

Guide to Converging Communications



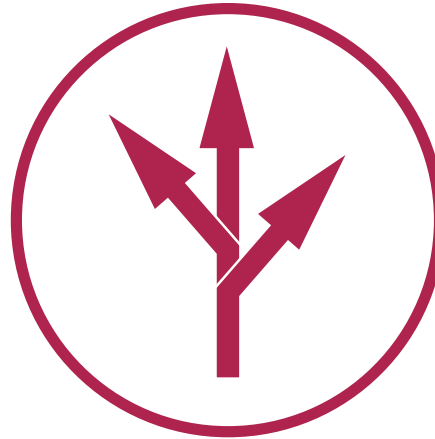
Guide to reviewing your existing telecoms solutions

The rate at which business telecommunications has advanced in recent years has had a big effect on many companies. They have taken advantage of the latest technology in unified communications and are seeing the benefits of improved integrated communications. But those businesses that are still operating a legacy system are likely to be missing out on the advantages of a newer system.

Some of the reasons why you should consider reviewing your existing solutions are:



Cost



Flexibility



Downtime

Cost

Legacy systems are generally more costly than newer systems that use cloud based technology. Historically, a business phone contract would include the rental of the phone handsets, plus call charges, line rental, maintenance and support fees.

Telecoms businesses have now made it much more cost effective for businesses by simplifying contracts and providing unified communications contracts. Making calls over the internet is also much cheaper; so many businesses are reaping the benefits of newer technology.

Flexibility

Legacy systems do not allow for ease of adding additional users and handsets, at least not without extortionate charges to run new cables and install new handsets.

Legacy systems are designed for office based businesses and don't support the modern ways of working. They have a fixed infrastructure which doesn't allow for flexible working, unlike modern cloud based systems that can be used and accessed from almost anywhere.

Downtime

Also, legacy systems suffer a higher risk of experiencing service disruption, which in turn could lead to potentially detrimental downtime. This can be rather bad news for companies reliant on using voice services as their main method of customer communication and revenue generation. As well as being a short term loss of income and productivity, it could also lead to a poor customer experience.

If customers are unable to get in touch with a company, they are likely to get frustrated and take their business elsewhere. Therefore, keeping customers happy when they wish to speak to a company over the phone is a priority for many businesses.

Change is inevitable, and in many ways it's a good thing. A big part of that change for businesses is through connectivity. Being better connected means your business can run smoothly no matter what problems the day may bring. To have the highest degree of success possible, you need to stay ahead of your competitors.

Future trends of business communication

With the advancement of communication technology constantly moving forward, there are various trends that could very well prove an invaluable investment to your business.

