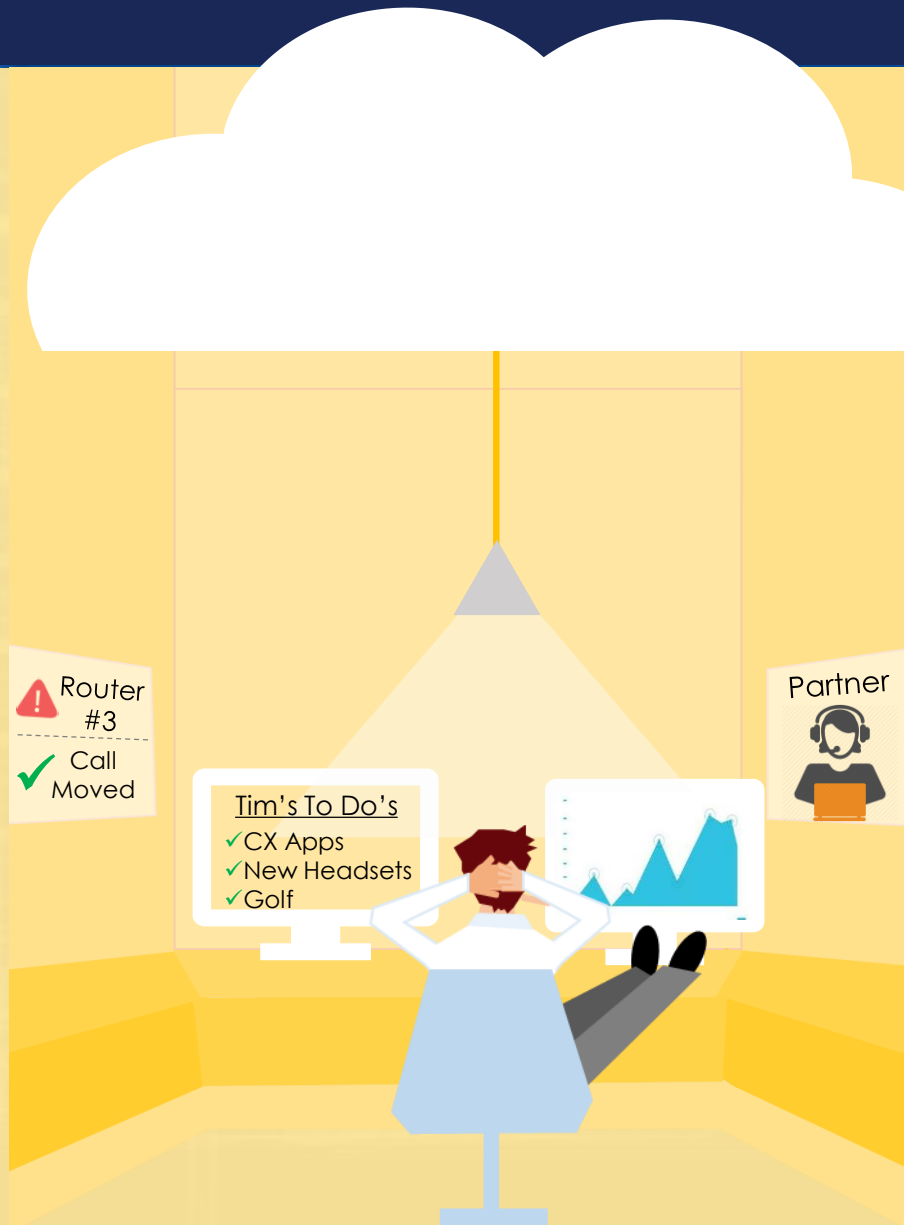
Tomorrow's Transformation

This is just the beginning for Tim, however. His team is planning to leverage their UC&C platform to transform much more than their communications experience. For example, Tim is transforming his team's success metrics by combining UC&C usage, adoption, and quality-of-experience data. These objective success metrics will help focus his efforts on the things that matter most to the business – increased adoption, effective utilization, and less 'fire fighting'.

Tim's developer team is also integrating their software tools into the new platform. By adding a few bots to the mix, the team can automate their software review cycle, even automating the code commit process based on one-click approval.

Integration with system monitoring software will enable automated alerts, complete with issue details and user impact, within Tim's mobile UC&C app. With some additional tweaks, the UC&C platform can also create auto-triage meetings, proactively connecting the right team for the most critical issues.

Tim is also looking at advanced AI solutions – combining communications, content and identity data. Now an AI service can identify experts based on a simple query: "Who knows the most about the latest video technology" is no longer an extended email thread – the system just replies, "It's Tim – click here to connect."



