



# Unified Communications as a Service (UCaaS)

People work from everywhere these days so organizations have to make sure they can still communicate and keep things moving smoothly. Unified Communications as a Service (UCaaS) is the answer. This flexible platform joins together voice, video, messaging, and presence tools into a single interface, makes your communication flow, and keeps costs down. UCaaS transforms how businesses work, and it takes different tools and puts them all on one place, hosted in the cloud.

In this article, we'll present tangible ways your organization can improve its UCaaS approach. Let's focus on problems that many organizations encounter when trying to create true unification across all channels of communication. Vlcom understands that a unified communication solution can be an incredible asset to the modern organization but it requires some strategic planning in order to do it right. Thankfully, you're not alone. Let's get into it!

# Understanding UCaaS Challenges



## Platform Fragmentation

Different teams using different platforms can introduce problems. A lack of effective communication between departments is often the result of organizations that are using multiple communication tools and services that are not fully integrated. This can occur when departments adopt tools on their own, or when an acquisition happens, or maybe when there isn't a good overall plan in place during the gradual adoption of technology. If communication is a vehicle for success in today's day and age, then organizations must view their setup critically as either a polished super-car, tuned for efficiency or a pieced-together project vehicle that may function and move, but not without the occasional sputter or issue.

The impact of platform fragmentation extends beyond mere inconvenience.

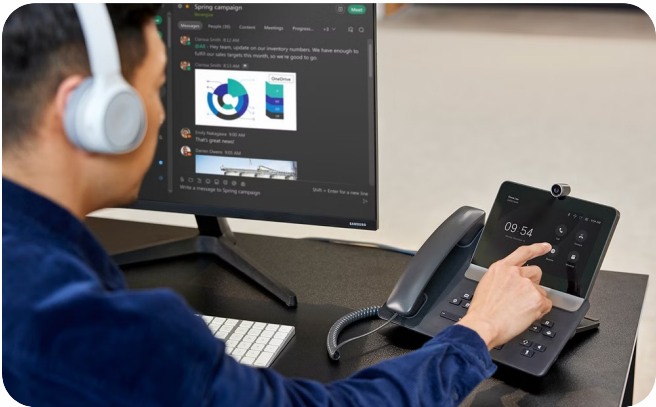
Organizations experience decreased productivity as employees switch between multiple applications, leading to communication delays and potential information loss. Additionally, fragmented platforms often result in increased IT overhead, security vulnerabilities, and difficulties in maintaining compliance standards across all communication channels.



## User Preferences and Adoption

One big hurdle for UCaaS implementation is managing different user preferences while also making sure there's a standard communication environment. Departments and different generations of workers might have different go-to communication tools, which makes it difficult to convince everyone to use just one platform. Some employees might not be into change and stick with what they know, while others might want cutting-edge features.

The key to successful adoption lies in understanding and addressing these varied preferences while maintaining a cohesive communication strategy. Organizations must balance user experience with security requirements, compliance needs, and operational efficiency. This challenge requires a thoughtful approach to change management and user training to ensure successful platform adoption across the organization.



## Integration of On-Premises PBX with Cloud Services

It can be tricky to seamlessly combine legacy PBX systems (Private Branch eXchange - essentially a business telephone system that offers multiple inbound and outbound lines, call routing, voicemail, and call management features) with modern cloud-based UCaaS solutions. These integrations pose unique technical challenges. Because many businesses have invested so much in their on-premise infrastructure, they can't simply ditch these systems overnight. The complexity of maintaining service quality while the transition to cloud-based solutions is happening calls for careful planning and meticulous execution.

Seamless integration between on-premises and cloud systems is crucial for maintaining business continuity and ensuring a smooth transition to modern UCaaS platforms. Organizations must address challenges such as maintaining call quality, ensuring reliable connectivity, and managing security concerns while bridging the gap between legacy and cloud systems.

# Strategies for Overcoming UCaaS Challenges

## Standardizing Platforms

1

Platform standardization offers your organization considerable benefits, like reduced complexity, improved security, and enhanced collaboration capabilities. By consolidating communication tools onto a single platform, organizations can eliminate redundant systems, reduce costs, and improve user experience. This standardization also simplifies IT management and ensures consistent communication practices across the organization. Let's go back to the super-car example from earlier: Imagine one clean dashboard in your vehicle instead of a messy array of gadgets, dials and knobs. Which do you think enables your drivers to go faster?

When selecting a UCaaS platform, organizations should consider factors such as scalability, integration capabilities, security features, and user experience. The evaluation process should involve key stakeholders from different departments to ensure the chosen platform meets diverse organizational needs while maintaining operational efficiency.

## Enhancing User Experience and Adoption

2

Ongoing support and training are absolutely essential for new technologies to take off. People work best when they're confident and comfortable and we all know that confidence is rarely an accident. Organizations must provide structured training sessions, make resources easy to find, and establish a support system so user concerns can be addressed quickly. This approach fosters user comfort with new tools and helps avoid resistance to change.

