



Game Changer: Enterprises Are Choosing 8x8 Unified Communications to Connect, Communicate and Collaborate

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Game Changer: Enterprises Are Choosing 8x8 Unified Communications to Connect, Communicate and Collaborate



Why do they do it?

Midsized and large enterprises are usually tech savvy and have IT resources at their disposal. They can also afford to invest in any of a number of communication and collaboration solutions to fit their needs. And they already have systems in place. So why would they switch their critical enterprise communications to VoIP (Voice over Internet Protocol)?

True, unlike premises-based PBXs or last-century phone service, VoIP has proven to be inexpensive, reliable, easy to manage, expands almost instantly to fit any need, and has drawn a large, growing following in small-to-midsized businesses eager to project a professional, already-arrived image to customers, partners and suppliers.

But is VoIP ready for prime time? Is it capable of serving the unified communications needs of thriving, successful enterprises—businesses with the resources to afford any of a number of solutions?

The answer is a surprising “Yes,” and a growing number of enterprises are making the switch. Here’s why.

Enterprise VoIP: A Growing Trend in Unified Communications

There’s growing evidence that VoIP is not only ready for prime time, but enterprises are already starting to switch at an accelerating rate. Some researchers even forecast greater growth in the enterprise segment than in VoIP’s original, longstanding sweet spot: small and medium businesses (SMBs).

For example, a recent Infonetix¹ report notes that in the first six months of 2013, enterprise investment in hosted PBXs and unified communications showed the highest levels of growth among VoIP services. Diane Myers, Infonetix’ principal analyst for VoIP and Unified Communications—and the author of the report—says this is “largely the result of businesses, especially large enterprises, moving to hosted services as alternatives to on-premises solutions.”²

1 VoIP and UC Services and Subscribers, Infonetix, October, 2013.

2 Infonetix Research, October 7, 2013, “Infonetix unified communications survey finds video and cloud on the rise in the enterprise.”

“Growth is being fueled by business services such as SIP trunking and cloud unified communications, which continue to expand and find broader adoption with enterprises of all sizes.”

Diane Myers

Principal analyst for
VoIP, Unified Communications
at Infonetics

Myers says that this growth *“is being fueled by business services such as SIP trunking and cloud unified communications, which continue to expand and find broader adoption with enterprises of all sizes.”* Data suggests the adoption for communication services like cloud contact center solutions is also accelerating.

Increasingly, midrange and large businesses are turning to cloud-hosted unified communications, to:

- Save money by eliminating hardware acquisition and maintenance costs
- Unite all company locations on one communications platform
- Expand rapidly to capture new opportunities and open new offices
- Reduce management hassle—all upgrades and maintenance taken care of in the cloud
- Provide a rich set of communication and collaboration features across the enterprise
- Consolidate additional features, such as phone, fax, meetings, videoconferencing and contact centers
- Achieve business continuity, even under adverse conditions
- Support mobile and remote workers anywhere, on the same system

8x8—the industry’s leading provider of unified communications for business—brings all these benefits to fast-growing enterprises, along with the voice quality and service reliability large companies demand.

Fight Fragmentation and Save Money

For example, Irving Materials, Inc., the largest privately held construction company in the US, has unified its 150+ locations with 8x8 Virtual Office business VoIP communications services, tying the growing company’s workers together more effectively and saving money.

The construction materials company has concrete and asphalt paving plants in several states, as well as four regional offices and a corporate headquarters. And like many growing enterprises, it was finding that previous solutions such as PBXs and old-style phone service were limiting its ability to grow as fast and effectively as it wanted.

“The more locations we opened up, the more fragmented we became, leading to diminished communication and productivity,” says Irving Materials Vice President of Information Technology, Jerry Howard.

“With 8x8, all of our offices are now connected under a single, cloud-based phone system at a fraction of what we were spending previously,” says Howard.

TMW Systems, a global transportation company that currently serves more than 2,000 customers and conducts operations in North America, Europe, Asia and Latin America, realized similar cost savings when consolidating its communications into 8x8 cloud-based service.



