



Migration guide:

# 6 steps to smarter unified communications

## Don't let outdated technology hold you back.

People want to work how, when, and where they work best. They expect their workplace technology to enable a smarter way of working. This requires use of a modern unified communications (UC) stack that inspires more meaningful connections that will drive innovative, fun, and collaborative work. To get there requires a strategy founded on the adoption of continuous innovation. A strategy that effectively predicts the future. Let's take a closer look at what that means.



## 1

### Assess your current UC environment.

Audit your existing UC network, and prepare a needs analysis as a comparison between where you are today and where you need to go.

Ask yourself what kind of cloud environment is right for you:

- How are on-premises adoption cycles compromising business agility?
- Where does cloud adoption add the greatest value?
- What parts of the business will continue to need on-premises UC?
- How can you best bridge your transition to the cloud, over time?

Here are just a few examples:

#### HR

- Accelerate time to hire
- Increase employee satisfaction
- Decrease employee turnover
- Expand the talent pool

#### Finance

- Reduce travel expenses
- Fund collaboration services with OpEx
- Boost profitability

#### Workplace resources

- Reduce office footprint
- Lower utility and furnishing expenses
- Cut maintenance costs

#### Sales

- Improve productivity
- Increase accessibility
- Strengthen customer relationships
- Accelerate time to close

## 2

### Choose the right vendor.

Plan for the future.

While today's communication needs are important, it's smart to consider future needs as well.

#### Solid technology

Look for a solution provider with a strong track record.

#### Innovation

Avoid vendors with stagnating technology. A technology partner who continues to innovate will be more invested in the future.

#### Solution breadth

The more comprehensive the solution, the more tools your teams will have to connect. Look for calling, video, meetings, and team collaboration, as well as contact center capabilities.

#### Interoperability

A flexible platform that can integrate with other applications and services is important.

#### Deployment options

Look for a vendor that offers a nondisruptive transition to the cloud, with the flexibility to support a mixed cloud and on-premises environment for as long as you need it.

Cisco, the Gartner Magic Quadrant Leader for Unified Communications for the eleventh year straight, offers reliable technology plus a complete collaboration suite that allows people to work how, when, and where they want.

Choose a comprehensive solution for easier:

- Integration
- Implementation
- Maintenance and support
- User experiences

"We chose Cisco after an exhaustive RFP process. Cisco supports our broad-based requirements, and we like their stability as a vendor ... Don't put off switching until it's too late."

— Danielle Tucker, senior telecommunications engineer, Apria Healthcare<sup>1</sup>

## 3

### Prepare your internal proposal.



#### Solution plan

Work with your selected vendor to define your cloud migration strategy and determine your solution needs:

- Products
- Services
- Software
- Maintenance and support



#### What is a realistic timeframe?

The UC experts at technology research firm Gartner recommend a phased rollout so that any process challenges will be limited to a portion of the organization at a given time.



#### Budget plan

Outline your budget needs, considering:

- Alignment with budget schedules
- Use of OpEx versus CapEx
- Financing options

## 4

### Gain internal support.

Inclusion drives advocacy.

Regroup with your line-of-business (LoB) leaders to validate goals.

- Evaluate current performance benchmarks.
- Determine realistic goals for outcomes such as improved productivity and cost savings.
- Plan to measure against those goals at regular intervals during migration—and after.

Gartner suggests focusing on metrics and accountability as they relate to financial performance. This will encourage dialogue between—and commitment from—all your stakeholders.



"By 2021, 90% of IT leaders will not purchase new premises-based UC infrastructure."

— Gartner Magic Quadrant for Unified Communications as a Service<sup>2</sup>

## 5

### Implement.



Ensure that the end solution will work for:

- Desktop users
- Mobile users
- Remote users
- Routing behavior
- Reporting and monitoring

- Planning
- Platform
- Integration
- Systems testing
- Performance and load
- Application tuning
- Monitoring
- Postdeployment support

Start with a small group of power users so you can identify challenges and make adjustments.

Make adjustments for subsequent group rollouts and continue evaluating.

Don't overlook user training. Without it, adoption will take longer and may impact your success metrics.

## 6

### Measure and validate results.

Gather metrics and continue to work with your LoB contacts to track efficiencies against predeployment benchmarks. Results should steadily improve as employees become more familiar with the new technology and adoption increases.



Partner with Cisco for smarter UC and smoother cloud migration.

Contact us

1. "Switching UC & Contact Center Providers Can Be a Relief," Cisco (blog), Jan. 13, 2017.  
2. Magic Quadrant for Unified Communications as a Service, Worldwide, Gartner, October 2018.

© 2019 Cisco and/or its affiliates. All rights reserved. Cisco and the Cisco logo are trademarks or registered trademarks of Cisco and/or its affiliates in the U.S. and other countries. To view a list of Cisco trademarks, see the Trademarks page on the Cisco website. Third-party trademarks mentioned are the property of their respective owners. The use of the word "partner" does not imply a partnership relationship between Cisco and any other company. (1905R)