



Future-Proofing Your Communications System

Cloud communications spendings will soon surpass premise based communications spendings for the first time. According to Gartner, shifting market dynamics will change the end-user spend mix, creating a projected 53% composition of cloud UC spend, and a shift of premises-based UC solution spend down to 19% of the total UC market by 2021.¹ Moving enterprise communications to the cloud is now a major consideration for CIOs looking at alternatives to existing on-premise systems.

There's a growing preference for cloud-based services, particularly in mid-to-large enterprises, and putting unified communications in the cloud makes great economic sense: The infrastructure is there, the support mechanisms are in place, the training programs are ready. Plus, fewer IT and purchasing resources are required to manage it.²

Replacing your enterprise communications system is no small matter, and selecting the vendor to rebuild it can be very difficult. But done right, the technology you invest in today can provide a strong ROI and can grow with you well into the future to help you achieve business objectives and develop a competitive advantage. This document presents five key points to consider when evaluating your future communications system provider.

¹ Source: Gartner, April 2017, Forecast Analysis: Unified Communications, Worldwide, 1Q17 Update.
² Wainhouse Research

1 Select a reliable solution.

Today, there are more options than ever for choosing a communications provider. However, not all vendors are equal, particularly when it comes to reliability and availability. It is crucial to make sure your future provider delivers the services your company requires to operate. When evaluating a solution, look for network redundancy, quality of service monitoring and reporting, as well as disaster recovery. Your business communications system is critical, and any outage could significantly impact your business—your customers, revenue, and reputation. Reliability is about eradicating these risks. A good indicator of a stable and well-managed solution is an uptime above 99.99%.

- ✓ Redundant network
- ✓ Geographically diverse data centres
- ✓ Quality of service monitoring and reporting
- ✓ 99.99%+ uptime

2 Do not compromise on security.

According to the Cloud Adoption Survey by the Open Cloud Alliance, the primary concern that inhibits cloud adoption remains security: Can other customers access our data? Have all the security patches been kept up to date?

After security, loss of control is the biggest concern, raising questions such as, what if the system goes down? Who is responsible for fixing the issue? How long will it take?

These questions should be brought out in the open in the early stage of the new solution evaluation. Trusting operations and confidential data to another company can quite naturally raise some eyebrows. This is why it is critical to choose a trustworthy cloud communications vendor, which means an established company with ownership of its platform, many satisfied customers, and robust cloud security. This vendor should also be able to show evidence of independently validated security, ideally in the form of an audited Service Organisation Control (SOC) 2 or 3 report.

Make sure security is a top priority for the provider you evaluate. Look for a vendor that has the technology, team, and policies in place to protect data both in transit and at rest. No system is perfect, but a well-staffed cloud provider, with highly trained staff dealing with security daily, is likely to reduce the risk of security breaches compared to an overworked enterprise IT department.

- ✓ Infrastructure security
- ✓ Physical and environmental security
- ✓ At rest and transmission data encryption
- ✓ Proactive fraud mitigation

RingCentral's security policy and technology have been vetted by its largest carrier partners—AT&T, BT, and Telus—all of which are very security-minded.—IDC

3 Demand flexibility.

In a rapidly evolving world, enterprises need flexibility in order to cope with globalisation, changing workplaces, and current or future expansions. When planning an expansion, for example, it can be challenging to connect multiple sites and even more so when planning an expansion into new countries. This is becoming the reality of many enterprises with distributed sites and workforces in need of a flexible unified communications solution that can scale globally. Whilst traditional business communications systems might restrict your expansion, bringing obstacles such as high equipment expenditures and long and complex deployment times, cloud solutions help you move forward by removing the complexity and high costs. Whilst on-premise, large, up-front capital expenditures and complex management might restrict your flexibility, a cloud solution enables you to adapt and grow your infrastructure based on your changing needs without having to make large investments in costly hardware.

- ✓ Simple, fast, and straightforward deployment
- ✓ No up-front hardware costs
- ✓ Regular, automatic, and free updates
- ✓ Additional users and sites added in a few clicks

4 Build an ecosystem.

Software as a service (SaaS) is becoming the predominant way enterprises access core applications. The majority of application software expenditures in 2017 are going towards modernising, replacing, or extending existing business software using SaaS. According to Gartner, the total expenditure for SaaS is expected to reach \$46.3 billion in 2017 and \$75.7 billion by 2020.³

Core business processes supported by SaaS across businesses today include email and collaboration tools such as Microsoft Office 365™ and Google G Suite, customer relationship management via services such as Salesforce®, business intelligence and document management tools, and HR services from Workday® and others.

In such context, integrations between applications are key and mean adding value to existing products, enabling communications capabilities directly from the interface where users spend much of their workday—boosting business efficiency and productivity. Integrations allow businesses to break down the silos that can hinder communications, enabling employees to work more efficiently and connect more easily with both customers and colleagues.

- ✓ Out-of-the-box integrations
- ✓ Full open APIs
- ✓ Communications infused into business apps
- ✓ Increases value of existing business apps

³ Gartner Press Release, Worldwide Public Cloud Services Forecast, February 2017.

5 Do not compromise on user experience.

With businesses using an average of 13 applications,⁴ these applications need to be easy to use and to manage. In today's busy world, nobody can afford to waste time learning and re-learning how to use a new business tool. Administrators and end users both deserve intuitive applications. When choosing a new system, CIOs need the buy-in of end users to ensure successful and rapid adoption with minimum impact on business activities and revenue.

- ✓ Intuitive applications
- ✓ User-friendly design
- ✓ Minimal training needs
- ✓ Consistency across devices

About RingCentral

RingCentral is a leading provider of cloud-based global collaborative communications solutions. More flexible and cost-effective than legacy on-premise systems, RingCentral empowers today's mobile and distributed workforce to communicate, collaborate, and connect from anywhere, on any device.

RingCentral unifies voice, video, team messaging and collaboration, conferencing, online meetings, and integrated contact center solutions. RingCentral's open platform integrates with leading business apps and enables customers to easily customise business workflows. RingCentral is headquartered in Belmont, California, and has offices around the world.

⁴ Okta annual Business@Work report, March 2016.