Comprehensive training programs and ongoing support are essential for successful adoption. Organizations should implement structured training sessions, provide readily available resources, and establish a support system to address user concerns promptly. This approach helps users become comfortable with new tools and reduces resistance to change.

# Future Trends in UCaaS

## AI Integration

The future seems full of AI and Unified Communication is no exception. AI-powered tools like machine learning and advanced analytics are changing how we think about UCaaS. They can improve communication by intelligently routing calls, transcribing meetings, and even predicting the future. This integration will lead to more efficient collaboration and better decisions.

## Focus on Security and Compliance

Looking ahead, we can expect to see increased focus on security, compliance, and integration capabilities in UCaaS solutions. The rise of hybrid work models will continue to drive innovation in mobile-first solutions and seamless cross-platform experiences.

Organizations that stay ahead of these trends will be better positioned to maintain competitive advantages in their respective markets.





# Security and Compliance Considerations

## Comprehensive Security Approach

Security in UCaaS environments requires a comprehensive approach that addresses both cloud-based and on-premises components.

## Robust Security Features

Modern UCaaS platforms must implement end-to-end encryption, secure access controls, and detailed audit trails to protect sensitive communications.

## Adaptable Security Solutions

Organizations must ensure their UCaaS solution provides necessary security features while maintaining the flexibility to adapt to evolving regulatory requirements.

## Navigating Compliance

Organizations must navigate complex compliance requirements including HIPAA, GDPR, and industry-specific regulations.

## Compliance Framework Requirements

Compliance frameworks demand regular security assessments, documentation of security controls, and incident response planning.

## Essential Security Measures

This includes implementing multi-factor authentication, data loss prevention, and comprehensive monitoring capabilities.

# Network Infrastructure Readiness

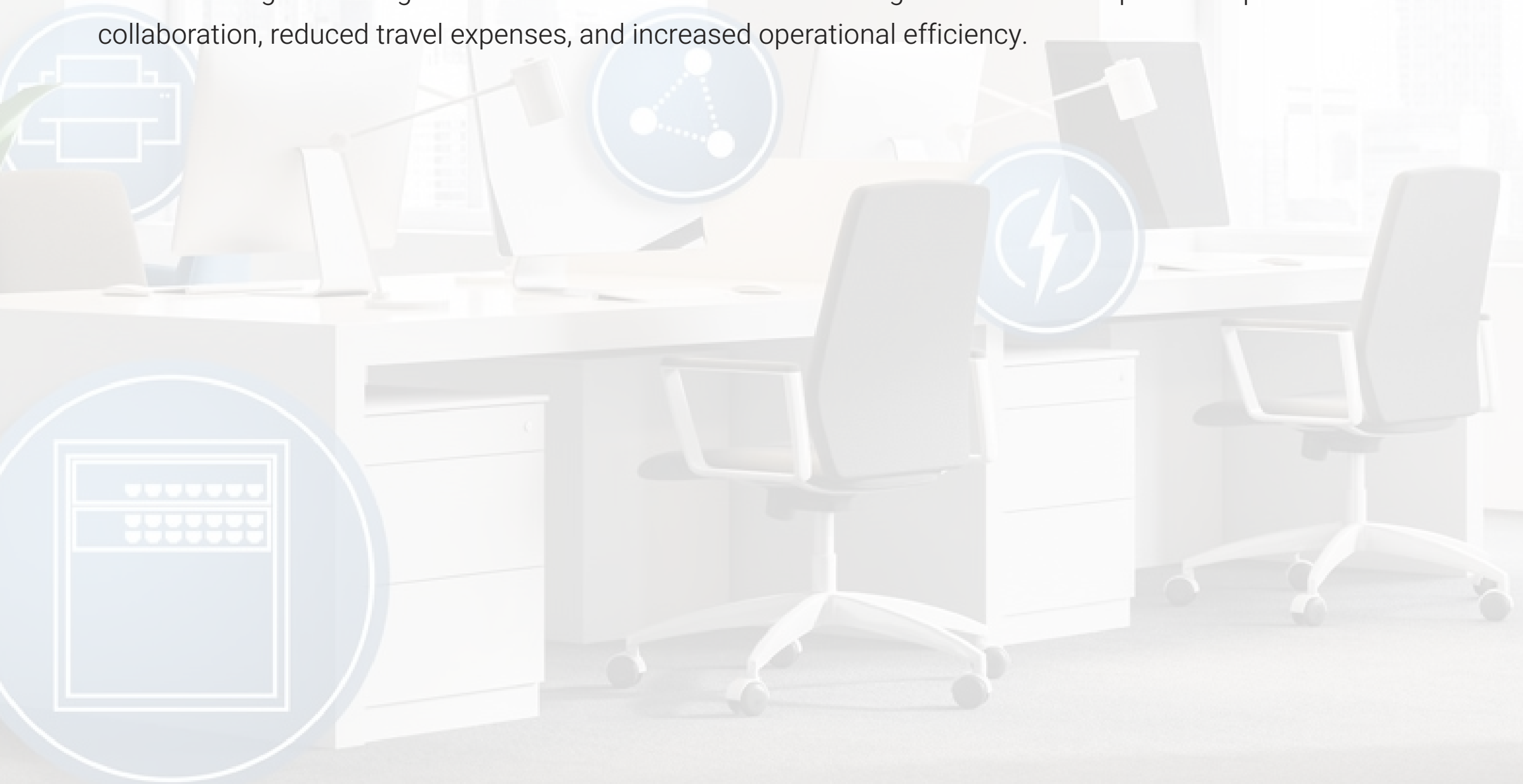
Successful UCaaS deployment depends heavily on network infrastructure capability. Organizations must assess their existing network architecture, bandwidth capacity, and Quality of Service (QoS) requirements. This includes evaluating WAN connections, implementing SD-WAN solutions where necessary, and ensuring adequate redundancy for critical communications.

