

5 Ways Enterprise Communications Services Will Change in 2019



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What is enterprise communications? It's an industry experiencing tremendous change. For decades, this services sector was dominated by large, unimaginative vendors. These slow-moving behemoths historically provided enterprise communications services that were both expensive and inflexible, with little to no room for customization to suit customers of all sizes and budgets. These were dark times.



The new year will bring mobile integration, APIs, and AI-powered bots to enterprise communications services.

But revolution is now in the air — or, more specifically, in the cloud. Nimble and innovative cloud-based solutions providers are disrupting the status quo with products and services that offer rich features and flexible pricing models. As 2018 draws to a close, these innovators are spurring the adoption of affordable, cloud-based enterprise communications technologies by organizations of all sizes and budgets.

What changes can you expect in the enterprise communications services sector in 2019? Here are five trends worth watching in the coming year.

1. APIs

Now that businesses have become comfortable using enterprise communications platforms, they are looking to expand their existing capabilities even further. That's where APIs come into play. APIs embed powerful communications features into existing business applications, and with them, businesses can select specific communications capabilities that they require. They can even scale those capabilities up as needed — on a global level if required — without having to worry about confronting massive capital outlays or having to marshal teams of developers.

APIs set the foundation for many other technologies on this list. Strategically leveraging APIs to enhance corporate collaboration and improve customer service through contextual communications, for example, demonstrates the power of this growing technology. When you add in AI and bots, which have also just begun influencing enterprise communications, you find another powerful class of APIs that will soon transform both internal business communication and the customer experience.

2. Personalization

Whether their users are employees or customers, businesses must deliver a highly personalized experience to customers if they want to stay ahead of their competition. Their systems must allow users to communicate with colleagues or customer support through whatever means they prefer — such as phone, email, SMS, online chat, mobile app, or telepathy (OK, that last one's not quite here yet) — and on the devices of their choice. Cloud-based services enable all of that and more. Look for further personalization of communications solutions in 2019, as users will be able to customize interfaces and integrate unified communications platforms (including video conferencing) with an even broader set of collaboration tools and business applications. We'll shoot for telepathy in 2021.



Business Communications Transformation

A business communication system is only one key component of digital transformation. [Click here to learn about more.](#)

3. Contextual Communications

Today's customers seek an experience that is not only personalized but relevant, which is why contextual communications is a trend to keep your eye on in 2019. Also known as communications platform-as-a-service, or CPaaS, this technology offers innovative, developer-friendly communication APIs that allow businesses to deliver on today's customer expectations in an omnichannel world. With contextual communications, businesses can tap contextual information like a customer's intent, physical location, and social presence to better understand what the customer needs, eliminating points of friction in the customer experience. With CPaaS, customers can seamlessly hop from one channel to another, picking up precisely where they left off, and businesses can consistently deliver exceptional service in an omnichannel environment.

By staying on top of the different ways communications is slated to change in the coming years, organizations can remain competitive and future-ready.

4. Mobile Integration

Mobile devices and applications are deeply entrenched in many enterprises, but they're not always perfectly integrated with back-end services. So until recently, many enterprise mobile users have not enjoyed the high quality unified communications experience that is their due as owners of sleek, powerful mobile devices. It's a travesty, when you think about it, but the good news is that the situation is steadily improving. Shrewd business communications vendors are already providing their mobile users with the ability to access unified communications systems and data on-premises or in the cloud and from any device. You can expect this type of mobile integration to become more seamless and friction-free in the coming year.

5. AI and Bots

As with so many forms of technology, AI is poised to transform enterprise communications in the very near future. Businesses are already deploying chatbots in messaging apps to assist customers on demand, on their channels of choice, and at any hour of the day or night. Smart APIs are even enabling real-time translation of languages from across the globe, bringing innovations we once thought of as strictly science fiction into the present day.

In the contact center, voice bots are set to provide an appealing alternative to interactive voice response (IVR) menus that guide customers to the support options they seek. Before long, voice bots may potentially be making service follow-up calls with an almost-human touch. It won't be long before virtual assistants are automatically scheduling our appointments or calling up presentations during client calls. Our AI-enhanced collaborative future is quickly approaching, offering businesses a wealth of exciting opportunities.

So what is enterprise communications going to look like in 2019? It'll no doubt continue to be a quickly evolving sector with a dynamic set of technologies. By staying on top of the different ways communications is slated to change in the coming years, organizations can remain competitive and future-ready, capitalizing on the new ways in which business will soon take place in our digital age.