Video Conferencing

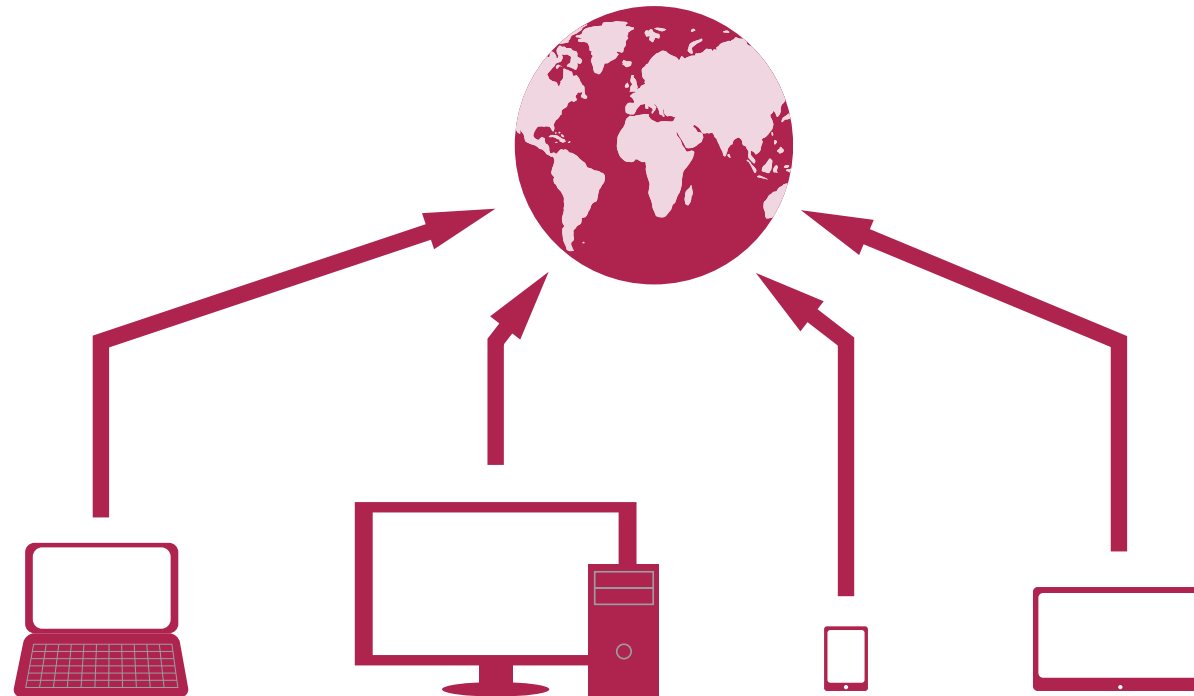
While video conferencing has been in existence since the 1980's, it's has now become a far more accessible and convenient method of communication. Not only does it enable businesses and persons from various locations to have a meeting, they can do so with little notice. It saves a lot of time and money, which is invaluable to a business. The time and money that would otherwise have been spent on travel time and costs can be invested elsewhere.

Video conferencing even allows employees to work from home, saving commuting time and overheads from office space. Although telephone and email are great, nothing beats a face to face meeting, and video conferencing gives a simple and cost-effective way of doing this without wasting time or money.



Cloud based services

With businesses looking to improve the customer experience, more efficiently integrate their workforce and remain current amongst their competitors, cloud communications are becoming an effective tool in this process. At present, cloud networking technology is focussing on software-defined networks (SDN) such as Microsoft 365, giving businesses access to software without the potential of installation problems, anytime, anywhere. Hosted VoIP is also being rapidly adopted by various businesses that are looking to avoid excess phone costs, and further the freedom and ease of access for their users when working on the go.



Seamless Technology Integration

Smartphones are quickly becoming a great alternative to the traditional use of a desk phone for many businesses. Being able to conduct business on-the-go, having constant access to storage of important contacts and accessibility of applications are just a few of the benefits.

Server based applications are now being reconfigured to allow vital applications to run on tablets and smartphones. Tablets are simple to use, portable and very convenient when incorporated into the business world. Some employees may even choose tablets and smartphones over laptops and PC's making it critical that businesses ensure availability of necessary applications on these mobile devices. It is thought that the popularity of this strategy is expected to grow as businesses become less dependent on desktop devices and employees become more mobile.



Why you should be looking at Unified Communications

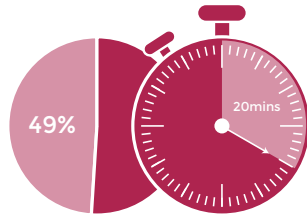
Phone, email, teleconferencing, web and videoconferencing in most organisations are all separate functions. All are vital, and collectively form the basis, from which we conduct our business, and yet we keep them all separate; investing time and effort individually managing these when our efforts could be better spent elsewhere.

Unified communications can fundamentally change workplace interactions by seamlessly combining a variety of independent communication channels into a flexible, collaborative environment. It will reduce infrastructure costs, make lives simpler and even enable management to quickly see when employees are available to chat.