A Day in the Life – Field Salesperson

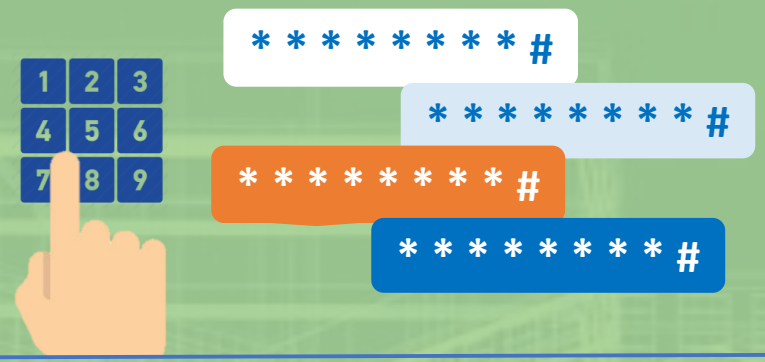
Yesterday's Challenge

Dave is a field sales rep for Deltech. He describes his work as "herding cats on both ends – customers on one side, my business on the other…"

By nature, Dave is always mobile, working at customer sites, hotels, and in transit. He is the epitome of the "Mobile Power Collaborator" – always on the phone, in conference calls, and constantly checking his email for orders and updates.

Without a consolidated UC&C service, Dave spent a lot of time reading email, playing phone tag, and suffering from "conferencing fatigue". Dave hops around between 10 different conferencing services, depending on the team he's working with. He's always hunting for passcodes and trying to figure out how to join conferences on unfamiliar platforms – and is frequently late to his meetings as a result.

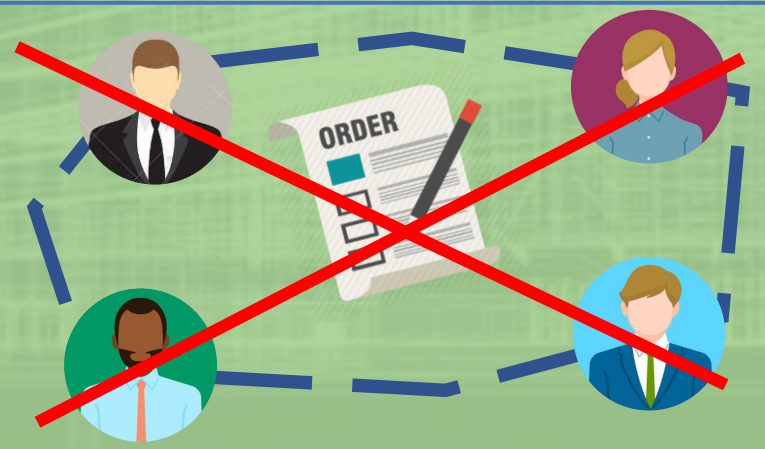
Dave's biggest challenge, however, is getting custom orders fulfilled – every time a customer needs something unique, the approval process seems to take forever. Emails are sent for approval, busy managers are slow to respond, and Dave ends up chasing the request until it's complete – sometimes missing his quota when things stretch on too long.



304: Weekly business emails received on average *

36 times: the average an employee checks their email per hour

16 minutes: Spent refocusing after handling incoming emails



* Source: Atlassian, https://www.atlassian.com/time-wasting-at-work-infographic

A Day in the Life – Field Salesperson

Today's Benefits

After Deltech deployed a UC&C solution, things changed. Dave now sees when his support resources are available and sends a quick IM when he needs an answer or update – spending less time reading email as a result. This also gives Dave faster access to real-time information than before, making him a more effective salesperson – faster quote-to-cash is a key benefit.

His new mobile app also makes joining conferences a snap – "click to join" has replaced "hunting for conference details". Consistency is the name of the game, and users like Dave quickly become experts in the new collaboration solution. Less time spent figuring out the tools means more time doing business – another welcome benefit.

Dave is also becoming a data junky. Previously, he used so many solutions that he really had no idea how often he was communicating with each customer. However, his new UC&C platform keeps track of each interaction, across IM, phone calls, and meetings. Knowing which clients have gone the longest without a touch-base helps focus his daily contact list.

Video is another welcome addition, now available on Dave's mobile device and laptop. Quick customer updates and team check-ins no longer require him to be on site, and his mileage is cut considerably. Less time on the road = more time for closing deals (and maybe a few extra customer dinners…)

A Day in the Life – Field Salesperson

Moving forward, the sales team is looking to transform several manual workflows. Integration between Deltech's UC&C platform and the internal ordering system enables auto-approval via IM – the system notifies the right manager when they are available, embedding a click-to-approve link in the message. No more email ping-pong means less time wasted chasing approvals and faster quote-to-cash cycles.

