

What you need to know about today's leading UC vendors.

Introducing the Unified Communications Players

For large enterprises, UC (unified communications) is often delivered as on-site software and hardware, which you either install yourself or hire your vendors to install. A few vendors, such as IBM Corp., Cisco Systems Inc. and ShoreTel Inc., also offer managed or hosted UC services. But for smaller companies, a cost-effective alternative can be found in the emerging SaaS (Software as a Service) space from providers such as PanTerra Networks Inc. PanTerra's WorldSmart WorkSuite on-demand UC services are designed for SMBs (small- to medium-sized businesses) and include digital voice, collaboration, call-center and messaging capabilities.

Different Paths to UC

Each vendor delivers UC slightly differently, which is one of the challenging aspects of choosing a UC solution for your organization. Regardless of how a provider offers its UC technology, the functionality is the same, combining unified messaging, IM (instant messaging), voice, email and conferencing on one platform. Vendors also add presence and device awareness to UC's common user interface. With UC, users can access all methods of communication from their desktop computers and mobile devices — making contact easier, faster and more efficient. And when UC is integrated with business processes and applications, communication is streamlined so that employees can be more responsive to co-workers, clients, customers and partners. Ultimately, UC can improve business processes, productivity and collaboration, especially among distributed workers.

This comparison guide examines the following UC solutions: Alcatel-Lucent OmniTouch Unified Communication, Avaya Aura, Cisco Unified Communications, IBM Lotus Sametime, Microsoft Unified Communications, Nortel Networks Unified Communications, ShoreTel Unified Communications and Siemens OpenScape Unified Communications Server.

Alcatel-Lucent

With executive headquarters in Paris, Alcatel-Lucent is a telecommunications vendor delivering voice, data and video-communications products to service providers, enterprises and governments around the world. Offerings include broadband access, carrier and enterprise IP technologies, services and applications like UC.

Introducing the Unified Communications Players



Alcatel-Lucent's OmniTouch Unified Communication is comprised of a series of communications products. The OmniTouch 8400 Enterprise Instant Communications Suite supports smart phones, wireless network technologies such as wifi and 3G, and has capabilities for faxing, conferencing and automated message delivery. The software-based Alcatel-Lucent OmniTouch 8460 Advanced Communications Server is a powerful communications and presence engine. My Teamwork is a browser-based collaboration application that allows users to start an audio or video conference with a click-to-communicate interface. It also includes application sharing, IM and presence. Finally, My Instant Communicator is the client for end-user devices, including PCs, PDAs and IP phones.

The OmniTouch suite is a good fit for companies that have already invested in Alcatel-Lucent's telecommunications products.

Avaya

Avaya is also a leading global telecommunications provider, but this Basking Ridge, N.J.-based vendor offers business communication systems to SMBs as well as large enterprises. Avaya focuses on making its IP telephony solutions interoperable with existing communications systems, supporting SIP (Session Initiation Protocol) and SOA (Service-Oriented Architecture). Avaya's Unified Communications suite is thus a good option for companies looking to layer UC onto their mixed-vendor network.

Avaya Aura is a series of nine products: Avaya Aura Communication Manager, Avaya Aura Communication Manager Branch, Avaya Aura Session Manager, Avaya Aura SIP Enablement Services, Avaya Aura System Manager, Avaya Aura Communication Manager Messaging, Avaya Aura Application Enablement Services, Avaya Aura Presence Services and Avaya Integrated Management. The UC solution comes in branch, standard and enterprise editions based on per-user licensing.

Cisco

This Silicon Valley networking-technology provider, not surprisingly, takes a network-centric approach to UC, tying it closely to the underlying network infrastructure. Cisco's UC components are modular, sold individually based on what an organization requires. This is done presumably to extend the Cisco "Intelligent Network" to include UC functionality.

Cisco UC systems have five components: IP telephony, Unified Communications applications, Unified Contact Center applications, Unified Communications infrastructure and the Unified Communications Management Suite. Like many vendors in this comparison guide, Cisco supports SOA, SIP and VXML.

