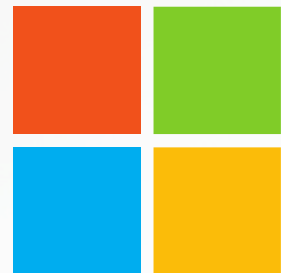


2025 Unified Communication Comparison Guide

The unified collaboration and communication platforms market is rapidly growing, projected to exceed \$150 billion by 2025. With hybrid work becoming common and new AI features emerging, organizations have numerous choices for video conferencing, team chat, and cloud phone systems. Key players like Zoom, RingCentral, and Microsoft Teams provide robust UCaaS solutions. Business and IT leaders must thoroughly understand the evolving UC market to make strategic decisions for successful collaboration.



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from

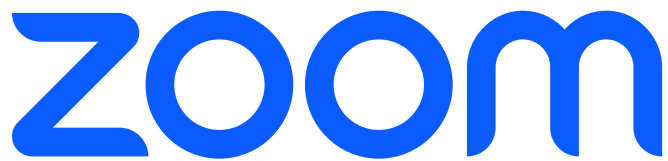


Introduction

This guide was created to help businesses evaluate Zoom, RingCentral, and Microsoft Teams side by side. We provide an unbiased comparison of their features, capabilities, pricing, and ideal use cases. By understanding the strengths and weaknesses of each solution, decision-makers can select a platform that fits their company's needs in terms of meetings, messaging, telephony, security, and integration with existing workflows.

(Note: All information is current as of early 2025. Features and pricing may change over time; readers should verify details with official sources as needed.)





Zoom Video Communications launched in 2013 as a cloud video conferencing tool and quickly became a market leader, especially during the 2020 shift to remote work. In April 2020, Zoom famously reported 300 million daily meeting participants on its platform. Originally known for simple, reliable video meetings, Zoom has since expanded into a full UC platform including Zoom Team Chat and Zoom Phone cloud PBX services.

Zoom: Primary Use Cases

Zoom is best known for its high-quality video meetings and webinars, which are praised for "seamless connectivity" and user-friendly features that make virtual meetings feel almost in-person. Organizations use Zoom for everything from one-on-one video calls and team meetings to large webinars and training sessions. It supports HD video/audio, screen sharing, recording, and interactive touches like virtual backgrounds and breakout rooms to enhance engagement.

Zoom: Typical Customers

Zoom's ease of use has made it popular across industries and company sizes – from small startups and individual consultants up to large enterprises. It's widely adopted in education (online classes and lectures), government and nonprofits, and general business settings for internal and external meetings. Zoom now serves a global user base, providing "reliable and scalable solutions for businesses of all sizes". Many small and mid-sized businesses choose Zoom for its low barrier to entry (including a robust free version) and its familiarity to end-users. Enterprises often leverage Zoom for its webinar capabilities and integrate Zoom Phone for telephony to create an all-in-one communications solution.





RingCentral is a pioneer in cloud communications, founded in 1999 with a focus on business Voice over IP (VoIP) phone service. Over time, RingCentral evolved its offering into RingCentral MVP (Message, Video, Phone), a unified platform for team messaging, video meetings, and enterprise-grade telephony. In our research, RingCentral is recognized as "the best business VoIP service on the market right now," known for a vast selection of calling features and strong scalability for growing businesses.

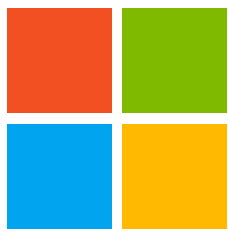
RingCentral: Primary Use Cases

RingCentral's heritage is in business telephony and call management – replacing traditional PBX phone systems with a cloud solution. Companies use RingCentral to get phone numbers, unlimited calling, voicemail, IVR (auto-attendants), and call center features without on-premise hardware. In addition, RingCentral includes built-in video conferencing and team chat capabilities. While its video meetings offer similar basics to Zoom (HD video, screen share, etc.), RingCentral's differentiators are often in voice features (e.g. advanced call routing, queues, fax) and integrations with CRM and productivity tools. It essentially acts as an all-in-one hub for internal and external communications (calling, messaging, meetings) on any device.

RingCentral: Typical Customers

RingCentral serves businesses of all sizes needing reliable phone service and collaboration tools, particularly those with high call volumes or multiple offices. It excels in scalability for growing companies and serves sectors like healthcare, finance, and customer support. With 400+ integrations including Salesforce, Microsoft 365, and Slack, it readily adapts to diverse IT environments.





