

WHITEPAPER

HOW TO DO MORE WITH UNIFIED COMMUNICATIONS

Hosted Voice over IP (VoIP) services have revolutionized the way businesses and people communicate, providing significant cost savings, superior flexibility, and advanced functionality over traditional telephony. But voice is only one piece in the communication puzzle.

The evolution of technology has given employees a variety of devices, applications, media types, and communication platforms to choose from. For example, companies might use a free screen sharing application from one provider and another provider's free service for sending large files. Or employees might be using numerous IM/Chat applications with no unified directory, making it difficult to reach out to just anyone in the company. While phone calling and audio conferencing may be provided through the business phone service, maybe it's not integrated with video calling and aforementioned communication and collaboration applications. Even something as common as giving out two phone numbers (office and mobile) can make it challenging for prospects and customers to connect with your employees, and it means the employee must manage two voicemail boxes.

Although each piece of technology fills a need and contributes to effective communication, these tools can introduce their own challenges if there is a lack of integration among them. Ultimately, businesses may not be receiving the productivity gains they had envisioned when they adopted them.

At MegaPath, we are on the leading edge of delivering services that help organizations stay focused on running and building their business. To address the need for employees to easily connect and collaborate—with colleagues, partners and customers from anywhere—MegaPath offers powerful hosted telephony services integrated with advanced collaboration tools in a Unified Communications (UC) package.

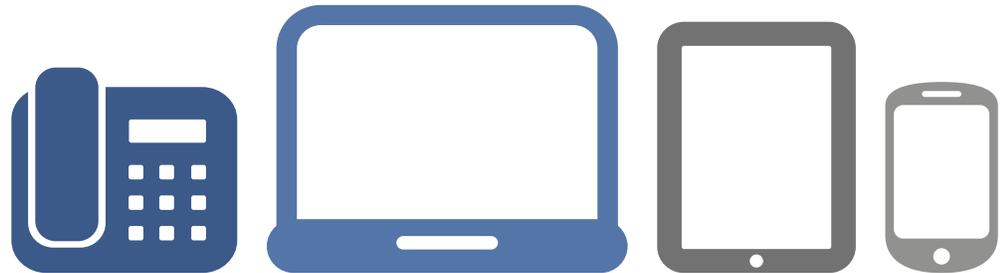
In this brief whitepaper, we will explain the tools and how they contribute to unparalleled freedom, mobility, and productivity for small and medium businesses, enterprises, and their employees.

OVERVIEW OF HOSTED UNIFIED COMMUNICATIONS

Unified Communications (UC) bridges the gap between IP-based telephony and other IP-based communication technologies. It typically incorporates multiple collaboration tools such as screen sharing, a presence indicator, instant messaging, and video calling.

The UC tools are often integrated into a single client: a “softphone.” Providers often make versions of the client available on a range of devices such as desktop, mobile, and tablet.

To keep up with today’s fast-paced and mobile work style, Hosted Voice solutions offer mobility-enabling features to keep people connected.



**Access Hosted Voice and Unified Communications
on a variety of devices.**

Hosted Voice—traditionally called Hosted PBX or Hosted Voice VoIP—is a cloud-based telephony system that furthers a company’s competitive edge by providing powerful collaboration capabilities available in a subscription model. Its low initial investment, predictable monthly billing, and affordable administration by a service provider make it a great fit for companies that want to stay competitive by managing their business, not their business services.

“MegaPath Unified Communications is so easy to deploy with iPhones and Androids. It blends the popular ways of staying connected now – email, voicemail, video, texting and IM – all into one platform that supports all of today’s popular communication devices.”

