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EFFECTIVELY NAVIGATE THE TWISTS AND TURNS OF THE UC BUYER'S JOURNEY

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5 PITFALLS

AVOID THE 5 HIDDEN COSTS OF UCAAS

Unified Communication as a System (UCaaS) enables a more collaborative and interconnected organization, both internally between organization members and externally to clients, partners and remote agents.

Many companies are already working hard to adapt or convert their existing communication systems to a unified platform. If you are looking to transition to a UCaaS system, you're going to want to effectively navigate the twists and turns on the road ahead.

We've compiled a list of common hidden costs to avoid for organizations looking to make the switch:

1 OVERESTIMATING EXISTING SYSTEMS

UCaaS solutions deliver a cohesive service of voice, video and data but without significant network improvements, they can lead to poor voice quality and network performance. Some organizations' infrastructures, especially those with legacy or non IP-PBX platforms are not equipped to effectively deal with these voice and video applications.

Additionally, adjusting these existing infrastructures to support UCaaS solutions may also impact data traffic, which may impede mission critical applications with longer downloads and slower response times. You will need to ensure that your infrastructure is capable and ready to handle the new stresses of a UC system.

Your existing support teams are likely unprepared for managing, troubleshooting and diagnosing varied issues with regards to emerging UCaaS services. Troubleshooting alone involves a complex merger of vendor-derived, end-user, protocol- and packet-based data sources for real-time understanding and diagnosis of issues. Make sure your teams are comprehensively prepared for far-reaching and complex systems and technical issues before they are expected to provide support.

2 INEFFECTIVE TRAINING AND PRACTICE

Unified Communications as a Service consist of several major parts, and each of these parts require training and practice in your organization's environment. This starts with members of the IT department and Internal UC Administrators, who will start training on the overall solution, expectations of the solution and then the intricacies to manage the UCaaS solution. End users may have different levels of training needs. If a UC solution includes integrations, like CRM, Contact Center or UC Recording, then each user will need to be trained on the UC solution as well as any other tools from the solution that they will utilize. Unfortunately, training for all these elements is usually conducted in one day (without workshops or follow-up); this approach notably ineffective.

Effective training should separate the various elements so that users first understand the solution in its entirety and how it will improve communications and collaboration. Each user should be hands on, learning the ins and outs of their UC solution. It is also important to make information about the solution easily accessible. Access to quick start guides are essential. It is also important to provide follow-up training. Proper teaching leverages oral instruction, question and answer, practice and reinforcement. This is a critical component of a UC transition; if the initial user expectations are not met, the organization will not enjoy the expected ROI.

When discussing your new system internally and during training, focus on those features that are most desired or needed by users, will generate the fastest adoption rate, and will deliver the greatest productivity improvements.

3 NAVIGATING TAXES, SURCHARGES & FEES

Your new UCaaS system is activated, and things are looking great – but then you get your first bill and it's notably bigger than expected. What are all these surcharges, taxes and fees doing on there? You didn't anticipate these costs and now you have to change your budget. These days, every penny counts so you can't let yourself get caught unawares by not knowing what your final bill looks like. You might not be able to do much about taxes, but surcharges and fees might be negotiable. Some companies are even committed to keeping surcharges and fees down to a minimum percentage of your total bill. Make sure to keep this kind of consideration in mind when selecting a UCaaS solution provider.

4 KNOW YOUR UCAAS PROVIDER'S NETWORK

As remote work becomes a bigger and more permanent part of many companies and industries, the networks these organizations depend on become increasingly intertwined. The strength of your company's network may be conditional upon the quality of local internet carriers across the country or the world – depending on the location of your workforce. You need to make sure that your new UCaaS solution provider has adequate or, preferably, optimized access to as many carriers as possible in order to avoid connectivity issues. Beyond that, UCaaS solution providers should ensure that their system is optimized for voice for peak clarity and continuity.

5 A CLEAR MIGRATION PATH

One obvious red flag when selecting a UCaaS solution provider would be the lack of a solid and sound migration path to move your company to their services. There will always be a few hiccups in this process, but a good migration path will keep everything up and running until you can launch your new system. A slightly less obvious red flag during the migration process would be the proper speed at which to conduct a migration. Some companies, for reasons varying from technology hurdle or upfront costs, might defer to have a slow rollout of solutions and devices. Slow rollouts could cause a major migration issue with UCaaS solution providers who only offer a single UCaaS solution – but providers with multiple solutions should be able to navigate a variety of solutions to facilitate a transition.

Avoiding these hidden costs and following the recommended steps will help you get the most out of your new UCaaS solution. You'll be maximizing your ROI and increasing collaboration and effectiveness across your entire organization. UCaaS, properly utilized, is the future of communication technology and you need to utilize it to stay ahead of the curve.

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