"We expect to see significant six-figure cost savings using the 8x8 solution on both a CAPEX and OPEX basis," says Ron Godine, TMW's director of IT. "Not having to purchase PBX hardware for each location and pay traditional local and long distance calling rates cuts this line-item expense in half."

And, for even greater unity, the company has integrated its customer communications with the rest of its infrastructure for even greater cohesiveness.

Worldwide Deployment Is Easy, Consistent

Many enterprises are also using 8x8 unified communications as a simple, cost-effective way to expand their international operations. That was the case for McLarens, a leading global claims services provider with over 300 offices and affiliates in more than 80 countries. In addition to opening new locations, the company also needed to integrate its huge mobile workforce.

"With new offices opening worldwide regularly, it had become apparent that our previous premises-based telephony infrastructure would no longer support the communications needs of our geographically dispersed organization," says Bob Hughes, McLarens' global chief information officer. "8x8 not only facilitates this functionality, it enables us to standardize our telecommunications deployment across all locations and achieve impressive annual cost savings."

Consolidate All Locations onto One Service—with One Phone Bill

And for some rapidly growing companies, just getting a handle on communications expenses can be an accounting nightmare that vanishes when the company adopts 8x8 unified communications. Typical is the experience of Darren Canada, head of the D. Canada Financial Group at Raymond James Financial Services, Inc.

"We have five locations in Southern California," explains Canada. "Before using 8x8 for our communications needs, we had five different phone bills from four different providers: Verizon, Cox Cable, Time Warner and AT&T. "8x8's platform allowed us to consolidate our phone service down to one provider and one phone bill—and with more than a 50 percent reduction in cost."

But, says Canada, consolidation onto one platform has brought additional payoffs as well.

"Our offices are now interconnected with intercom, separate extensions, a robust voicemail system, voicemail-to-email, convenient auto attendant, and many more features that have enhanced the quality of our customer service, increased our productivity, and made our lives much, much easier. 8x8 is adding new and better features constantly, and I feel that I am always on the cutting edge when it comes to our communications platform."



One Company, One Vision, One Team, One Great Way to Communicate and Collaborate

The 8x8 Unified Communications and Collaboration Suite helps large companies keep teams collaborating effectively, tying them together with a single interface for all of their communications needs—meetings, faxes, phone calls, chat and customer interactions. Many companies find it hard to grow, open up multiple new locations, and still keep their teams connected and working together as well as they did when they were small. 8x8 unified communications helps tie together all offices—as well as telecommuting, traveling and remote workers—as if they’re all still just “down the hall.”

That’s certainly the case with CST Industries, a leading container manufacturing firm. “CST is one team with one vision,” says founder Yusuf Abu-Hatoum. “With 8x8, we can have one phone system that keeps all of us connected.”

Enterprises are also finding that VoIP is also an inexpensive way to access talent wherever it’s located, without worrying about whether people can be physically together in one office all the time.

For instance, BottomLineGrowth’s founder and CEO Rey Marin says that even though his business has expanded quickly in recent years, his 8x8 system ties everyone together. “We still have a feeling of physical connectedness with our teams, as I am able to just pick up the phone to speak to them, have calls transferred to me, and hold conference call meetings as often as I need.”

Also, 8x8’s modular approach lets enterprises add functionality as needed, easily and cost-effectively. There is no need to “rip-and-replace” an organization’s communications all at once. 8x8 provides the flexibility enterprises need to adopt cloud communications on their own schedules.

Scale Up to 8x8 Virtual Contact Center for Integrated High-power Customer Communications

Many enterprises are also attracted by 8x8’s distinctive ability to extend unified communications to customer contact centers. Companies that go this route find a strong economic case for taking the vital function of customer contact out of a separate silo and integrating it with the rest of their infrastructure. Virtual Contact Center makes every customer interaction more efficient, increases customer satisfaction and reduces the significant labor costs associated with providing contact center services to customers.

“It was a no-brainer,” says the CEO of airline reservations company Radixx International, Ron Peri. “Saving money. Far more robust. Modern technology. Better features. Easier to use.”