Jim Dainko
President, Fluid Networks

To keep up with today’s fast-paced and mobile work style, Hosted Voice solutions offer mobility-enabling features to keep people connected and productive. Here are some examples:

- > **Give out only your business VoIP number, and keep your personal number private.** MegaPath Anywhere turns any device—desk phone, smartphone, or home phone—into your business phone, using your Hosted Voice business number and calling plan.
- > **Stay on top of important calls.** With Find Me/Follow Me, you define how incoming calls are routed or forwarded, ensuring that you receive important calls whether you’re at your desk, on the road, or anywhere else.
- > **Manage your voice service yourself.** Voice Manager is a simple-to-use Web application that gives users the power to change routing, turn features on or off, and make and receive phone calls.
- > **Save time on faxes and voicemails.** Visual Voicemail with Transcription lets users view, play and read voicemail and fax messages directly in their inbox. Voicemails are delivered as audio files as well as transcribed into easy-to-read text emails so they’re easy to review, respond to, or forward (even while tied up on another call).
- > **Hold professional conference calls.** Audio Conferencing enables users to host and participate in professional conference calls by dialing an access number and meeting number.

WHY HOSTED COMMUNICATIONS

Industry statistics also show that more than one-third of companies adopting VoIP choose hosted services—a number that will almost certainly increase as more companies become aware of this cost-saving, feature-rich, scalable alternative to traditional and expensive phone services and equipment.

Through the right provider, all hosted and unified communications solutions, no matter which components you choose, offer the same overall benefits to a business: reduced costs and enhanced productivity and collaboration.



Unified Communications Desktop Application

Quality

It is important to note, however, that not all hosted communications providers are created equal. For one, the service delivery method largely determines the voice call quality, creating a positive (or negative) experience.

When MegaPath provides voice with access, all voice packets are tagged core-to-edge with priority across the network. That means that—unlike other hosted VoIP providers—we can provide true Quality of Service (QoS). Plus, our HD Voice ensures crystal-clear call quality.

MegaPath Hosted Voice and UC have been developed with enterprise-ready features. They also offer plug-and-play convenience. In fact, our softphone client is available for download from various app stores for a wide range of OS types and devices.

Hosted Can Mean More Than Voice and UC

Hosted communications technologies go even beyond Voice and UC. For example, many companies now outsource their email to a cloud provider. Outsourcing email avoids the need to manage and maintain email servers and software. Plus, you won't have to worry about your servers getting ruined if the water pipe upstairs bursts. Most providers host your email in rock-solid data centers that are backed up in redundant locations.

Hosted Exchange from MegaPath lets you access your email, contacts, calendars, and more by using the familiar Microsoft® Outlook® client for PC or Mac®; Outlook Web app (OWA) access; or a mobile device or your PC. It comes with built-in synchronization for your iPhone, iPad, Android, Windows, or BlackBerry device. Unlike free email services with their typically low-end feature set and unpredictable reliability, Hosted Exchange from MegaPath delivers Microsoft's popular email and collaboration platform, a 100% Availability SLA, and built-in virus and spam protection—all conveniently managed in the cloud for you.

Hosted SharePoint, Microsoft's popular document workspace and collaboration platform, enables workers to collaborate on projects, quickly set up a company intranet, and access files from anywhere.

BEYOND COMMUNICATIONS

TREND: Outsourcing Business Services › Companies have long farmed out services like payroll and taxes. Increasingly, they are outsourcing more types of business services, with technology and communications services such as voice, email, and data backup services topping the list. In fact, the global hosted VoIP and Unified Communications (UC) market will reach \$12 billion in 2018 with 62.6 million seats in service.*

◀ You need more than phone and UC services to run your business, and you shouldn't have to manage a multitude of providers and pay just as many monthly invoices. From broadband access to enterprise-class hosted email to secure and automatic data backup, even Remote IT Help Desk, MegaPath has best-in-class solutions to take the burden off you. And by working with one provider, you can pay just one bill and make one call for support.

NEXT STEPS

◀ Visit www.megapath.com to learn more, or contact a MegaPath Business Consultant today at 877-611-6342.

* Diane Myers, Infonetics Research, Business Cloud VoIP and UC Services Report, August 2014, Infonetics: "Hosted VoIP, UC Market to Reach \$12 Billion in 2018".