Digital Age Communications
Your ‘any cloud’ opportunity

Alcatel·Lucent
Enterprise

eBook

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Overview

The past few years have been confusing and chaotic for everyone. Overnight, massive changes happened around the globe. One of the most significant challenges many organizations faced was figuring how to quickly adapt to a locked-down world and how to keep their businesses afloat. Organizations had to take immediate action or risk the demise of their businesses.

A Gartner HR survey revealed that 88% of organizations encouraged or required employees to start working from home when the pandemic hit.[1] The result was a quick, but under-planned progression into the digital workforce. Video- and audio-conferencing solutions replaced face-to-face meetings; virtual workspaces emerged as Ariadne's threads – keeping people connected even outside of the physical office. Unfortunately, most companies didn't have time to think about the long-term impact of their technology investments.

Now, as the world settles into a new normal, companies are re-visiting what their organizations will look like to ensure they invest in the right tools.

1 - Encourage Employees to Work from Home Due to COVID | Gartner

Preparing for long-term change

Initially, the first, and most prominent concern for businesses thrown into this digital deep end was surviving the change. It didn't matter what kind of technology they chose, as long as it kept people connected. And, while in some cases, the tools a company chose may have been the right ones for that time, the only way to ensure that they are properly prepared for their on-going digital transformation, is to re-visit and test the theory.

Today, organizations are re-assessing security to ensure that, going forward, they're not just surviving with tech – but thriving with tech.
Things they need to think about include:

- Is your security up-to-scratch on your new communication devices, or are there issues that could affect your compliance in the long-term?
- Do you have all the features you need in the same environment, or are you trying to stitch a variety of tools together and struggling as a result?

The reality is that there are and will be long-lasting consequences of the pandemic. Companies are realizing that their solutions need to be suitable for now, as well as into the future if they want to set themselves up for the best chances of success. It's no longer just about business continuity, organizations must be prepared to compete over the long haul.

Challenges and questions for consideration

The transformation of the current landscape has enterprises considering five crucial topics to address ongoing challenges and succeed in their transformation. Companies need to ensure they're ready for the changes that may come next.

Following are the main questions organizations working on their digital transformation are asking:

1. How can I create or strengthen capabilities in my employee's digital workplace? Do team members have everything they need to be efficient and engaged in their new remote, work-from-anywhere environment? Or, are they just "making do" with what's available?
2. How can I continue to deliver the same or better level of enterprise performance to address rapidly changing customer expectations? What can my company do to deliver the best possible service to keep existing customers happy and attract new ones?
3. Which cloud model is the most suitable for communications applications and services? Is the best route to move straight to the cloud for scalability and flexibility? How much does it cost to move to the cloud?
4. How can I assure my data is secure in the cloud?
5. Can my organization manage a cloud infrastructure either hosted or on premises?

Enhancing communications and performance

Truly effective teams emerge when employees have the tools to be just as productive when they're working remotely as when they're at their desks.

In the new digital workplace, there shouldn't be a difference between the tools used at the office and the solutions used at home. To ensure employees can communicate and perform at their best wherever they are, business leaders looking at cloud-based communications and collaboration solutions need to ensure the solutions offer a full, cohesive experience that remains the same whether employees are working at home, travelling the world, or collaborating in a traditional office environment.

Additionally, organizations need to consider the emotional and psychological impact of the new digital workplace. Working remotely can be isolating for some individuals. Business leaders that can provide the emotional support people crave is key to ensuring employee success.

Addressing the new digital workplace

To empower employees in the new digital workplace, business leaders need to understand the challenges that their team members are facing right now. The office has evolved to a virtual space that can span the entire globe. Employees can interact and complete tasks from anywhere. Experts suggest that most companies will continue to maintain at least a hybrid work environment as the pandemic subsides. For example, 80% of people surveyed by McKinsey said they enjoyed working from home, and 41% said they're more productive.[2] Many businesses today are facing the challenges of dealing with employees' new expectations and requirements, now that it has been demonstrated that certain jobs can be done from anywhere and everywhere.

The time has come for organizations to rethink how they work and define their digital workplace in the digital era.

A person's job, as well as their mobility patterns will influence their communications requirements. In order to determine when to invest in technology solutions, organizations must create user profiles to understand their business needs.

