



Beyond the hype: How do the new Unified Communications Clients compare in terms of features, capabilities, architectures and functional operations?

T3i Group's **Unified Communications Client Comparison (UC³)** database provides specific and detailed information and analysis on over 450 features/functions and other points of comparison on the leading vendor desktop products. Vendors and products covered in the first phase of the database are:

- **Avaya** one-X Portal, one-X Communicator
- **Cisco** Unified Personal Communicator
- **IBM** Lotus Sametime (Entry, Standard, Advanced)
- **Microsoft** Office Communicator/OCS R2
- **Mitel** Unified Communicator (Express, Advanced)
- **Nortel** MCS 5100 (Multimedia PC, Personal Agent and other clients)
- **Siemens** Enterprise Communications OpenScope

Vendors and products being analyzed for release 2 in the second half of 2009 are:

- **Alcatel-Lucent** Omni-Touch 8600 My Instant Communicator
- **NEC** UC for Business, UC for Enterprise
- **ShoreTel** Personal Call Manager, Professional Call Manager
- **Zeacom** Communications Center

This online tool enables users to easily create side-by-side comparisons of specific products using a common language, which is very important given the complexity and large number of features contained in these systems. The functional descriptions of each product, with extensive notes and comments on how the features work, enable in-depth understanding and comparisons.

- For example, while almost all clients can add third parties to a two party call, not all offer elegant drag and drop functionality. Some require manipulating multiple windows or calling each party individually.
- Presence is another area in which the term is commonly known, but not standard; clients differ on number and type of standard presence states, sources of presence information and flexibility to support customized states and user notes. Understanding these differences is critical given the importance of presence in the UC environment.
- Another important difference among clients is the amount of functionality included in the basic package. Some clients rely on third party Instant Messaging (IM) clients, which mean additional investment/purchase and integration/management issues. Similarly, they may require additional software purchases for conferencing, IM federation licenses, video user licenses, external user licenses, etc.

Until now there has been no benchmark for comparison of these rapidly evolving solutions.

The database is organized according to the following categories, so that users can easily focus on their interests and desired points of comparison:

- **Applications Summary**
- **Presence & Contact Management**
- **Instant Messaging**
- **IM Federation**
- **Telephony**
- **Desktop Video**
- **Conferencing/Collaboration**
- **Enterprise Workflow Integration**
- **Speech Recognition**
- **E-mail Integration**
- **Calendar Integration**
- **Voice Mail Integration**
- **Other compatible UC clients (mobile, web, phone)**
- **Device Compatibility**
- **Elements of architecture including scalability, configurations, security, etc.**
- **Client and server technical requirements**
- **SDK's and API's**
- **Pricing & Packaging**
- **Strengths & Considerations**

While the majority of the functionality is based on the PC UC client, the UC³ database also covers related UC clients in each vendor's family, notably mobile, web and phone clients. It provides basic descriptions of their capabilities, relates their functionality to the PC client and includes relevant information on their functions where applicable.

Every field in the database is defined in a companion glossary on the website to ensure standard terminology and definitions. Features that may sound similar can be easily differentiated. Users unfamiliar with some terms can quickly get up to speed without further research.

The UC³ database provides several benefits to vendors, partners and enterprises.

As a vendor or partner, the UC Client Comparison database enables you to:

- ◆ Quickly and easily develop and customize sales presentations that highlight your strengths and focus on specific customer needs
- ◆ Save considerable time and resources researching websites, marketing material, detailed user guides and feature descriptions to understand, compare and evaluate what is included in each vendor's offers
- ◆ Understand and analyze competitors' offers in terms of clear standardized benchmark functionality
- ◆ Create side-by-side comparisons vs. competitors' products to help your customers understand these detailed differences
- ◆ Ensure you are prepared for questions on your products' weaknesses or competitors' strengths

- ◆ Demonstrate the trade-offs customers face between choosing a traditional telephony solution vs. IBM or Microsoft, and how each of the telephony manufacturers stacks up against IBM and Microsoft in terms of features and functionality
- ◆ Communicate with, and train channels more effectively with structured evaluations of products in the market - and stay up-to-date on changes
- ◆ Back up your claims with independent third-party research and analysis
- ◆ Utilize call-in support to quickly and accurately answer questions regarding features and functionality
- ◆ Determine product gaps to support next release planning

If you are planning to invest in UC for your business, the UC Client Comparison database enables you to:

- ◆ Save time and resources researching websites, marketing material, detailed user guides and feature descriptions to understand, compare and evaluate what is included in each vendor's Unified Communications desktop interface
- ◆ Understand the trade-offs between choosing the IBM or Microsoft solutions vs. telephony manufacturers' UC offers
- ◆ Quickly create detailed side-by-side comparisons of multiple offers including strengths and weaknesses, so that you can see feature and operational gaps and compare each vendor's offer against the total set of elements needed to achieve the level of UC functionality you require
- ◆ Identify the relevant information to develop an RFP and control negotiations with vendors
- ◆ Evaluate the effectiveness of UC clients for each user segment of your organization
- ◆ Understand the total costs involved (which functions are standard vs. extra cost options) before making a significant investment decision.

Before investing potentially thousands or hundreds of thousands of dollars in a UC solution, it pays to get current, unbiased information from a third party source such as T3i Group.

³ UC demonstrates the same unbiased accuracy and rigor provided in T3i Group's TelecomTactics, Collaboration Tactics and InfoTrack programs. As a subscriber, you will have access to our analysts for call-in support, and input on our tool enhancement plans, such as new feature categories, white papers and database modules.

**To obtain more information or request an online demonstration, contact
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