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Unified Communications for Business [CEBP]

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Abstract

Unified Communications (UC) has gone through several market transitions since its inception. Over the past few years, we've heard terms like "integrated communications", "IP communications" and "unified communications and collaboration" as terms that further the definition of Unified Communications.

Unified Communications can be categorized in two types: (a) UC enabling the user and (b) UC enabling the business enterprise.

Most of the product companies and business enterprises have relied mostly only on the soft savings due to enhanced productivity and collaboration among users to support their assessment of the ROI. But, with CEBP (Communications-Enabled Business Processes), Unified Communications assumes a more strategic business approach and here is where the ROI really becomes compelling.

CEBP integrates business process and communications infrastructure in a manner that ushers agility in business process execution. CEBP solutions by virtue of its ability to automate most of the ad-hoc and mundane part of business processes, makes the execution dynamic and more efficient.

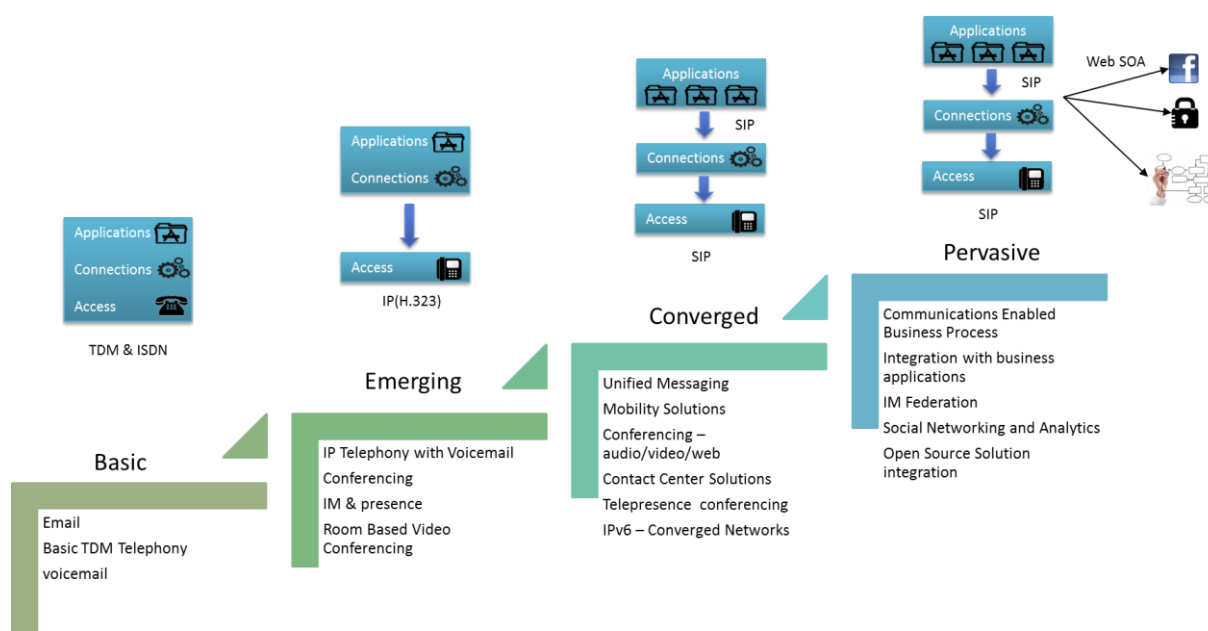
This paper focuses on the trends leading towards adoption of CEBP, various solutions being offered and the benefits it brings to an organization.

Introduction

Communications-enabled business processes (CEBP) is the integration of communications capabilities into software-enabled business process, applications and technologies. It is basically a tool or framework which automates many components of business applications which traditionally is human effort intensive, needs a lot of coordination through people interaction and is often impacted due to human errors.

CEBP provides a platform for rich contextual collaboration among users, access to applications from mobile devices and removes human latency through real time communications solutions. CEBP when implemented correctly can improve efficiency, increase end user productivity and enhance experience through successful UC solution adoption and bring down the cost of communications.

The CEBP adoption journey in an enterprise is best done in a phased manner starting with enhancing existing IPT Infra with capabilities like SIP support. In the next stage, the focus should shift to enhancing user productivity through integration of various applications which improves collaboration. And finally and most importantly, in the last stage integrate the business process which brings in revenue thereby creating the environment for transformational experience.



