

Business Case for Cloud Collaboration

Case Studies and Testimonials

Some organizations prefer to host their IT systems in their own data center. But on-premises communications solutions are not for everyone, and many organizations are shifting to a secure hosted collaboration solution in order to:

- Increase agility to quickly scale up or down
- Extend collaboration applications to anyone, anywhere
- Free up IT resources to focus on core business
- Reduce total cost of ownership (TCO)
- Replace an aging voice or video communications system

The cloud can reduce complexity for users who just want to get their jobs done and enable new levels of collaboration.

This brochure shares the experiences of actual customers who replaced their on-premises communications system with a secure Cisco Powered cloud service based on Cisco Hosted Collaboration Solution (HCS).



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Increased Agility to Scale Up and Down

Seasonal business spikes, company reorganizations, mergers and acquisitions, and new marketing campaigns require the ability to quickly add and delete user accounts and locations. Delays can hamper employee productivity and interfere with the customer experience. A secure cloud collaboration solution provides the increased flexibility that you need to thrive in a dynamic business environment.

Global Document Management Company Sets Up Contact Center in Two Weeks

CHALLENGE

While undergoing a major reorganization, a global document management company needed to replace its voice and contact center systems. The details of the reorganization were uncertain, so the IT team wanted the flexibility to add and delete users in different locations on demand. To complicate matters, the company needed to set up 50 contact center agents for a new marketing campaign starting in just two weeks, much sooner than the IT team could deploy an on-premises contact center platform.

SOLUTION

The company gained the agility that it needed during the reorganization by replacing its on-premises communications solution with hosted voice and contact center services from a certified Cisco partner. The contact center service was ready in just one day, enabling the company to easily make the deadline to launch the marketing campaign. As the company reorganizes, the IT team can add and delete users with a few clicks on a web portal. What's more, advanced collaboration capabilities included in the Cisco® Powered cloud service are helping to optimize team performance. For example, mobile employees can now receive calls on any phone, including personal smartphones.



Life Insurance Company Adds New Locations Without Increasing IT Staff

CHALLENGE

After acquiring a company serving Latin America, a U.S.-based life insurance company needed to integrate the new offices into the communications system. But assigning IT staff to each office to manage the on-premises system would be prohibitively expensive.

SOLUTION

The company found its solution in a Cisco Powered cloud service from a provider that serves both the United States and Latin America. The company is shifting to the cloud collaboration solution in phases as it retires each location's on-premises communications system. Not only does the cloud collaboration solution make it easy to add new locations and users, it has also freed up IT staff to focus on the core business and lowered capital costs. Business continuity increased because the service includes a backup connection to the public switched telephony network (PSTN) if the link to the partner goes down.





Testimonial

Scotts LawnService Scales Contact Center Agents for the Season

CHALLENGE

During the busy summer season, Scotts LawnService, part of the Scotts Miracle-Gro Company, employs up to 2200 people who work from more than 65 offices. The old voice system made it difficult to add hundreds of temporary employees during the peak season. The inability to quickly add contact center agents affects sales because a customer who cannot promptly reach a salesperson is likely to hang up and call a competitor.

SOLUTION

Scaling to meet fluctuating seasonal demand is much easier since the company switched to a Cisco Powered cloud service. Scotts LawnService can now add or delete contact center agents on-demand, from a web portal. In addition, advanced collaboration capabilities have elevated customer service levels. For example, if no salespeople are available in the local office, the Cisco Powered cloud service automatically routes customer calls to another nearby office that understands local lawn-care issues and can schedule appointments. Regional managers use the single-number reach feature to receive calls to their office number from wherever they are, helping to accelerate decision-making.



[Read the full case study](#)

Extend Collaboration Applications to Anyone, Anywhere, Using Any Device

When each office has its own voice system, the employee and customer experience can vary by location. Employees who can reach coworkers in their own office with four-digit dialing might need to dial the full number for coworkers in other offices. Often, headquarters employees have access to advanced capabilities such as presence, instant messaging, single-number reach, and video, but branch office employees do not. And employees may or may not be able to access these services on Windows PCs, Macs, iPhones, iPads, and Android devices. When you connect your offices to a Cisco Powered service, employees in every location enjoy the same services, on any device you support. This approach reduces complexity for users who just want to get their jobs done and enables new levels of collaboration.