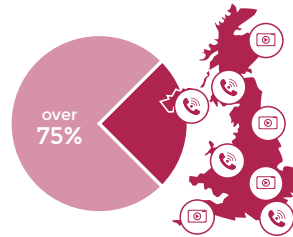
The combined costs of all the individual services, pieces of equipment and staffing your business requires to communicate with your customers, can be expensive and involve several different payment options. Communications will no doubt be an investment, but should be an affordable one. Cloud-based unified communication solutions mean that quality and affordability are now achievable. Imagine one cost-effective solution for all your communication needs.

The best unified communication solutions will include your phones, advanced calling features like unlimited calling, online faxing, video conferencing, toll-free and the latest mobile apps and tools, all for no additional expense. When you think about the value of this and what you can eliminate (for example, fax machine costs and maintenance) modernising and unifying your communications into one cost-effective solution is self-explanatory.

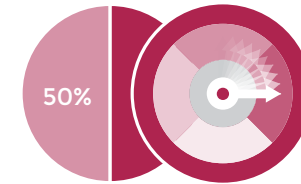
Research conducted by Chadwick Martin Bailey on behalf of Cisco, a partner of Raspberry Beret, found that:



49% of user organisations save up to 20 minutes per employee daily by reaching workers on the first try.



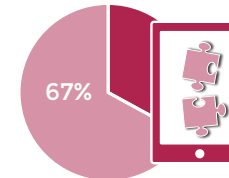
Over 75% of user organisations experience improved productivity of employees across geographically-dispersed locations due to voice and video conferencing.



50% of user organisations save up to 20 minutes per employee daily from more efficient message management.



46% of user organisations have travel savings of more than five days per employee annually.



67% of user organisations report increased mobile worker productivity and faster problem resolution.

Unified Communication solutions offer countless advantages to businesses and help to ensure it is business as usual, no matter what takes place or where you or your employees physically are.

