UCaaS vs. VoIP: Which Is Right for Your Business?

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In recent years, businesses have reaped the benefits of upgrading their traditional communication systems to internet-based options. When VoIP, or voice over internet protocol, came on the scene a few decades ago, it changed the way people and businesses communicate with one another. And communications technology has only continued to evolve since then, with cloud and unified communications as a service (UCaaS) later emerging as game-changing technologies.

In the battle of UCaaS vs. VoIP, your business needs determine the right tool for you.

With such improved options for business communications, many companies struggle to find the right technology for their needs, causing the eternal battle of UCaaS vs. VoIP to continue.

There are certainly benefits to both technologies, and which one is right for your business largely depends on your needs. Here's a breakdown of the two technologies, as well as some tips for choosing the right product for your organization.

VoIP Phone Solutions vs Traditional Service

VoIP can give your business the mobility it needs. Here's how.

What Is VoIP?

VoIP allows you to connect your phone service via IP networks, rather than through traditional wire-line connectivity. It's largely touted for its cost-savings benefit: You don't have to enable both phone and internet service since VoIP uses your internet connection rather than a phone line.

VoIP gives you all the benefits of a landline phone, such as being able to call both landlines and cell phones, as well as receive and monitor calls, but it also has an added benefit: flexibility. Because it transfers call data via IP networks, you can make calls directly from a computer, phone, or app. Whether you're at your desk or on the go, you can easily make and receive calls. Indeed, the advantages of VoIP over landline systems abound, especially when you combine VoIP with cloud hosting. Doing so gives you robust calling features, integrated mobile access, and efficiencies — such as streamlined data transfers — that often keep costs low.

VoIP is also easy to scale as your business grows. During busy seasons or as your company expands, for example, you don't need to add more phone lines since VoIP uses your existing internet connection.

Unlike traditional solutions, VoIP offers features like voicemail to email, which sends you an email with a recording of a voicemail message so you can access the message from your computer or phone. Features also include simultaneous ring, which forwards a call from your desk phone to your mobile device so you never miss a call. Auto attendants can route clients and potential new business to the right person quickly, reducing the possibility of missed opportunities. VoIP's easy dial-in conferencing functionality quickly connects business partners and employees. With call logs and call recording, you can reference calls at a later date. All together, these features allow you to keep tabs on your business from all angles. What's more, you can manage all of these features from an online interface.

If your company is looking to reduce costs and have a secure communications system in place as the organization grows, a VoIP system might be the best option. If your organization uses more communication channels, though, consider UCaaS.

> *UCaaS combines all your messaging, video, conferencing, contact centers, business apps, and even chat apps into one communications system that is accessible anywhere and at any time from all of your connected devices.*

What Is Unified Communications?

When comparing VoIP vs. unified communications as a service, or UCaaS, the two may seem similar in that they both use the internet instead of analog phone lines. However, UCaaS is a more robust communications tool.

Think of all the tools you use to communicate: Email. Messaging. SMS. Video. Conferencing. UCaaS combines all your messaging, video, conferencing, contact centers, business apps, and even chat apps into one communications system that is accessible anywhere and at any time from all of your connected devices.

Whether you run a help center, a law firm, a consulting business, or a healthcare organization, UCaaS puts all of your communications tools at your fingertips. It also allows you to seamlessly transition between devices: You can take a call on your mobile phone while you commute to work or return from lunch and immediately switch to your laptop or desktop without having to disconnect.

UCaaS allows you to integrate other business applications like Salesforce or Office 365. With a Salesforce integration, your business could capture call notes and access real-time user activity reports, while an Office 365 integration creates a seamless communications system with click-to-call functionality, contact sync, and conversation noting and tagging. These integrations allow you to customize your tools according to your business needs.

UCaaS also makes it easy to host training sessions or meetings with remote colleagues or clients, from any internet-connected device. You can share information from legal briefs, storyboards, graphics for the latest ad campaign, or business financial statements with teammates, keeping everyone in your business informed and up to date.

The Big Question: UCaaS vs. VoIP

So which is right for your business?

Take a look at both your business needs and how you communicate internally and externally. Is your staff mostly remote? Are they spread across offices, perhaps across the globe, making collaboration even more of a challenge? What methods of communication do your clients prefer? Would your business benefit from using SMS or chat apps? If your organization requires a more robust set of communication channels, consider UCaaS as a cost- and time-saving solution.

If your business is conducted mostly over the phone, fielding orders or sales, then a VoIP system might be a better fit. In fact, if you're just looking to cut down on your monthly bill, consider VoIP as a simple and effective solution.

No matter which solution you choose, the switch to a streamlined, internet-based communication tool will surely benefit your business.