Radixx now uses both 8x8 Virtual Office for its general business communications and Virtual Contact Center for its agents.

“It’s the best automated call distribution (ACD) product I’ve seen,” says Peri. “Before 8x8, it could take anywhere from 45 seconds to a minute-and-a-half before a customer got into the support queue. Now it’s 7 to 10 seconds. The customers are definitely happier about it.”

“We needed a comprehensive solution: phones, online meetings and call centers. 8x8 is really the only hosted VoIP provider out there that can integrate a virtual call center into its service.”

Neal Alberda

Director of IT, Replicon

All Under One Umbrella, Delivered Seamlessly and Securely in the Cloud

That kind of silo also did not appeal to Replicon, a cloud-based provider of time tracking applications. Neal Alberda, Replicon’s director of IT, wanted to integrate the company’s call center into the same communications platform that the rest of the company uses for meetings, faxing, and phone communications—all while keeping customer communications a central focus for the company.

8x8’s Virtual Contact Center was exactly what his company wanted: a communications system with advanced call center management features that could be part of the company’s overall communications strategy.

“We needed a comprehensive solution: phones, online meetings and call centers,” explains Alberda. “8x8 is really the only hosted VoIP provider out there that can integrate a virtual call center into its service.”

The Powerful Combined Impact of Call Center Integration and CRM

And when enterprises take advantage of 8x8’s integration with CRM, company representatives can start conversations with advanced knowledge of their customers. Customer calls automatically cause account information to pop up on agents’ screens, informing the sales or customer support conversation. In addition to 8x8’s own CRM engine, ready-to-use integrations with Salesforce, NetSuite, Zendesk, Microsoft Dynamics and Zoho are also available.

“The integration between 8x8 and our NetSuite management solution is critical to our success,” says Kyle Allen of WTI, Inc. “We rely heavily on this integration to track calls and time.”

And Buildium, a company that makes the software that helps manage more than 750,000 residential units for its 8,000 customers worldwide, says the Zendesk and Salesforce integration with Virtual Contact Center has helped the company achieve an independently verified 99 percent customer satisfaction rating.

International Recruiting and Teamwork Easier Too

Enterprises are also “the using one-company, one-team, one unifying system” approach overseas. That’s because even international integration is easier with a truly unified communications system, says Shevantha Abeyasekera, who works with international teams in product development at Nexgen Packaging.

“What I love about 8x8 is that they’re taking global communication head-on and excelling at it,” says Abeyasekera. “As employees of a company that is highly globalized, with operations across the world, we have been able to use 8x8 across continents effectively, namely between the US and Hong Kong. We have found that the desktop 8x8 client is the best at this, providing us crystal clear call quality with a very easy interface.”

Unified communications also help Replicon recruit top talent worldwide. “Although we’re a growing global company, we still like to have that face-to-face contact when we’re making hiring decisions,” says Replicon’s Alberda. “With 8x8 videoconferencing, we can bring new employees on board with confidence.”

Easy, Rapid Change Management

8x8 hosts and maintains all the communication services it provides, slashing maintenance costs to the bone for 8x8 customers, reducing managements headaches.

“The simplicity of change management using the 8x8 solution was eye opening,” says TMW’s Godine. “Previously, we had to involve substantial internal IT resources plus hire outside consultants to make simple moves, adds or changes. With 8x8 services, someone on my IT staff can quickly and easily execute all of these changes online. This enables us to focus our attention on the tasks that are core to our business rather than our back-office functions.”

Merchant Warehouse’s CTO Paul Vienneau faced a similar problem. Like many fast-growing companies with international operations in many countries, the company had accumulated a variety of vendor solutions for its PBX telephony, audio conferencing, web collaboration, chat, fax, and contact center needs. These incompatible tools were limiting growth and expansion and were becoming very difficult to manage.

“When I joined Merchant Warehouse less than a year ago, I knew the existing premises-based approach to our increasingly complex communications needs would have to change, especially as we grew globally,” said Vienneau.

