

Building Blocks of Modern UC

The unified communications market continues to gain steam among a variety of industries around the globe, as more organizations work to reduce their total expenditures on equipment and accounts through integrated management strategies. In many ways, this revolutionary trend originally made its way onto the scene in a quiet fashion, later to explode in popularity and demand.

For this reason and many more, some business owners might not understand how UC progressed from its earliest stages to the modern frameworks that have become ubiquitous in the office. Teo Technologies recently published an infographic to illustrate the ways in which initial UC building blocks led to today's solutions and strategies.

At first, simple email clients and IVR-enabled voicemail systems made their way into the common workplace, helping to drive accessibility of resources for employees who were outside of the physical office. Next came one of the more important and revolutionary aspects of the progression in the merger of voice with Internet Protocol.

The product of this was the Voice over Internet Protocol business phone systems that are common throughout businesses today. Eventually, companies begin to further integrate data traffic into these channels.

More recently, companies looked for suites of solutions that would combine email clients and various other communications tools into one holistic system, while video conferencing followed close behind and completed the circle of comprehensive collaboration utilities.

What resulted from this progression was a massive shift in corporate telecommunications provisioning and utilization strategies. Now, instead of having a variety of disparate systems that strain managerial resources and budgets, companies can enjoy a more unified and organic collaborative environment through the implementation of UC tools.

THE BUILDING BLOCKS OF MODERN UC

It should come as no surprise that unified communications is the result of several separate innovations, but not everyone knows the sequence to the story.

The infographic consists of a 2x3 grid of colored boxes with icons representing different communication technologies: top-left (blue) shows a speech bubble and envelope; top-right (red) shows a telephone handset, a T-junction, and a database cylinder; bottom-left (green) shows two people with speech bubbles; bottom-middle (orange) shows a video camera; bottom-right (light green) shows a smartphone.

Promising plans
IVR-enabled voicemail systems and early email clients make corporate info more accessible to employees away from the office.

Major merger
IP-PBX later refines this vision, ushering voice and data traffic onto the same lines.

Real-time results
Email clients and office suites enter the conversation, popularizing IM and presence tools that encourage easier everyday collaboration.

Video ventures
Increasingly affordable Internet access and efficient compression techniques make video a viable candidate for admission onto the converged network.

Singular perspective
Computer Telephony Integration techniques tie email and voicemail into a single desktop interface, forming the basis of softphones.

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networkworld.com/newsletters/converg2011.08291/convergence1.html
ucstrategies.com/unified-communications-strategies-views/a-short-history-of-uc.aspx