Getting started with CEBP

CEBP deployment in an enterprise can be done in two stages. Both the stages are extremely critical and needs subject matter expertise to make sure that execution is based on a well-defined and detailed approach.

First one is to decide on the right UC infrastructure solution through careful evaluation of the vendor product capabilities and ease of integration with existing infrastructure, applications and business

processes. The process of evaluation must focus on treating the CEBP approach as a collaborative development platform rather than just UC deployment.

The next stage is to work on the business applications and processes to identify which ones will help most in realizing and maximizing the benefits from being communications-enabled. Process execution where human latency is high or can be costly due to human errors typically are the ones for top consideration of CEBP adoption. Considering a staged approach, integrated with the business process benefits, will have more chances of successful deployment.

Framework

CEBP is built over the Web Service Oriented Architecture. This can be classified into three broad spectrums:

1. Communications Infrastructure layer – which includes multi-vendor solutions in voice, telephony, video, presence, IM & Chat etc.
2. Web SOA middleware – SIP open platform which can connect business process with communications solutions
3. Business Process and Applications – any applications like CRM, SAP, ERP, etc.

The success for designing and deploying a CEBP solution comes from understanding the components which fit into this framework and measuring its effectiveness in solving the business need.

Business Value delivered by CEBP

Organizations depend on their core Lines of Business (LOBs) to stay competitive in the global market and are constantly challenged to improve the operating models for efficiency and consistent experience. Underlying these, are key business processes which get executed all the time. CEBP is all about enabling any kind of real time interaction involved in these processes like a sales cycle or customer interaction, and focus on enablement for faster and efficient solution cycle.

For example, most global or multi-national companies have omni-channel or multi-channel communications to reach their customer care agent: via email, chat, voice, web etc. When your customer has to wait on call queue to transact with an agent or go through multiple sequential threads before getting a contextual response, the chances are high that the customer will be lost to you due to the experience. Instead of just staying on the call queue or waiting for return email, imagine having an option for the customer to leave a message with call back options and automatically triggering the call to the customer with context mentioned by the customer. With this, the customer “holding” time is freed up, the agent is able to quickly get to the details that would address the request or issue at hand and eventually add a lot of value to the organization.

The following key business values can be achieved through deployment of CEBP Solution in an enterprise and these can become the driving factors for the need of CEBP:

- **Utilization of resources:** With reduction in human latency, there is less need of labor in the business process which leads to better utilization of resources and faster solution cycle. These reduce staffing costs and increase margins and revenue.
- **Accelerate business cycle completion:** Most enterprises have business processes which are mainly transaction cycles, having real time communications like voice, IM, video, presence integrated into these process accelerates the completion, for example Insurance issue by banks, SCM chain in retail or manufacturing companies. This can lead to increased customer satisfaction and better utilization of assets.
- **Enhanced Notifications:** CEBP application can intercept or recognize alerts from any event in a business process and trigger any automated notifications like voice call, IM, email or video call of relevant people, that is getting the right people at the right time. This leads to improved productivity and customer satisfaction.
- **Automated Communications:** Adding self-service solutions for repeated enquiries or tasks in a process can optimize utilization of resources and enhance customer interactions. For example having an IVR to provide flight status to callers by pulling information from online web server reduces the need of agent for this task and increases agent utilization.
- **Enhance Collaboration Effectiveness:** Having collaboration tools like SharePoint or any Knowledge Management Tools integrated with presence, IM, voice or video ensures faster and more efficient team operations leading to faster time to market and gain competitive advantage.

Identifying the exact need and benefit would help in better deployment of CEBP solution in an organization.

Key Challenges

Any new technology to be deployed comes with its own set of challenges. Even though CEBP brings in host of business values, there are some challenges in ensuring the realization of those benefits.