As beneficial as remote and digital workplaces can be, there are also challenges that must be considered. For instance:

- Ensuring employees don't feel isolated or overwhelmed when they are out of the office environment
- Fostering your company culture in a remote landscape

Companies need to think about the devices and tools required to improve the flow of information and teamwork in a digital space. For most companies, the first step in preparing for an enhanced digital workforce will be creating a set of user profiles and guidelines they can use to determine what's required for each employee role. Questions may include:

- How much time do these employees spend in the office versus on the road?
- How often are they roaming on-site?
- Do they need to move around offices, warehouse environments, stores and outdoor facilities?
- How frequently do team members need to access corporate information from business databases and applications?
- Is this person an individual contributor who works alone on projects, or someone who needs to work regularly with colleagues and subject matter experts?
- What are the requirements for this individual in terms of corporate telephony? Does the employee need to simply make and take calls, or do they need advanced features like voicemail, recording and security features? Are ad-hoc numbering plans and advanced audio quality essential?

There is no one-size-fits all cloud model that's guaranteed to be better than another. Today's organizations have a plethora of opportunities to explore. You need to do the research and determine which strategy makes the most sense for your business. Since there's no obligation to move 100% in any one direction, the best option might be to mix and match until you find the solution that fits your needs.

2 - Reimagining-the-office-and-work-life-after-COVID-19-final.pdf (mckinsey.com)

Choosing the right model

To truly leverage the opportunity for change that all businesses now have, it's crucial for enterprises to determine which model they will use for transformation. One of the most immediate outcomes of the healthcare crisis was the accelerated transition to the cloud for a large number of applications and services.

According to Synergy Research Group, cloud spending for 2021 reached $178 billion, up 37% from 2020.[3] Many businesses had to instantly move to cloud solutions to ensure team collaboration and conferencing. Enterprise communications markets began to offer an unprecedented number of choices in terms of potential models for teams to use.

Unfortunately, the quick dash to the cloud may have presented security and compliance challenges for businesses. Previously, a Bain and Company study found that approximately 18% of companies put their workloads in the cloud. The sticking point for many organizations were concerns about security. However, now 74% of CFOs are planning on moving on-site employees to remote environments.

While the cloud adoption strategy selected at the start of the pandemic may not be the one you want to continue with, today you can choose the model that suits you, from public, private or hybrid, and from CAPEX to OPEX models. If you're struggling to ensure productivity and cost-efficiency, then a full cloud solution might be the right model for you. However, a hybrid cloud model that allows you to keep some components of your existing communications system and complement them with cloud-based services might be a compelling option. A hybrid cloud model can also help with advanced regulatory concerns such as how and where data is stored or processed.

As with most transformational processes, the key to success is to ask the right questions:

- What services are you ready to move to the cloud?
- Who will be operating those services? Do you need a cloud service provider or a system integrator? Will you be handling everything yourself?
- How will you manage communications traffic, and what are the pros and cons from a quality of service and cost perspective?
- What are you going to do to maintain high standards of security, data integrity, sovereignty and compliance?

3 - As Quarterly Cloud Spending Jumps to Over $50B, Microsoft Looms Larger in Amazon's Rear Mirror

An ‘any cloud’ world

In an ‘any cloud’ world, companies have an opportunity to choose a cloud model according to their requirements. Whatever you decide, you need to make sure your level of service remains constant and business continues no matter what happens. Whether you are considering a public, private, or hybrid cloud, Alcatel-Lucent Enterprise has a solution for you.

Public cloud

Rainbow Hub is operated in accordance with worldwide compliance certificates and is committed to protecting customers’ data and communications. Rainbow Hub is General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) compliant ensuring full data sovereignty and transparency.

Rainbow Hub, provides a complete cost-effective business communications and collaboration solution for organizations looking for a full cloud solution. Rainbow Hub provides a modern all-inclusive Communications Platform as a Service (CPaaS) to address the changing needs and consumption models enterprises require. It encompasses real-time collaboration, online meetings and business telephony including, inbound and outbound international calls to deliver a comprehensive solution with ease-of-use, mobility, trust and openness. This cloud business communications platform empowers employees with messaging, video meetings and calls from anywhere, on any device.

It is complemented with optional physical handsets and network infrastructure products from Alcatel-Lucent Enterprise. Rainbow Hub provides:

- **Full collaboration features:** From video conferencing to team conversations
- **A single interface:** Access all UC features from a desktop, web or mobile interface
- **Native cloud corporate telephony:** Offer corporate telephony to enterprises directly within Rainbow from our ALE cloud PCX
- **Open:** Easily integrates with third-party apps, Microsoft and Google environments

World-class reliability, security and data privacy

Robust protection measures are implemented at every level of the Rainbow Hub architecture and processes. Our full-time security and fraud-prevention department provides 24/7 physical and environmental defens e for your service. Enjoy peace of mind knowing that our distributed network is fully redundant in every location we serve, providing a truly global infrastructure that consistently delivers service continuity and quality at the highest SLA standard.