Cisco's portfolio of UC and voice products is extensive. Applications include Mobile Solutions for Unified Communications, which includes clients for mobile

Introducing the Unified Communications Players



phones, smartphones and wireless IP phones; Unified MeetingPlace Express, for voice, video and Web conferencing; Unity, a unified messaging application that integrates with IBM Lotus Domino and Microsoft Exchange; Unified Presence, a platform that enables secure IM communications; and Unified Contact Center applications. WebEx Web Meetings software and Cisco's telepresence system integrate with the UC solution also. Hardware components include switches, voice gateways and servers, IP desk phones and video-conferencing equipment.

Cisco is well suited for organizations that are already heavily invested in the vendor's network products. According to Gartner Inc.'s UC Magic Quadrant report, you should consider Cisco's UC solutions if you are using Cisco's key voice and conferencing functions, but you should ensure that your communication functions from other vendors will interoperate.

IBM

The core of IBM's UC2 (Unified Communications and Collaboration) strategy is an open, extensible platform — Lotus Sametime — as well as hardware, design, implementation services and third-party applications. Based in Armonk, N.Y., IBM also partners extensively with telecommunications providers, including Alcatel-Lucent, Avaya, Nortel, ShoreTel and Siemens Enterprise Communications. Based on open standards, Sametime can be used independently or integrated with your existing telephony infrastructure, including third-party and custom applications.

According to Gartner, "IBM enables multiple vendor services to operate with its middleware, making a broad range of servers available while allowing different types of clients to become consolidated with the Sametime client."

The Sametime family of UC and collaboration applications includes integrated IM, Web conferencing, presence awareness and user-location services. Its IM works with public chat networks, and the software supports Microsoft Windows, Linux and Apple Inc. Macintosh operating systems. Its IM functionality also integrates with Microsoft Office applications. Unlike many UC suites, Sametime includes built-in VoIP for PC-to-PC conversations and point-to-point video capabilities. To complete its UC offering, IBM offers IP telephony unified messaging, contact-center applications and more features via its Converged Communications Services.

Microsoft

The Redmond, Wash. technology giant is also making a play for this space with a software-only approach that integrates with existing telecommunications infrastructures. Its UC solution has three main components: OCS (Office

Introducing the Unified Communications Players



Communications Server) 2007 R2, which handles all synchronous (real-time) communications; Exchange Server 2010, which manages all asynchronous communications; and Office Communicator 2007 R2, the UC client application. Each interdependent component is sold with a separate license.

OCS 2007 R2 includes IM, VoIP, presence, audio and video conferencing, as well as a built-in IVR (integrated voice response) platform called Speech Server. Exchange Server 2010 is the unified messaging component of Microsoft's UC offering, sending email, voice mail, faxes and calendar messages to users' Office Outlook inboxes. Finally, Communicator 2007 R2 is a click-to-communicate UC interface that gives users access to presence and directory information, IM, audio and video conferencing and VoIP calls. It also integrates UC into Office, so presence information appears whenever a contact's name appears, including in a Word document or in an Outlook email string.

Like IBM, Microsoft has made several key partnerships with telcos, such as Nortel, to strengthen its UC offering. It's also one of the few vendors to cater to developers with several SDKs (software development kits). You should consider Microsoft's UC solution if you need to build custom UC apps or integrate existing custom apps with your UC applications; it's also an easy fit for companies using Exchange and Word.

Nortel Networks

This Toronto-based telecommunications vendor offers packet, optical, wireless and voice communication technologies to companies and service providers around the world. Nortel's UC solution combines telecommunications hardware and IP phones with software applications, not unlike Cisco, and can integrate with existing voice environments from Nortel or third-parties.

Nortel's two main UC components are the MCS (Multimedia Communication Server) 5100 and Communication Server 1000. MCS 5100 handles users' collaboration tools, including IP telephony, conferencing, IM and presence. It has clients for IP desk phones, PCs, mobile devices and a variety of third-party SIP devices. It also includes clients that integrate with Lotus Notes and Microsoft Outlook. Communication Server 1000, on the other hand, is a server-based IP PBX supporting unified messaging, contact centers, IVR, wireless VoIP and IP phones. Additional UC applications include Multimedia Conferencing, CallPilot Unified Messaging and Unified Messaging 2000, as well as contact-center and IVR applications.