Manufacturer Equalizes Communications Capabilities for All Dealers

CHALLENGE

A leading farming equipment company distributes its products through hundreds of independent dealerships. Previously, each dealer could choose its own communications system, and capabilities varied, leading to an inconsistent customer experience. Dealers who had acquired dozens of stores found themselves having to manage disparate on-premises communications systems. This increased management overhead made it difficult for employees in different stores to collaborate, and sometimes led to inconsistent customer service levels.

SOLUTION

The company now gives its dealers a choice of a Cisco Powered cloud service or an on-premises Cisco Unified Communications solution. Either way, employees enjoy the same Cisco voice and collaboration capabilities available at corporate headquarters. Dealers who use the cloud service select each employee's monthly plan depending on the features they need for their role: receptionist, service helpdesk technician, manager, and so on. Capabilities such as presence, instant messaging, and single-number reach are helping to provide a consistent customer experience at every location. And relieving dealers from having to worry about communications infrastructure frees up more time for sales and customer service.



Food-Products Company Provides Consistent Communications Services across Global Offices

CHALLENGE

To simplify workforce collaboration, a multinational food-products company wanted to integrate its voice, instant messaging, and Cisco TelePresence® systems, which had each been acquired from a different vendor. However, this integration would require a major effort, diverting IT resources from strategic business priorities.

SOLUTION

The company replaced its on-premises voice system with a secure Cisco Powered cloud service, delivered by a Cisco partner that does business in all countries where the company operates. The partner integrated the service with the customer's on-premises instant messaging solution, and is currently integrating the Cisco TelePresence system. Working with the same Cisco partner in all countries also simplified licensing. The company can increase or decrease the number of licenses on demand, paying only for the number of licenses needed in a given month.





Testimonial

Synergis Education Enables Collaboration at Multiple Locations

“Here at Synergis, we’ve made a strategic decision to use 100-percent cloud services. We needed a SaaS platform for voice and video services, and it needed to cover our corporate offices, our remote workers, and even extend to key partner institutions we serve across the United States. Our cloud provider was able to deploy the Cisco Powered cloud service in a matter of weeks, which allowed us to meet the requirements of a new partner institution contract. We couldn’t have done it otherwise.”

– **Lowell Vande Kamp**
Chief Technology Officer
Synergis Education

Free Up IT Resources to Focus on Core Business

Managing an on-premises communications platform takes a significant IT effort to add and delete users, manage dial-plans, and install and test software updates and new features. Cisco partners that offer Cisco Powered cloud services manage these activities for you, freeing your IT staff to focus on the core business. The partner also takes responsibility for keeping software up to date, giving your workforce access to the latest capabilities for collaboration and mobility.

Global Consumer Packaging Group Avoids the Time and Cost of Major Upgrade

CHALLENGE

Years ago, a multinational consumer packaging company had deployed an on-premises Cisco Unified Communications solution, simplifying collaboration for a 20,000-member global workforce. Now the company wanted to enhance collaboration by adding presence, instant messaging, and video capabilities. But the necessary platform upgrade would require a major effort.

SOLUTION

The company decided to shift from an on-premises Cisco Unified Communications solution to a Cisco Powered cloud service. The cloud collaboration model saved the IT team the time and costs of a major upgrade. And the certified partner lent its expertise to quickly integrate the cloud collaboration solution with the company's on-premises Cisco Jabber™ server, enabling employees to view coworkers' presence information and just click to dial. As an added bonus, licensing costs decreased by 19 percent.



Physicians Group Frees Small IT Team to Focus on Core Business

CHALLENGE

After a series of acquisitions, a U.S. physicians' group with 1700 employees in 60 offices found itself with a mixture of unintegrated communications systems and contact centers. The small IT staff had neither the resources to separately manage each system nor the budget to implement a centralized system. The group wanted to relieve the IT team, and also make it easier for physicians in different locations to collaborate, with the goal of providing excellent quality of care to patients.

SOLUTION

The physicians group freed its IT team from having to manage communications solutions by moving to hosted unified communications and contact center services from a Cisco partner. Now the IT team can focus on its core competency: healthcare systems. And with capabilities such as four-digit dialing and presence, the group's 200 physicians can collaborate with colleagues in any location as easily as if they were in the same office.