Microsoft

Microsoft Teams launched in 2017 as part of the Office 365 (now Microsoft 365) suite, initially to compete with workplace chat apps like Slack. It has since grown into a comprehensive collaboration hub that combines persistent team chat, video meetings, voice calling, and file sharing under one platform. Teams is deeply integrated with Microsoft's productivity tools (Outlook, Office apps, SharePoint, etc.), making it a central workspace for many organizations. By 2023, Microsoft reported over 320 million users of Teams, and the platform is used by 93 of the Fortune 100 companies – underscoring its widespread enterprise adoption.

Teams: Primary Use Cases

Microsoft Teams functions as a unified workspace where employees chat, collaborate, meet, and manage documents in one interface. It integrates deeply with Microsoft 365 apps, enabling seamless transitions between communication modes and document collaboration. When combined with calling plans or direct routing, Teams also serves as a complete phone system through Microsoft Teams Phone.

Teams: Typical Customers

Teams is a natural fit for any business already subscribed to Microsoft 365 – including small businesses using Business Basic/Standard and enterprises using E3/E5 licenses – since it's included at no additional cost and integrates with their existing Outlook/Office workflows. It's widely adopted in large enterprises and government organizations (thanks to Microsoft's security/compliance credentials), as well as in education (with Office 365 for Education) and healthcare/finance sectors that value data governance. Teams is often favored for internal collaboration (especially in Microsoft-centric IT environments), though it can be used for external meetings and webinars as well. Organizations that prioritize a "versatile suite of collaboration tools" over a specialized video-meeting experience often lean towards Teams.



Feature Comparison: Meetings & Webinars

Zoom

Optimized for virtual meetings and events. Supports 100 participants on free plan, upgradable to 300 (Business) or 500+ (Enterprise). Large Meeting add-ons allow up to 1,000 interactive participants. Renowned for easy-to-use controls and features like breakout rooms, live polling, and reactions. Zoom Webinars can scale to huge audiences, supporting up to 3,000 or 10,000 attendees with licenses, and even up to 1 million view-only attendees for large-scale events.

RingCentral

Solid meeting functionality, typically supporting 100 participants (Standard plan) or 200 (Premium/Ultimate) in a single call. Offers HD video, screen sharing, and features like breakout rooms. RingCentral Webinars/Events add-on supports up to 500 attendees by default, expandable to 3,000 or 10,000 attendees for big events. While capable, it doesn't match Zoom's scale for the largest webinars.

Teams

Robust for internal meetings and now capable of large webinars. Standard Teams Meeting supports up to 300 interactive participants with most business subscriptions, up to 1,000 with enterprise licenses. Teams Webinars support up to 1,000 interactive attendees, with additional view-only capacity up to 10,000. Teams Live Events can reach 20,000 attendees. Includes features like live captions, meeting transcripts, and waiting rooms.



Feature Comparison: Chat & Messaging

Zoom

Offers Zoom Team Chat as a built-in persistent messaging platform. Supports private or public channels, 1:1 chats, file sharing, and quick transitions to Zoom meetings. Available to free and paid users. Features include message search, emojis/GIFs, @mentions, and integrations via the Zoom App Marketplace. While improved, it's not as fully featured as dedicated collaboration apps.

RingCentral

Provides Team Messaging capability alongside phone and video. Feature-rich, allowing creation of teams/channels, file sharing, task assignment, and project management. Messages are persistent and searchable, with support for rich text, emojis, and pinned posts. Integrated with the phone system for seamless escalation from chat to call or video meeting. Includes task tracking with due dates.

Teams

Offers one of the most robust team chat experiences. Users create Teams and Channels for different projects or departments. Supports threaded conversations, file sharing, and integration of Tabs for documents, wikis, or third-party app content. Deeply integrated with Microsoft 365, allowing easy sharing and collaboration on Office documents. Includes private 1:1 or group chats outside of channel discussions.



Feature Comparison: **Voice & Telephony**

Zoom

Zoom Phone is a cloud PBX add-on that integrates with the Zoom app. Offers standard business telephony features like auto-receptionist, IVR menus, call routing, voicemail transcription, and SMS messaging. Supports direct dialing in 40+ countries. Allows users to make and receive phone calls from their Zoom client or desk phone. Growing quickly but newer to the telephony arena compared to RingCentral.