Organizations with a Nortel-based infrastructure should consider this UC solution, which is also sold modularly.

In 2006, Nortel teamed up with Microsoft and created the Innovative Communications Alliance to jointly deliver UC solutions such as Converged Office for Microsoft Office Communications Server 2007. It can be difficult,

Introducing the Unified Communications Players



though, to tell where Nortel ends and Microsoft begins, so be sure you understand which vendor is responsible for supporting the various applications you implement.

ShoreTel

This Sunnyvale, Calif.-based vendor is a pure-play IP UC system provider. ShoreTel Unified Communications includes IP phones, switches and applications, which are sold as a fully integrated solution. The unique modular architecture of the ShoreTel system scales from 10 to 10,000 users without a forklift upgrade. This easy-to-manage design also offers high system reliability and availability at a fraction of the cost of traditional centralized IP-PBXs.

ShoreTel offers a wide range of UC applications, including ShoreTel Converged Conferencing for improved collaboration, unified messaging and ShoreWare Contact Center solutions—all integrated in the ShoreWare Call Manager desktop applications.

ShoreWare focuses on simple communications with ease of use for users and system administrators, while offering one of the lowest TCOs in the industry. System-wide administration is easily performed with the Web browser-based ShoreWare Director application. For knowledge workers, the ShoreWare Call Manager desktop applications combine voice, instant messaging and video communications capabilities in an intuitive user interface, and are easily integrated with Microsoft Outlook, Microsoft OCS and IBM Sametime.

ShoreTel should be considered by companies that are looking to install a new end-to-end IP communications system, as well as those who want to leverage existing infrastructure investments by taking advantage of ShoreTel's unique integration capabilities.

Siemens

This Munich-based vendor provides open enterprise communication solutions, including IP infrastructure, IP and SIP phones and enterprise mobility, as well as CRM (customer relationship management) and UC applications, to large companies around the world. Siemens' UC offering, the OpenScape Unified Communications Server, is one of the most mature offerings on the market.

Extensible, open and based on SIP, the OpenScape UC Server can operate in almost any IT or telephony environment, integrating with existing IP telephony networks as well as legacy PBX environments, regardless of vendor. It runs on Linux, supports Web services, uses industry standards like SIP, and is built on Siemens' OpenSOA framework. Also, OpenScape integrates with Lotus Sametime and Microsoft Office Communication Server. Extremely flexible, it can be configured to support as few as 300 users or as many as 100,000 users per cluster.

Introducing the Unified Communications Players



The OpenScape UC Server handles presence, administration, and other shared services in the OpenScape UC suite. This suite of applications includes OpenScape Voice Application (previously called HiPath 8000) for enterprise-grade voice and IP least-cost routing, OpenScape Video and OpenScape UC Application, which can support as many as 20,000 concurrent users. The UC Application is available in Enterprise and Developer editions, allowing you to integrate UC functionality into your organization's business processes.

While most vendors support SIP and SOA, Siemens is unique both in its use of open standards to deliver UC and its massive scalability. According to Gartner, you should "evaluate the Siemens UC solution if you are looking for a full-featured and mature product, intend to integrate UC with business applications, or wish to create a joint telephony and Microsoft OCS solution."

Planning Ahead

When it comes to implementing UC, there are almost as many approaches as there are vendors. To choose the right provider — or providers, if you're going to deploy a best-of-breed solution — you need to not only determine which products will work best with the current hardware and software supporting your business communications, but with the plans you have for your organization's systems for the future.

Deploying UC is not simple, and because it's an immature technology, there aren't yet a set of best practices to guide you. When you choose your vendor, don't hesitate to take advantage of their network assessment and UC-design and -implementation services.