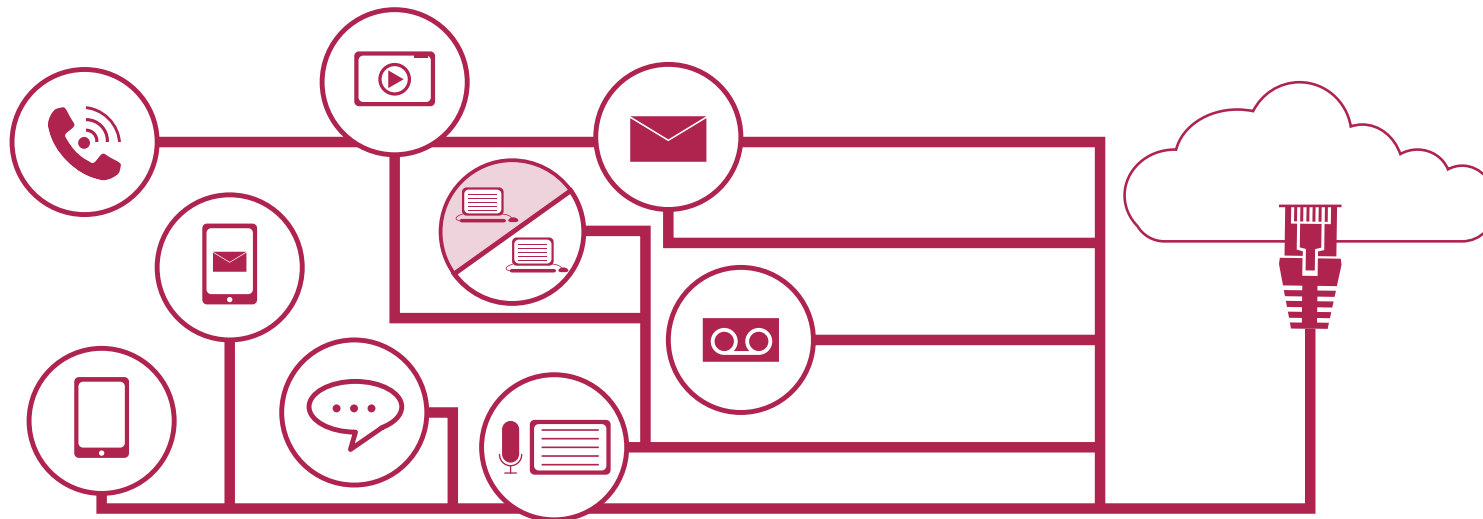
How to choose the right system

With a number of solutions available, it's important to develop a strategic unified communications plan that fully suits your business needs. You used to be able to buy a box with some software in it, plug it in, configure it, and that was that. But the landscape has changed. Given this, it's more important than ever to have a clear goal in mind when choosing a system.

What factors should you consider?

Is my company ready for unified communications?

Some organisations will want to focus on enhancing the productivity of individuals by implementing new capabilities such as instant messaging, presence detection, or click-to-call. Other organisations may need ways to focus on more effective business workflows. In many cases, organisations benefit from first concentrating on individual productivity and then later identifying opportunities for business process optimisation.



New, or Integrate with your old system?

Successful deployment of a unified communication solution depends on evaluation of your technical preparation. For example, is your network ready? The infrastructure must be capable of delivering sufficient throughput and meeting latency, jitter, and packet-loss requirements. Most businesses are looking to integrate new digital technology with something they already have in place.

The three options of deployment mode will depend on your current technology setup:

Based on premises	Cloud-based	Hybrid UC
<p>This conventional mode comes from the telephony world, which is where most Unified Communication vendors originate. Businesses that have sufficient IT resources will likely prefer to stay in this mode as it provides the highest degree of control.</p>	<p>As with VoIP, many vendors have adopted the hosted model where the solution is hosted in their data centre. This makes it easy for businesses to deploy unified communications. This option is popular among small to medium size businesses as they tend to have limited IT capabilities. Cloud economics can also be quite appealing which makes a unified communication system an operational expenditure as opposed to a capital expense.</p>	<p>Cloud-based services are gaining popularity among both small to medium size business and larger enterprises. However, not all businesses are ready for an all-cloud deployment, so utilising a hybrid service would be ideal. This involves having some unified communications products remain on-site and under the IT department's control, while other services can be safely outsourced to the cloud.</p>

Regardless of the size of your business at this point, the growth you expect should impact the decision you make. If you're beginning to lean towards an on-premise solution, you will need to think ahead and estimate the size of your business in the years to come and buy a system with room for expansion.

A hosted solution allows you to add new users to the system as they join, without any changes to hardware, beyond purchasing a new handset. Flexibility here is key; and ideally you should choose a system that allows you to switch easily from on-premise to hosted, or vice versa.

Moving forward....

With various factors to consider you will undoubtedly need some expert advice to determine the correct solution for your business, with on-premise, cloud and hybrid solutions all having different advantages. Once you understand the differences, it will be easier to see which is right for your business, and we're ready to talk unified communications when you are.

Whilst assessing your choices we'd recommend talking to us, so we can help you make the right decision. We only offer genuinely good advice; we will back this up and explain why we are offering this. We will explain to you the pros and cons for each solution so that you can make a more informed, empowered decision for your business.

We work hard to understand your business and the specific needs of the phone system you want to purchase, tailoring our solution accordingly. We will help you assess whether you have enough bandwidth for a unified communications solution and help you establish whether your network is VoIP capable. We are determined to honour what we promise in an efficient and timely manner. We are determined to offer a level of service not often found in the Telecoms Industry.

About Raspberry Beret

We Are Honest

We only offer genuinely good advice, we will back this up and explain why we are offering this. We will offer you pro's and con's for each solution we give you. We will educate you and empower you to make the choice that's right for you.

We Have Intuition

We talk simple, plain english. If you don't know, just ask. We feed off out of the box solutions, whatever your requirements are, we are confident we can help.

We Are Determined

We are determined to honour what we promise in an efficient and timely manner. We are determined to offer a level of service not often found in the Telecom's Industry.



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