“The system in place was difficult to manage due to the number of disparate vendors, the assorted learning curves associated with each solution, the myriad of support contracts, lack of integration within the service platform and physical limitations of the individual components” says Vienneau.

But by migrating to 8x8 unified communications, “all of these services will now be under one umbrella, delivered seamlessly and securely in the cloud to all of our employees on whatever device they happen to be using,” he explains. “This will result in tremendous productivity gains

across our entire organization, and our IT staff will be able to focus resources on our core business rather than on our phone system.”

Ensure Business Continuity and Expedite Disaster Recovery

Minimizing the risk of downtime—and ensuring business continuity—are key concerns for businesses with global or critical operations. With redundant data centers located thousands of miles apart, 8x8 is known for providing highly reliable hosted communications.

“One of the primary reasons we chose the 8x8 solution was the built-in disaster recovery capabilities it offered,” says TMW’s Godine. “There is no longer one single point of failure in our phone system because the 8x8 service architecture offers multiple redundancy and rerouting capabilities. Plus, if there is a power failure or Internet outage, our employees can simply unplug their phones, plug them into their home network and continue interacting with customers as if they were still in the office.”





Security and Compliance Help Businesses Expand Fearlessly

8x8 has invested heavily in providing secure and compliant solutions for business that need them. Not only is 8x8 CPNI and PCI compliant, but 8x8's solutions can also be configured to be compliant with HIPAA, FISMA and FIPS 140-2 (level 2).

For many companies, compliance is a non-negotiable requirement in a solution. For example, ICANotes, a provider of a web-based electronic healthcare records solution for psychiatrists and other behavioral health professionals, chose business VoIP provider 8x8 for its business phone service and communications solutions, in part because of the priority that the company places on HIPAA compliance, a key requirement for companies that handle patients' personal information.

"We rely on 8x8's communications services to help us run our business efficiently and securely," said Jamie Morganstern, Operations Director at ICANotes. "With 8x8, we have safeguards in place to pledge the confidentiality and integrity of the health information of our customers."

Many VoIP providers haven't made the critical investments necessary to secure solutions for compliance-conscious firms, and are either silent on the issue or advise customers that their solutions aren't appropriate for applications governed by compliance issues. That's why it's critical to check the compliance capabilities of any unified communications solution before making crucial infrastructure decisions.

Supporting Mobile Workers Anywhere, On Any Device

8x8 desk phones work wherever there is an Internet connection, so employees simply plug them at the new location whenever they're on the move. 8x8's call forwarding, presence management and mobile apps for smartphones and tablets provide additional flexibility, allowing employees to use any device while working remotely.

Best of all, 8x8's service is so seamless that customers can't tell when employees are out of the office. This was critical to McLaren's, because it "places a high priority on delivering outstanding customer service, making it critical for our US-based workforce to quickly and professionally respond to customer needs, whether that be from their car, a hotel room, or the nearest coffee shop, with the same capabilities as if they were in one of our offices", says Hughes.

McLaren's can now support road warriors, telecommuters and travelers as easily as office workers—and customers never guess that McLaren's employees aren't in their offices.



The Power of Unified Communications Takes Organizations from Idea to Enterprise

As enterprises grow and expand, across town or around the world, they increasingly choose 8x8's Unified Communications and Collaboration suite for some of the same reasons that have made 8x8 the leading SMB communications choice for years:

- 8x8's company-unifying power
- Professional-grade unified communications
- Huge savings, typically 30-80 percent
- Advanced features
- Easy use and management
- Security and compliance
- Business continuity
- Contact Center capabilities
- Easy integration with other software and services
- Mobile apps and support for distributed workers

And while large, successful companies have unique challenges—going global, reliability, security, compliance and customer communications—8x8 VoIP-based unified communications rise to meet the challenge.

As Replicon's Global IT Director Alberda puts it, "8x8's hosted VoIP service is nimble. It's got the complete suite of features we need and the scalability we need to keep up with us."

From idea to enterprise, 8x8 unifies and grows with companies of all sizes—including thriving, successful organizations like yours.



To learn more, call **1.866.879.8647** or visit **www.8x8.com**.



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