Network optimization strategies should include traffic prioritization, bandwidth allocation, and latency management. Regular network performance monitoring and capacity planning are essential for maintaining service quality as usage patterns evolve. Organizations should consider implementing network monitoring tools to proactively identify and address potential issues.

## Cost Analysis and ROI

The total cost of ownership (TCO) for UCaaS implementations extends beyond monthly subscription fees. Organizations must consider factors such as network upgrades, training costs, integration expenses, and potential productivity gains. While cloud-based solutions typically offer lower upfront costs, organizations should develop comprehensive ROI models that account for both direct and indirect benefits.

Cost optimization strategies include careful vendor selection, appropriate service tier selection, and efficient license management. Organizations should also consider the long-term financial impact of improved collaboration, reduced travel expenses, and increased operational efficiency.



# Vendor Selection Guide

| Feature                         | Zoom      | RingCentral | 8x8       | Nextiva   |
|---------------------------------|-----------|-------------|-----------|-----------|
| Starting Price (per user/month) | \$14.99   | \$19.99     | \$15      | \$18.95   |
| Video Conferencing              | Yes       | Yes         | Yes       | Yes       |
| VoIP Phone System               | Yes       | Yes         | Yes       | Yes       |
| Team Messaging                  | Yes       | Yes         | Yes       | Yes       |
| Mobile App                      | Yes       | Yes         | Yes       | Yes       |
| File Sharing                    | Yes       | Yes         | Yes       | Yes       |
| Screen Sharing                  | Yes       | Yes         | Yes       | Yes       |
| Call Recording                  | Yes       | Yes         | Yes       | Yes       |
| Integrations                    | 1,000+    | 200+        | 50+       | 100+      |
| Analytics                       | Yes       | Yes         | Yes       | Yes       |
| International Calling           | Available | Available   | Available | Available |
| Customer Support                | 24/7      | 24/7        | 24/7      | 24/7      |
| Free Trial                      | 30 days   | 15 days     | 30 days   | 7 days    |



# Measuring Success

|                                                                     |                                                                 |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>System uptime and reliability</p> <p>Target: 99.999% uptime.</p> | <p>User adoption rates</p> <p>Target: &gt;90% active users.</p> |
| <p>Call quality metrics</p> <p>MOS score &gt;4.0.</p>               | <p>Response time for support tickets</p>                        |
| <p>Cost savings compared to previous solutions</p>                  | <p>Employee satisfaction scores</p>                             |

Regular assessment of these KPIs helps organizations identify areas for improvement and demonstrate ROI to stakeholders.

Modern UCaaS solutions must adapt to unique organizational workflows while maintaining standardization. This includes custom API integrations, workflow automation, and department-specific configurations. Organizations should prioritize platforms that offer robust customization capabilities while maintaining security and compliance standards.

Vlcom's expertise in integration ensures that customizations align with business objectives while preserving system integrity. Our engineers work closely with clients to develop tailored solutions that maximize the value of their UCaaS investment.

# Change Management Strategy

## 1 Stakeholder Analysis and Communication

Successful UCaaS adoption requires a structured change management approach.

## 2 Phased Implementation Plan

Organizations should develop detailed transition plans that address both technical and cultural aspects of change, ensuring long-term success of their UCaaS implementation.

## 3 Comprehensive Training Program

Successfully implementing and maintaining a unified communications strategy requires careful consideration of various challenges and thoughtful application of solutions.

## 4 Feedback Collection and Response

By understanding and addressing platform fragmentation, user adoption, and integration challenges, organizations can create a more efficient and effective communication environment.

## 5 Continuous Support and Improvement

Ready to transform your organization's communication infrastructure? Contact VIcom today for a free consultation with our expert team of Account Representatives and Systems Engineers. Our 20+ years of experience in AV, UC, and Network integration makes us the ideal partner for developing a thoroughly integrated solution tailored to your organization's needs. Fill out the form below to start your journey toward truly unified communications.



## Ready to get started?

Vicom has over 20 years of experience integrating solutions to make communication simplified. We've worked with organizations of all sizes throughout the state of Virginia and beyond.

We'd love to setup a free consultation to discuss your technology plans!

[Click here](#)[Learn more](#)