VoIP Unified Communications Comparison Guide

	Alcatel-Lucent	Avaya Inc.	Cisco Systems Inc.	IBM Corp.
	OmniTouch 8400 Instant Communications Suite OmniTouch 8460 Advanced Communications Server	Avaya Aura	Unified Communications	Lotus Sametime
Product Notes	OmniTouch applications increase enterprise agility, foster innovation, and reduce or eliminate reliance on third-party services. Carriers, OEMs, system integrators, and businesses today use OmniTouch solutions to enable the rapid deployment of a wide range of real-time applications and services for hosted and premises-based environments across wireless and wire-line network.	Avaya Aura is the core communications platform supporting unified communications and contact center solutions for midsize to large enterprises. It extends Communication Manager and enables SIP-based session management with innovative and powerful capabilities.	The Cisco Unified Communications system is built into an intelligent IP network and includes infrastructure hardware, end-point devices and the software that connects them.	Lotus Sametime is the center of IBM's UC2 strategy, which also includes UC business services and partnerships with other vendors. Sametime is an open platform that supports plug-ins.
Primary UC Applications	OmniTouch 8410 Instant Communications Web Services, OmniTouch 8440 Messaging Software, OmniTouch 8450 Fax Software, OmniTouch 8460 Advanced Communications Server, OmniTouch 8464 Meet-Me Audio Conference Bridge, OmniTouch 8600 My Instant Communicator, OmniTouch 8622 My Cellular Extension, OmniTouch 8660 My Teamwork Conferencing and Collaboration, OmniTouch 8670 Automated Message Delivery System	Avaya Aura Communication Manager, Avaya Aura Communication Manager Branch, Avaya Aura Session Manager, Avaya Aura SIP Enablement Services, Avaya Aura System Manager, Avaya Aura Communication Manager Messaging, Avaya Aura Application Enablement Services, Avaya Aura Presence Services, Avaya Integrated Management, Avaya Aura Media Services, Avaya Aura System Platform	Unified Communications Manager, Unified IP Phones 7900 Series, Mobile Solutions for Unified Communications, Voice and Unified Messaging, Unified MeetingPlace Express, Unified Presence	Lotus Sametime, including Sametime 8.5 Advanced, Sametime Entry, Sametime Unyte and Sametime Unified Telephony
Cost	Contact vendor	Contact vendor	Cisco Unified Workspace Licensing is one way to procure a range of Cisco Unified Communications applications and services with a per-user price point. Phones and call control, presence, unified clients, mobility, unified messaging and audio, video and Web conferencing are included in this program. Contact vendor for specific prices	Contact vendor
Additional UC and UC-Enabled Applications	OmniTouch 8464 Meet-Me Audio Conference Bridge	Video Conferencing	Unified IP Conference Station phones, Unified Video Advantage, Unified MeetingPlace and Unified Contact Center	IBM WebSphere Portal, IBM Lotus Notes, IBM Lotus Quick
Interoperable Contact-Center Applications	Not included as part of the UC offering. Sold separately as OmniTouch Call Center suite of products.	Not included as part of the UC offering. Contact-center applications sold separately from UC.	Unified Contact Center	Contact vendor
Additional Management Tools	Contact vendor	Contact vendor	Unified Operations Manager, Unified Service Monitor, Unified Provisioning Manager and netManager Unified Communications	Contact vendor
Development Tools	Yes	Developer toolkits and APIs (application programming interfaces) included with Avaya Aura Application Enablement Services	Unified Application Designer and Unified Call Studio	DeveloperWorks portal and developer forums are available.

