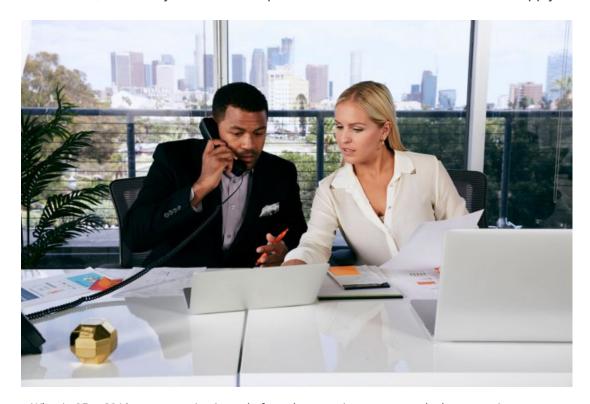# What is CPaaS? (Communication Platform as a Service)

By **JOE HEWITSON - Contributor**

The cloud has been an undisputed blessing to modern IT. From seamless scalability to simplified deployment, it's never been easier to do more with your infrastructure. However, one vastly underrated aspect of the cloud is its near-limitless supply of additional acronyms.

What is CPaaS? It's a communications platform that can give customers the best experience.

Really, pick any combination of uppercase letters, stick "aaS" on the end, and you've got the newest cloud technology. Seriously, though, the sheer number of acronyms floating around these days is nearly impossible to keep pace with. Fret not! The following are answers to some of your most burning questions surrounding one such acronym, including, "What is CPaaS?" and, "What makes it different from UCaaS?"

Knowing Your CPaaS from Your UCaaS

First and foremost, it's important to decipher these conveniently ambiguous acronyms. CPaaS stands for communications platform-as-a-service. Unsurprisingly, it's simply a cloud-based platform. But wait — don't we already have one of those in unified communications-as-a-service (UCaaS)? Well, yes and no.

CPaaS and UCaaS share the same cloud foundation while being delivered over both public and private IP networks. They also make great platforms for businesses of just about any size. But those similarities — and the fact that they both find themselves in the communications field — pretty much mark the end as far as common ground goes.

CPaaS is primarily focused on enriching customer communication channels. It acts as a platform for businesses to combine the reliability and back end of proven communication services with their own customer applications through the use of APIs. For example, you could use a chat app API to integrate messaging platforms that your customers likely already use, like Facebook Messenger or Viber, into your own mobile offering. Simply put, CPaaS lets developers program the entire breadth of real-time, cloud-based communications platforms into their own applications to give customers the best experience available.

So, in a nutshell, CPaaS is a back-end communications platform with APIs that allow you to present it to front-end offerings. Think chat, voice, and video capabilities embedded in your customer-facing applications. In contrast, UCaaS is a platform for internal channels that unifies communications into a consistent experience regardless of device or location.

Why You Need to Know About CPaaS

Now that you can confidently answer the question, "What is CPaaS?" there's yet another question you may be asking: "Why should I care?" It's a great question indeed. A recent article by Customer Experience Insight described some communication expectations your customers likely have. To summarize, its research shows customers want communication that is personalized, consistent, always-on, and that preferably comes in as many channels as possible.

This is exactly why you need to know about CPaaS. When it comes to communication, especially mobile communication, customers simply expect more — more options, more reliability, and more accessibility. You get the picture. CPaaS provides all of the above with a back-end communication infrastructure, presented "as-a-service" from a vendor, that is then tightly integrated with your own app offerings through extensive APIs. CPaaS is a great tool for companies looking to go global without breaking the bank.

CPaaS is a useful technology for businesses of all sizes. If you have an audience that has any expectations when it comes to communication, CPaaS is worth exploring.

Contact Vonage Business to learn more about how cloud-based communications can aid your company.