RingCentral

A market leader in cloud telephony. Every RingCentral MVP subscription includes a full phone system with features like unlimited calling, business SMS/MMS texting, fax, multi-level IVR, call queues, and call recording. Offers advanced analytics and integrations with CRM systems. Supports toll-free numbers and international numbers in over 100 countries. Known for excellent call quality and a 99.999% uptime SLA.

Teams

Provides enterprise telephony through Microsoft Teams Phone. Offers cloud PBX features integrated into the Teams client, including call transfer, hold, voicemail, and delegation. Requires either Microsoft Calling Plan licenses or Direct Routing / Operator Connect to link Teams to a telecom provider. Supports auto-attendants, call queues, and voicemail transcription. Integrates well with Outlook contacts and calendars.



Feature Comparison: **File Sharing & Collaboration**

Zoom

Primarily focused on meetings, with minimal native file sharing and co-editing features. Users can share files in Zoom Chat channels, stored in Zoom's cloud. Recently introduced Zoom Docs and Zoom Whiteboard for collaborative content creation. Most businesses using Zoom integrate it with other file-sharing solutions like Google Drive or Dropbox.

RingCentral

Supports basic file sharing within its messaging app. Integrates well with external storage providers like Google Workspace and Microsoft 365. Includes built-in task management and note-taking system. Does not have its own office productivity suite, so most users pair it with Office 365 or Google apps for document collaboration.

Teams

Shines in file sharing and collaboration due to native integration with SharePoint and OneDrive. Every Teams channel has an associated SharePoint site for file storage. Users can co-edit Office documents directly within Teams in real time. Includes built-in Whiteboard app for collaborative drawing. Provides rich file sharing and co-authoring out-of-the-box, leveraging Microsoft's cloud storage.



Feature Comparison: **Third-Party Integrations**

Zoom

Provides an App Marketplace with over 1,000 third-party integrations and apps. Includes integrations with CRM systems, project management tools, productivity suites, and collaboration tools. Supports scheduling plugins for Outlook and Google Calendar. Offers Zoom Apps that can run within Zoom Meetings, bringing third-party services into the live meeting experience.

RingCentral

Offers over 400+ integrations as of 2025. Covers a wide range including Microsoft 365, Google Workspace, Salesforce, and industry-specific apps. Can integrate with Microsoft Teams, allowing RingCentral to serve as the telephony backend. Provides open APIs for custom integrations. Known for having more out-of-the-box integrations than Zoom Phone. document collaboration.

Teams

Naturally integrates with all Office 365 apps. Has an App Store with hundreds of third-party apps available as Tabs or Bots in Teams. Supports connectors that push notifications from external apps into Teams channels. Can leverage Microsoft Power Platform for custom integrations. While having fewer third-party integrations than Zoom's marketplace, it covers most major needs and deeply integrates with Microsoft's ecosystem.



Feature Comparison: **Security & Compliance**

Zoom

All meetings encrypted using 256-bit AES encryption. Offers optional end-to-end encryption (E2EE) for meetings. Includes features like waiting rooms and passcode protection. Maintains certifications including SOC 2 Type II, ISO/IEC 27001, and GDPR compliance. Offers HIPAA-compliant options and can meet FINRA and FedRAMP requirements. Has made significant security enhancements since 2020.

RingCentral

Encrypts voice communications and messages in transit and at rest. Provides end-to-end encryption for video meetings and phone calls when possible. Offers multi-factor authentication and granular admin controls. Maintains certifications including SOC 2 + HIPAA, ISO 27001, PCI-DSS, GDPR, and CCPA. Has a long track record in secure business communications.

Teams

Built on Microsoft 365's enterprise-grade security framework. All data encrypted in transit and at rest by default. Supports E2EE for one-on-one calls. Underpinned by Azure Active Directory for robust identity management. Meets a wide range of compliance standards including HIPAA, ISO 27001, GDPR, and FedRAMP High. Includes built-in Data Loss Prevention and eDiscovery capabilities through Microsoft 365.



Feature Comparison: **User Experience**

Zoom

Known for its simplicity and ease of use. Clean, straightforward interface that even non-technical users find easy to navigate. Joining a meeting is as simple as clicking a link. Consistent experience across desktop and mobile apps. Offers accessibility features like closed captioning and screen reader support.