Supported Standards				
SIP (Session Initiation Protocol)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
SOA (Service Oriented Architecture)	Contact vendor	Yes	Yes	Contact vendor
VoiceXML	Yes	Contact vendor	Yes	Contact vendor
WSDL (Web Services Description Language)	Contact vendor	Yes	Yes	Contact vendor
Features				
Number of Concurrent Supported Users	90,000 users per cluster; architecture supports multiple, federated clusters.	Contact vendor	Contact vendor	NA; IP telephony service available
Integrates with Existing PBX/IP Telephony System	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Supported Operating Systems	Supports multiple operating systems and browsers	Microsoft Windows and Linux	Microsoft Windows and Apple Macintosh	Supports and integrates with multiple client and server operating systems.
Third-Party Software Integration	Contact vendor	Avaya Aura integrates with hundreds of communications and business applications, including Microsoft Office Communicator and IBM Lotus Sametime, as well as a broad range of collaboration, contact center, call recording and click-to-dial applications.	Microsoft Office and Exchange/Outlook; IBM Lotus Domino/Notes; Novell GroupWise	Microsoft Office, Microsoft Outlook and Microsoft SharePoint
Supported End-User Devices	The Alcatel-Lucent Advanced Cellular Extension application enables the UC products on any smart mobile phone without extra hardware, infrastructure changes, or dedicated link involved.	Deskphones, wireless phones, on-screen softphones, home phones with VPN, conference phones and headsets.	IP phones and smartphones, including RIM Blackberry and Treo	The Sametime mobile client supports Nokia, Research in Motion (RIM) BlackBerry, Sony Ericsson and Microsoft Windows Mobile devices. IBM Lotus Sametime 8.5 software supports a browser-based Apple iPhone chat client.
Messaging				
Presence	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Unified Messaging	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Unified Corporate Directory	Contact vendor	Contact vendor	Yes	Contact vendor
Click-to-Communicate Interfaces	Click-to-call and click-to-conference	Click-to-call	Click-to-call	Click-to-call and click-to-conference
Text-to-Speech	Contact vendor	Yes	Yes	Contact vendor
Visual Voice Mail	No	Yes	Yes	Contact vendor
IVR (Interactive Voice Response)	Yes	No	Yes	Contact vendor
IM (Instant Messaging)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes; also integrates with supported public IM networks
Group Chat	Yes	Contact vendor	Contact vendor	Yes

Telephony and Mobility				
PC Softphone	Yes	Yes	Yes	Contact vendor
Built-in VoIP	Yes	Contact vendor	Yes	Yes
One Number and Voice Mail	Yes	Contact vendor	Yes	Yes
"Find-Me-Follow-Me" Phone Ringing	Contact vendor	Contact vendor	Contact vendor	Contact vendor
User-Defined Call Routing and Permissions	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Simultaneous Ringing of Multiple Devices	Yes	Contact vendor	Yes	Contact vendor
User-Location Display	Yes	Contact vendor	Yes	Yes
Shift Live Calls Between Devices	Yes	Yes	Yes; between mobile devices and IP phones	Contact vendor
Mobile-Device Access to Corporate Directory	Contact vendor	Yes	Yes	Contact vendor
Mobile-Device Access to PBX	Yes	Yes	Contact vendor	Contact vendor
Synchronized Call Logs	Contact vendor	Contact vendor	Yes	Contact vendor
Conferencing				
Audio Conferencing	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Web Conferencing	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Built-in Video Conferencing	Yes, with OmniTouch 8660 My Teamwork	Yes, with Avaya one-X Communicator.	Yes	Yes
Desktop/Application Sharing	Contact vendor	Contact vendor	Yes	Yes
Initiate Conference from IM	Yes	Contact vendor	Yes	Contact vendor
Initiate Conference from Mobile Device	Yes	Contact vendor	Contact vendor	Contact vendor
In-Conference Break-out Sessions	Contact vendor	Contact vendor	Yes	Contact vendor
In-Conference Management	Includes polling, Q&A and lecture mode options for large events.	Contact vendor	Includes mute, dial out, screen entry and conference lock	Contact vendor
Record and Playback	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Support and Services				
Assessment, Design and Planning Services	Contact vendor	Avaya Strategic Communications Consulting	Cisco Unified Communications Services	Sametime Readiness Workshops, Sametime Environmental Assessments, and Sametime Architecture Workshops
Hosting Services	Contact vendor	Contact vendor	Hosted Unified Communications Services	Contact vendor
Tech-Support Options	24/7 technical assistance by telephone, fax, email or online chat.	Avaya Support and Managed Services	Online, phone and email service request	Sametime Health Checks, Sametime Performance/Optimization Testing, and Sametime Upgrade Services
Online Resources	Resource center with demos, white papers and datasheets	Online Service Manager, knowledge management, tutorials, user guides, resource library and FAQs	Design guides, systems documentation, voice and video forums	Fix downloads, troubleshoot info, Redbooks publication of best practices, searchable knowledgebase and technical documents
Vendor-Supported UC Community	Yes	No	Yes; Cisco Support Community	Yes; Sametime blog and wiki, Inside Lotus blog, user forums and communities

