

Voice, Video and Collaboration Infrastructure: How they are Transforming Business



Contents

Introduction.....3

Voice and Video Solutions: Drivers.....3

How Collaboration Solutions are Transforming Business.....3

Aspects to Consider.....4

About the Author.....5



Introduction

As a consumer, each one of us is aware of the enabling power of technology in keeping us connected and mobile. Voice and video tools are a routine part of our everyday lives. Traditionally, the consumer marketplace has always been an early adopter of technology; but can voice and video solutions be leveraged to make the enterprise more collaborative, allowing employees to connect to the world at a click of a button?

Today's distributed workplace demands collaboration infrastructure that allows employees, suppliers and customers to connect easily and seamlessly, on any device, anytime. Collaboration solutions allow a mobile and geographically dispersed workforce to share information rapidly and effectively. [Unifying communication](#) and collaboration tools over a simplified virtual platform offers a high degree of control over the communications experience, and the maximization of business efficiency. It also breaks down communication silos within the enterprise, optimizing employee productivity.

Voice and Video Solutions: Drivers

With the growing 'consumerization' of IT, employees expect the same degree of technology sophistication from the enterprise that they have access to in the consumer marketplace. Additionally, the increasing use of social media in the workplace is only blurring the lines between 'corporate' and 'social' communication. Social networking is enabling new ways of interaction, communication, and information-sharing that can transfer into the workplace. Big Data and analytics, the ubiquity of the smartphone, and the emergence of [cloud computing services](#) play their part in enabling collaboration technologies, especially when they are integrated to drive intelligent, business-disruptive solutions

Voice solutions refer to contact center tools and solutions that enhance user productivity and the customer experience. Video solutions support collaboration within and outside the enterprise through video conferencing solutions.

How Collaboration Solutions are Transforming Business

The modern enterprise is a geographically dispersed one, and video is fast becoming a key requirement for effective cross-border collaboration. Video solutions improve communication by connecting people over distances in a manner that is more personal than an audio call. It is accepted wisdom that non-verbal communication is at least as, if not more important than verbal communication—gestures and expressions can communicate more than the spoken word. And this is what video solutions are bringing to the table—the ability to have more personal, 'face-to-face' interactions with someone sitting half a world away.

These solutions facilitate communication and collaboration in real-time through features such as whiteboards, screen-sharing, etc. Collaboration solutions also function as effective productivity tools, allowing the enterprise to not only share and disseminate knowledge, but also harness collective knowledge. The ease of knowledge-sharing between employees, customers, and partners makes meetings more productive and improves real-time collaboration, besides strengthening and enriching relationships with all stakeholders. The result is effective virtual meetings, leading to speedy problem resolution and rapid decision-making, ultimately reducing cost, quickening time to market, and boosting revenues.

When it comes to voice solutions, these enable rapid and proactive customer service through call centers, resulting in an enriched customer experience.

From the perspective of the employer, collaboration tools offer enterprises access to a much wider pool of talented resources, with no constraints as to geographical location. It is an easy matter now to remotely hire, work with, and retain best-fit resources from around the world. And the employee benefits as well, enjoying a better work-life balance, enabled by the flexibility that these solutions usher in.

The Green Impact

Discussions around global warming are no longer restricted to conferences and the living room; they are a part of boardroom discussions as well, with organizations striving to demonstrate that they are responsible eco-warriors. And what better way to reduce your carbon footprint than by adopting solutions that do away with the need to travel—to office or overseas? An additional direct benefit to the enterprise is the reduction in travel costs. Collaboration infrastructure allows employees to work remotely from home and could thus potentially result in shrinking office sizes, and associated real estate and infrastructure costs.

In short, cutting-edge voice, video, and collaboration infrastructure is ushering in the era of [unified communications](#), where collaboration is maximized, productivity improved, and customer service enhanced. And to the business leader, these are the real benefits—more significant than only cost reduction, they lead to real business transformation.

Aspects to Consider

Before deploying these solutions, a few points that an enterprise would do well to consider include:

- Choosing a solution that is easy to use and feature-rich can amplify the potential benefits. A solution that allows the recording of online meetings for example, or the conversion of media types (audio to text) offers more flexibility.
- Investing in an overarching enterprise-wide solution that integrates video applications into business processes (production or design processes, for instance) will extend the benefits of using video technology beyond meetings to boost true collaboration across the organization.
- The deployed solution should be consistent, reliable, and available. This is especially important if the solution is deployed in a customer context, where the expectations are for a speedy and efficient response.
- Solution apart, an enterprise should focus on building the capacity and capabilities of a network infrastructure robust enough to optimize the collaboration solutions. A network that is reliable, agile and can scale up to meet evolving needs, and can support myriad standards and interfaces is an imperative for the future.
- Sophisticated collaboration solutions do enrich business collaboration in new ways, but they also add complexity in the area of data privacy and security. This is something that must be addressed as part of the organization's [compliance and governance](#) policies.

About the Author



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Suresh Kanniappan, Heads the Global Practice for Unified Communications in Happiest Minds Technologies. Suresh has about 17 plus years of IT experience and have performed various roles in solutions and platform development. Some of the platforms he has developed on open source technologies are focused towards End user experience on unified communication

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.

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