- **Adoption:** End user adoption of new tools and process is key to success. If users are not able to adapt to the new interface of integrated communications with business process, the perceived benefits will not be realized.
- **Infrastructure:** CEBP is built on a communications infrastructure, often with multivendor integration needs, therefore an open platform for integration is most beneficial. The cost and time associated with getting a seamless integration across platforms and deployment can otherwise become a challenge.
- **Perception:** Enterprises lack the knowledge of CEBP and how it can benefit. This leads to a common assumption that there is huge cost associated with the deployment, due to which the business process would generally be left alone from communications. Thereby having a clear vision and knowledge is very critical.
- **Security and Compliance:** Enterprises are very cautious of the possibility that upon implementation CEBP could lead to some security or compliance issues with business

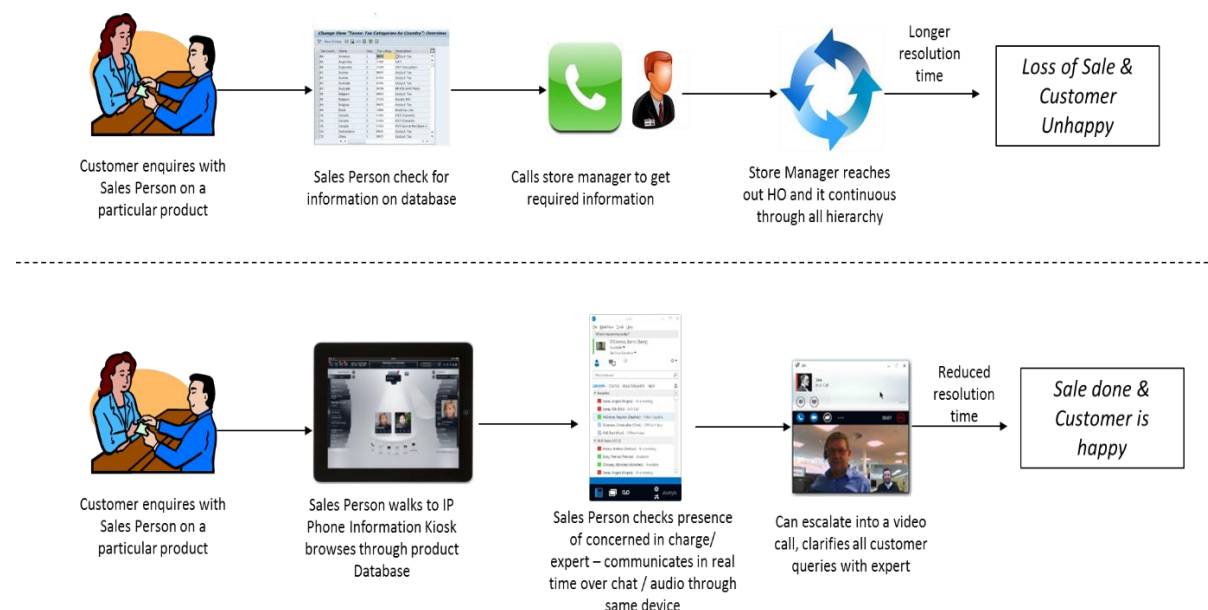
processes getting automated. Therefore, focus on secure development from the planning stage of the solution is paramount.

A Classic Use Case for CEBP

Consider a customer walking into a retail store for enquiry on a particular product he/she checked on the internet.

Typical scenario in case of legacy solution would be- the shop floor sales person would first check on database list for that particular product, check for contact person, if the person is unavailable then call out to store supervisor, who would then check with head office manager and then to the wholesalers and it continues. This entire process takes a lot of time and customer gets dissatisfied and leaves the store.