VoIP Unified Communications Comparison Guide

	Microsoft Corp.	Nortel Networks	ShoreTel Inc.	Siemens Enterprise Communications
	Unified Communications	Unified Communications	ShoreTel Unified Communications	OpenScape Unified Communications Server
Product Notes	Microsoft's UC solution is entirely software and integrates with applications across the Office system. Partnerships with telcos are also important to this solution.	Nortel's UC solution is a presence-enabled communications and collaboration system featuring integrated IP telephony, instant messaging (IM), audio, video, and Web conferencing, providing a consistent, unified user quality of experience over any device, anywhere, anytime - whether fixed or mobile - and through multimedia applications for a richer collaborative experience. UC is a stepping stone to Communication Enabled Business Process (CEBP) applications which automate the process of communicating to the right person/people based on business process event triggers.	ShoreTel only sells IP UC systems, and thus offers end-to-end solutions: voice switches, IP phones, UC applications and contact-center solutions.	OpenScape UC is an open, extensible platform. OpenScape UC Server provides a foundation of SOA services, which are developed as OpenScape applications. It also enables CEBP (Communications-Enabled Business Processes) with existing applications.
Primary UC Applications	Exchange Server 2010, Office Communications Server 2007 R2, Microsoft Exchange Online	Agile Communication Environment, UC Desktop for ACE, Unified Messaging, Multimedia Conferencing, Converged Office for Communication Server 1000, Multimedia Communication Server 5100, IP Phone 1100 and 2000 Series, Mobile Communication 3100, IP Softphone 2050, LG-Nortel IP Phone 8500 Series, WLAN Handsets 6100 Series, Carrier hosted solutions	Assuming the ShoreTel IP platform is in place (which includes the ShoreTel IP Phone system, ShorePhone IP phones and ShoreGear voice switches), adding UC can be done with ShoreWare Professional Call Manager and Converged Conferencing.	OpenScape Unified Communications Server (HiPath 8000 which includes OpenScape Voice Application, OpenScape Video, OpenScape UC Application, Mobility, OpenScape Messaging and OpenScape Office
Cost	Exchange Server 2010 Standard Edition costs \$699, Office Communications Server 2007 R2 Standard Edition costs \$699, Microsoft Online Services start at \$2 per user per month, Microsoft Office Live Meeting standard costs \$4.50 per user per month.	Contact vendor	Contact vendor	Contact vendor
Additional UC and UC-Enabled Applications	Office Live Meeting and Exchange Unified Messaging, Exchange Hosted Services	Hot Desking, Sales Portal for ACE	ShoreTel Web Dialer	HiPath OpenOffice ME
Interoperable Contact-Center Applications	Contact vendor	IP Contact Center	ShoreWare Contact Center	OpenScape Contact Center
Additional Management Tools	Contact vendor	No	ShoreWare System Monitor and ShoreWare Director	Contact vendor
Development Tools	Communications Server 2007 Server SDK, Communicator Automation API, Exchange Server 2007 SP1 SDK, Unified Communications Managed API V1.0 SDK, Unified Communications Client 1.0 SDK, Unified Communications AJAX SDK, Communicator Automation API and Exchange Server 2007 SP1 SDK; UC Developer Portal and developer forums are also available.	Contact vendor	ShoreTel Developer Network, ShoreTel Web Service SDK	Software Development Kit