RingCentral

User-friendly unified app that consolidates messages, video, and phone into one client. Interface uses a left sidebar for easy navigation between functions. Learning curve is moderate, with most employees quickly adapting to basic calling and meeting functions. Mobile app is robust, allowing full functionality on the go.

Teams

Powerful but more complex user experience. Combines many functions in a single app, which can feel overwhelming to new users. Highly customizable and efficient for users once trained. Seamless for internal users, but external guests may face some friction when joining. Excellent accessibility features including immersive reader, live captions, and high contrast mode.



Performance & Reliability Comparison

Zoom

Known for reliable, high-quality performance even in bandwidth-constrained situations. Uses advanced compression and adaptive algorithms to maintain clarity. Targets low latency with global data centers. Does not publicly guarantee a specific SLA for meetings, but has a strong track record of high availability. Zoom Phone offers up to 99.999% uptime SLA for enterprise customers.

RingCentral

Emphasizes "carrier-grade" reliability with its own global cloud network. Publicly touts a 99.999% uptime SLA for services. Supports failover options for voice services. Designed with redundancies and has historically had minimal downtime. Provides tools to monitor call quality and bandwidth usage.

Teams

Runs on Microsoft's Azure cloud, engineered for enterprise-grade availability. Offers a 99.9% uptime SLA for Microsoft 365 services. Uses geographic redundancy and load balancing for reliability. Performance can be resource-intensive on older devices. Benefits from Microsoft's global network infrastructure for optimal speed and regional data localization.



Pricing & Licensing Comparison

Platform	Free Tier	Paid Plans	Enterprise
	Basic plan: Free, 100 participants, 40-min limit on group meetings	Pro: \$14.99/host/month, Business: \$19.99/host/month (10+ licenses)	Custom pricing, typically for 50+ licenses
	No free tier (limited trial available)	\$20 to \$35+/user/month depending on edition	Custom pricing for large deployments
	Included in many Microsoft 365 plans	Teams Essentials: \$4/user/month, Full Microsoft 365 plans: \$6-\$12.50/user/month	E3/E5 enterprise plans, custom pricing

Best Fit by **Business Size**

Small Businesses 2 (1-100 employees)

Zoom is often the top choice for its ease of use and low cost. RingCentral may be considered if a professional phone system is critical. Teams can be a fit for small businesses already using Office 365.

Mid-Market (100- 3 1000 employees)

Choice depends on existing investments. Microsoft 365 users often choose Teams. RingCentral is popular for companies needing robust telephony. Zoom is common for video-centric organizations or those frequently hosting external meetings.

Enterprises (1000+ employees)

Microsoft Teams is often the standard due to integration with Office 365. Zoom is used for customer-facing roles or large webinars. RingCentral is sometimes chosen as the telephony backbone, integrated with Teams.

Industry **Preferences**

Healthcare

Zoom for Healthcare is popular for telehealth. Teams is preferred by healthcare systems standardized on Microsoft. RingCentral is used for its HIPAA-compliant phone and fax capabilities.

Finance

Teams is strong due to built-in compliance features. RingCentral is used for trading desks and wealth management. Zoom is common for external client meetings and investor calls.

Education

Zoom is widely used for online classes. Teams for Education is popular in higher education and some K-12 districts using Office 365. RingCentral is less common but sometimes used for school phone systems.

Professional Services

Zoom is popular for external communications. Teams is used if the firm is Microsoft-oriented. RingCentral may be chosen by firms needing reliable phone service in addition to meetings.



Key Decision Factors

Budget and Existing Licenses

Consider current investments in Microsoft 365 or other platforms.

Technical Ecosystem

Assess compatibility with current tech stack and hardware.

Primary Communication Needs

Determine whether video meetings, internal collaboration, or telephony is most critical.

Scalability and Flexibility

Consider future growth and potential need for additional features or integrations.

Security & Compliance Requirements

Evaluate each platform's compliance certifications and security features.

User Preference and Culture

Consider what aligns best with your company culture and user preferences.

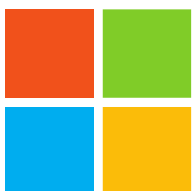
Recommendation Summary



Best for organizations prioritizing video conferencing and easy external collaboration.



Ideal for businesses needing a complete unified communications suite with emphasis on voice calls.



Best fit for organizations deeply integrated with Microsoft or desiring a cohesive collaboration environment.

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