Integration with Deltech's CRM system will also reduce the time Dave spends finding new contact details, as he is flagged when new prospects are added to the system – delivering the client's background, opportunity, and phone numbers directly to his mobile UC&C client. One click call and conference, and a new deal is in progress.

Of course, data and analytics pose a huge transformation opportunity for the sales team. Combining communication patterns with CRM sales data, Dave's manager can begin benchmarking her team – identifying the most effective team members based on sales results, analyzing their communication habits, and coaching the rest of the team accordingly. Come to find out, Dave's use of video and internal messaging has set a high bar – and now the rest of the team can follow his lead…

A Day in the Life – CEO

Yesterday's Challenge

As CEO, Mary is responsible for every team member, each customer's experience, and Deltech's bottom line. She's the "Big Cheese" above all else – making decisions and directing resources are her primary responsibilities.

Mary fits into the "Key Executive" persona. Deltech ensures their key executives have the best collaboration devices – cutting-edge mobility, video-enabled desk phones, expensive laptops, and the latest video hardware in each executive conference room.

Despite her shiny devices, Mary relied on traditional solutions before moving to a UC&C platform. Email was her primary mode of communication, and information often travelled in a serial chain – flowing from customers, through each level of the business, to her executive team, and finally landing on her desk.

Mary felt that her team was stuck in a boardroom silo, reviewing staff input, evaluating finances, and making decisions – and the process was too slow. She was concerned about employee engagement as many users felt disconnected from the business.

Keeping up with the competition, however, was Mary's primary concern. Her hi-tech competitors were moving at a blinding pace – delivering product updates, expanding their ecommerce, and engaging new partners faster than Deltech could keep up.

A Day in the Life – CEO

Today's Benefits

Mary
CEO

Mary knew a successful UC&C implementation would require full adoption – this meant time spent training, learning, and changing how Deltech employees interacted. She decided to lead by example, requiring her executive team to champion the solution, lead the rollout, and adapt to the new service first.

Her approach delivered immediate benefits. With her team as the early adopters, users found they could get quick answers with a simple IM – much faster than waiting for an email response. At first, this generated a lot of IMs – but Mary's team became "presence experts", creating virtual "office hours" and marking themselves "available" when they had time to respond.

Information began flowing from the bottom up at a faster pace, shortening decision timeframes. Greater access to the executive team resulted in more engaged employees.

With an updated network and a single platform to manage, Mary's IT team delivered a consistent video experience – the team now meets face-to-face from the boardroom, their home offices, and on the road. While travel costs were reduced as a result, her executives also spent more time with employees, customers, and their families. Happy executives, engaged users, and delighted clients were exactly what Mary was shooting for.

A Day in the Life – CEO

Tomorrow's Transformation

Of course, Mary has her sights set on the bigger picture, starting at her customer's experience. She plans to extend the UC&C experience into her contact center to start. As Deltech agents receive calls, they will have immediate access to the rest of the organization through their UC&C platform – getting real-time answers from tier 2 and 3 support, engaging sales faster, and bringing key resources into calls based on their availability.

Her next step is to extend the UC&C platform directly into the customer portal – integrating chat, voice, and video into her sales and support websites. Key customers may even get their own customized support portal, connecting them directly to their account and support teams (when they are available, of course), completely bypassing the contact center – a big differentiator for Deltech!

Mary also sees an opportunity to transform her supply chain management process, by "communication-enabling" inventory, purchase, and shipping workflows. With advanced IoT integration, a range of sensors and management systems will send detailed messages with approval links from the factory to the right Deltech resources – when and where they are available. Add an army of intelligent bots, and Mary thinks much of Deltech's manual process can be automated – with managers reviewing, rather than approving, action that has already been taken.

About Tata Communications

TATA COMMUNICATIONS

Tata Communications' UCaaS services, including Cisco Powered solutions and Microsoft-based cloud solutions, simplify your users' collaboration experience while relieving them of complex UC management tasks.

Our innovative solutions in SD-WAN, UC, and Mobility help deliver an integrated experience across access and collaboration that the customer expects.

Click here to learn more and continue the digital transformation discussion.

About Wainhouse Research

Wainhouse Research, www.wainhouse.com, is an independent analyst firm that focuses on critical issues in Unified Communications and Collaboration (UC&C). The company conducts multi-client and custom research studies, consults with end users on key implementation issues, publishes white papers and market statistics, and delivers public and private seminars as well as speaker presentations at industry group meetings.

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