Supported Standards				
SIP (Session Initiation Protocol)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
SOA (Service Oriented Architecture)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
VoiceXML	Yes	No	No	Yes
WSDL (Web Services Description Language)	Contact vendor	No	Yes	Contact vendor
Features				
Number of Concurrent Supported Users	NA	Single Communication Server supports 22,500 users per cluster.	ShoreTel IP phone system supports 10,000 users.	OpenScape UC Server supports up to 100,000 users in a multiserver configuration.
Integrates with Existing PBX/IP Telephony System	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Supported Operating Systems	Microsoft Windows	Microsoft Windows, Linux and VXWorks	Microsoft Windows and Linux	OpenScape Voice runs on Linux
Third-Party Software Integration	Contact vendor	Microsoft Office Communications Server 2007 and other MS UC offerings, Office; IBM Lotus Notes and Lotus Sametime; Novell GroupWise	Microsoft Outlook and other UC products; NetSuite Integration Application and Cost Recovery Integration	Microsoft Office Communication Server; IBM Sametime; Cisco WebEx
Supported End-User Devices	PCs, IP phones and Windows Mobile devices	PCs, mobile phones, PDAs and IP phones	IP phones, mobile phones	Contact vendor
Messaging				
Presence	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Unified Messaging	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Unified Corporate Directory	Yes; MS UC uses Active Directory to unify names, PBX extensions, email addresses and log-on information.	Yes	Yes	Yes
Click-to-Communicate Interfaces	Click-to-call, click-to-conference call and click-to-video	Click-to-call and click-to-conference	Click-to-call and click-to-conference	Click-to-call and click-to-conference
Text-to-Speech	Yes	Yes	Yes	Contact vendor
Visual Voice Mail	Yes; voice mail can arrive in Office Outlook inbox	Yes	Yes	Yes
IVR (Interactive Voice Response)	Yes; via optional Office Communications Server 2010 Speech Server	Yes	Yes, via Outbound Campaign IVR Application	Yes
IM (Instant Messaging)	Yes; connects with public IM networks	Yes	Yes; allows multiple concurrent IM sessions	Yes
Group Chat	Yes	Yes	Yes	Contact vendor

Telephony and Mobility				
PC Softphone	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes, OpenScape Personal Edition
Built-in VoIP	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
One Number and Voice Mail	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
"Find-Me-Follow-Me" Phone Ringing	Contact vendor	Yes	Yes	Yes
User-Defined Call Routing and Permissions	Contact vendor	Yes	Yes	Yes
Simultaneous Ringing of Multiple Devices	Contact vendor	Yes	No	Contact vendor
User-Location Display	Yes	Contact vendor	Contact vendor	Contact vendor
Shift Live Calls Between Devices	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Mobile-Device Access to Corporate Directory	Yes	Yes	Yes	Contact vendor
Mobile-Device Access to PBX	Contact vendor	Yes	Yes	Contact vendor
Synchronized Call Logs	Contact vendor	Yes	Yes	Contact vendor
Conferencing				
Audio Conferencing	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Web Conferencing	Yes; Also available as a service via Office Communications Server R2.	Yes	Yes	Yes
Built-in Video Conferencing	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Desktop/Application Sharing	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Initiate Conference from IM	Yes	Contact vendor	Yes	Contact vendor
Initiate Conference from Mobile Device	Contact vendor	Yes	Contact vendor	Contact vendor
In-Conference Break-out Sessions	Yes; chat within a live conference	Yes; IM chats	Yes; via IM	Contact vendor
In-Conference Management	Contact vendor	Contact vendor	Includes mute, lock, dial out and drop	Contact vendor
Record and Playback	Contact vendor	Contact vendor	Yes; recordings can be published via a Web link.	Contact vendor
Support and Services				
Assessment, Design and Planning Services	Contact vendor	Nortel Unified Communication Services	Implementation Services	Open Appraisal and OpenScale Services
Hosting Services	Exchange Hosting Services, Office Live Meeting Services	Nortel Unified Communication Services	Managed Services	OpenScape Enterprise Hosted; SaaS model for deployment in a service-provider environment.
Tech-Support Options	Microsoft Small Business Support Center, Microsoft Premier Support (for midsize businesses), Problem Resolution Services, 24/7 support.	Online and phone service requests	24/7 phone and online service requests, remote session and hardware replacement, online training modules	Contact vendor
Online Resources	How-to and troubleshooting documents, planning and designing guides and deployment and configuration guides	UC ROI (return on investment) calculator, knowledge base, technical documentation, security advisories and free UC newsletter	Online service requests, RMA, control point, remote session	White papers, reports, software downloads and Open Minds monthly newsletter
Vendor-Supported UC Community	Yes; includes beta programs, forums with users and MC product teams and user groups. Forums and user groups for UC developers.	No	Yes; UC blog and online forums	No