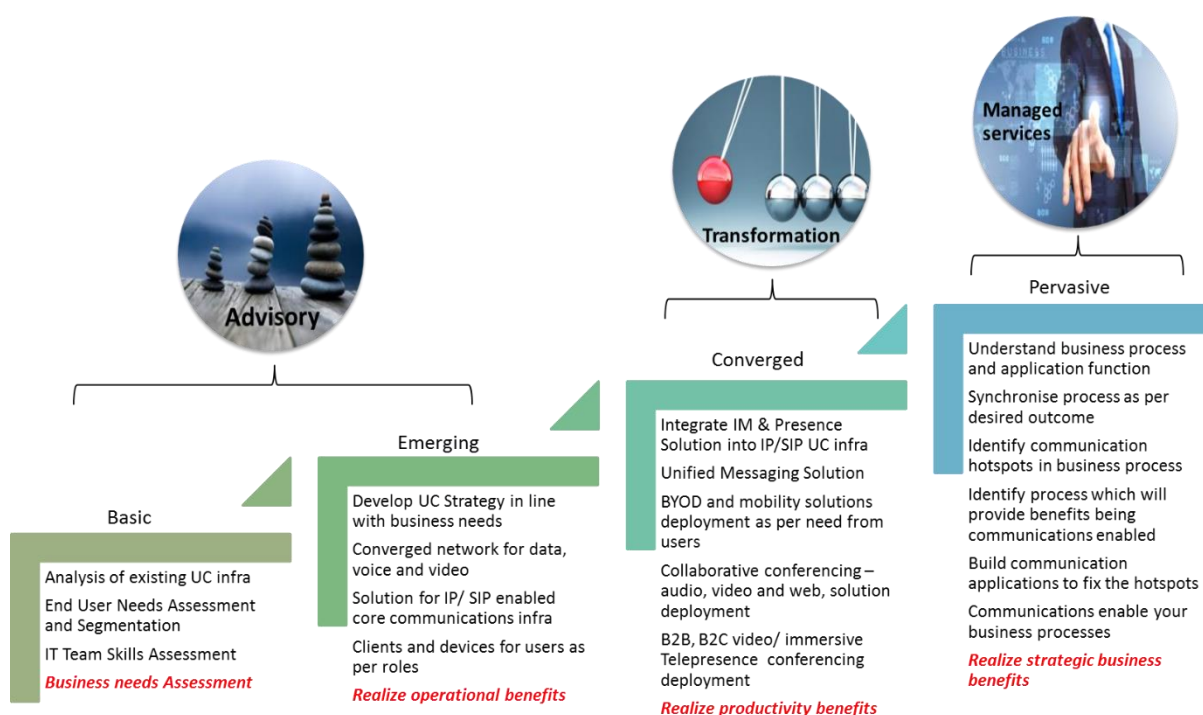
With unified communications solution, this scenario become a lot different and easier. When customer requests about the product, the shop floor sales person can immediately reach to the *IP Phone Information kiosk* browse for the product over web, collect the Product Code, check for presence and availability of concerned supply team on the IP phone through integrated CRM. Reach out to them either through chat/ audio/ video call through the same device and address all customer queries. This reduces the cycle and increases customer satisfaction and leads to increased sales.



Happiest Minds as your CEBP Solutions Expert

Happiest Minds Technologies brings to you a Unified Communication and Collaboration experience putting together varied technology solutions with a tight integration with business applications and devices. Our thought leadership along with industry specific knowledge helps us deliver solutions which provide real-time platform for employee collaboration and enhanced customer experience for a competitive edge.

Leveraging the partnerships with leaders in UC space, we offer the following services addressing the key challenges in respective industry verticals leading you towards CEBP journey.



Conclusion

Communication delays occur in every industry, the key to success lies in identifying the bottlenecks and getting them remediated. Having unified communications solutions is just not enough in removing the delays caused due to human latency, it's important to have business processes to be integrated with UC to completely realize the benefits of unified communications solution coupled with CEBP.

Communications Enabled Business Processes (CEBP) enables organizations to enhance customer satisfaction, increase productivity and overall increase in operational efficiency. CEBP forms a connecting layer between business processes and communications which can pick up events and alerts requiring need of human intervention. It helps in responding real-time by bringing the decision makers and process users together, thereby reducing latency, increasing speed of response and optimal use of

resources by helping them focus on customer relationship than on business processes. This makes an enterprise more agile and stay competitive.

CEBP by integrating the benefits of Service Oriented and Event Driven Architectures with business process, communications elements and people can be seen as the next stage in the evolution of business applications. The fact that CEBP can go a step further in becoming the driving force for continuous improvement in any organization makes it an even more realistic solution for achieving business benefits.

Happiest Minds has made strategic investments in building partnerships, developing accelerators and unique capabilities that can enhance the process from concept to realization of CEBP solutions.

About Happiest Minds Technologies:

Happiest Minds, the Mindful IT Company, applies agile methodologies to enable digital transformation for enterprises and technology providers by delivering seamless customer experience, business efficiency and actionable insights. We leverage a spectrum of disruptive technologies such as: **Big Data Analytics**, AI & Cognitive Computing, Internet of Things, Cloud, Security, SDN-NFV, RPA, Blockchain, etc. Positioned as “Born Digital . Born Agile”, our capabilities spans across **product engineering, digital business solutions**, infrastructure management and security services. We deliver these services across industry sectors such as retail, consumer packaged goods, edutech, e-commerce, banking, insurance, hi-tech, engineering R&D, manufacturing, automotive and travel/transportation/hospitality.

Headquartered in Bangalore, India; Happiest Minds has operations in USA, UK, The Netherlands, Australia and Middle East.

To know more about our offerings. Please write to us at
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