Rainbow Hub maintains a comprehensive set of International and EU compliance certifications including HIPAA and FERPA in the U.S. and attestations to protect customers’ data and communications. Rainbow Hub is General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) compliant and provides full data sovereignty and transparency. Customers are nevertheless required to carry out their own data transfer risk assessments and make their own determination regarding whether the transfer is adequately protected.

Private cloud

For specific requirements, **Rainbow Edge** offers (single instance) cloud-based communications and collaboration services and data that can be hosted on your premises or in a Partner-based data center of your choice. You can benefit from Rainbow Edge, an on premises private cloud solution with a flexible architecture that lets you select a region/country local data center.

Rainbow Edge is:

- **Secure:** Highly secure platform with the option to host on a self-selected data center platform
- **Personalised:** Guaranteed privacy with options based on your privacy requirements
- **Flexible:** Flexible architecture built to accommodate businesses of different sizes
- **Adaptable:** Variety of subscription offerings for cost optimization

Alcatel-Lucent OpenTouch® Enterprise Cloud (OTEC):

The (multi-instance) Alcatel-Lucent OpenTouch Enterprise Cloud (OTEC) offers a 100% OPEX business model. This is ideal for companies looking for consumption-based models and that want to replace their existing CAPEX model. With OTEC, employees benefit from ALE's communication experience in a per user, per month model. IT can easily automate operations and adapt costs while benefitting from an outstanding service level.

OTEC can be scaled up or down according to business needs. For example, collaboration tools/services such as chat, audio and video calls, conferencing capabilities, share and screen sharing can quickly be accessed without advanced planning and without spending extra money for additional hardware or software. As well, expenses can quickly be reduced if demand for services are reduced.

Hybrid cloud

With a hybrid cloud-based communications solution, you leverage existing communications investments with the ability to add cloud-based team collaboration services.

Rainbow™ by Alcatel-Lucent Enterprise, our award-winning hybrid cloud solution, delivers communications and collaboration capabilities including: Instant messaging, audio/video conferencing, screen and file sharing, one number, information channels, presence detectors and much more.

Alcatel-Lucent Enterprise awarded 2021 Unified Communications TMC Labs Innovation Award

ALE receives Remote Work Pioneer Award 2021

The hybrid model turns **Rainbow** into a **communications platform** by simply adding a "collaboration layer" on top of your ecosystem to guarantee a smooth transition to the cloud while leveraging your existing communications platform.

Rainbow services are available in an "as a Service" model which complements existing communications voice servers, including Alcatel-Lucent OmniPCX® Enterprise Purple and Alcatel-Lucent OXO Connect, and continues to deliver Enterprise-grade services, in terms of five nine's availability, along with the highest security standards such as Common Criteria.

Three Rainbow subscription-based deployment options are available (Essential, Business and Enterprise), each offering a different level of secure features and capabilities that allow your workforce to collaborate efficiently and rapidly, wherever they work. Rainbow is:

- **Secure:** Highly secure platform with the option to host on a self-selected data center platform. Rainbow is ISO 27001 certified, SecNumCloud certified through our hosting partner OVH, ENS certified and ISO 27001 – 017/18 certified and additional industry certifications.
- **Easy-to-deploy:** It takes one click to download and install Rainbow and benefit from rich features like contact management, presence, chat, audio/video call, screen and file.
- **Hybrid:** Rainbow takes a hybrid cloud approach, integrating with Alcatel-Lucent OXO Connect and OmniPCX Enterprise Purple, as well as non-ALE PBXs. It allows enterprises to migrate to the cloud at their own pace.
- **Open:** Rainbow is also an open Communications Platform as a Service (CPaaS) with a set of APIs allowing the integration of real-time collaboration services into in-house applications and business processes.

Rainbow is a 100% secure solution, no matter your subscription model. Whether it is a freemium, business, or enterprise subscription you are guaranteed a secure experience.

We respect privacy. We don't use data to monetize additional services and we respect international privacy laws, including Europe's GDPR. Our customers' data is private, safe and secure with us. Only our customers handle their own data. Transparency and traceability are critical elements of Rainbow. All regulatory requirements are respected and ethically managed.

Certifications

- HDS certified, which allows ALE to store health data
- GDPR compliant
- ANSSI CSPN certified
- HiPAA certified
- In the process of acquiring FERPA certifications

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Time for change

While companies around the globe have had to respond rapidly and make changes to the way they operate, it's not over yet. As the world moves into the rhythm of the new normal, enterprises are now tasked with re-assessing to ensure that the decisions made in a time of crisis stand the test of time and are the right resources to take them into the future.

There is no going back to the way things were, but you can ensure you have everything you need to support improved employee productivity, efficiency and performance. It's time to stop simply surviving and start thriving.

Learn how Alcatel-Lucent Enterprise can help you choose the right cloud solution for your digital age communications.

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