Conglomerate Relieves IT Team from Managing Communications for Hundreds of Offices

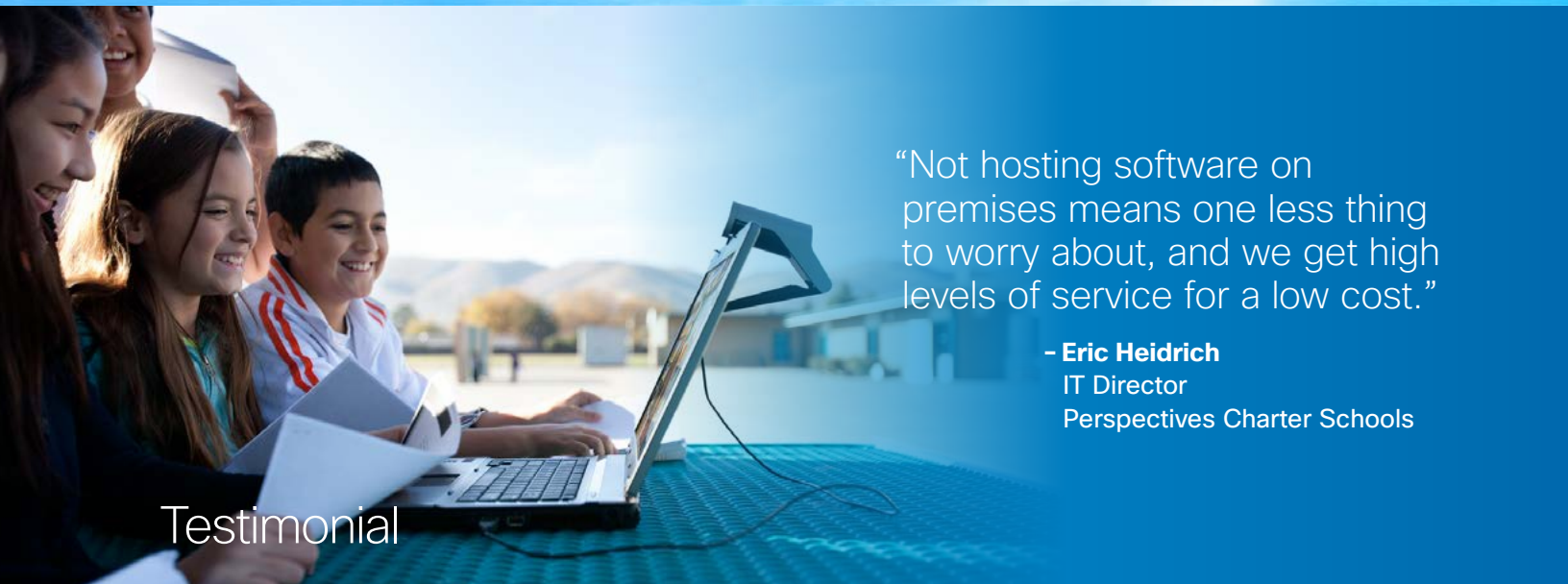
CHALLENGE

A U.S.-based company with 30,000 employees in hundreds of offices provides a variety of specialized business services. The company lacked the internal resources to implement and manage an enterprise communications solution, and decided instead to look for a cloud service. This approach aligns with the company's strategy to outsource IT activities that are not core to the business.

SOLUTION

The company retired its on-premises communications systems and began using a Cisco Powered cloud service, beginning with 7,000 employees. Employees can collaborate more easily by using features such as click-to-call on any company-owned or personal device. The company will soon add Cisco WebEx® for audio and web conferencing, to be included in the monthly per-user fee.





“Not hosting software on premises means one less thing to worry about, and we get high levels of service for a low cost.”

– **Eric Heidrich**
IT Director
Perspectives Charter Schools

Testimonial

Perspectives Charter Schools Reduces Management Burden for Small IT Staff

CHALLENGE

Perspectives Charter Schools operates five open-enrollment public schools, serving 2300 students in grades 6–12 in several Chicago communities. Just two IT professionals serve all schools, which made it especially burdensome for them to wait with technicians at the collocation facility whenever the voice system needed servicing. This task took time away from other IT projects for learning and administrative efficiency.

SOLUTION

Now Perspectives Charter Schools uses a secure Cisco Powered cloud service, funded by e-Rate. The IT team no longer needs to wait with external technicians while they work on phone system equipment. Nor does the team need to spend scarce time upgrading software, because the Cisco partner keeps the system up to date. The school estimates that TCO has dropped by 25 percent.



[Read the full case study](#)

Reduce Total Cost of Ownership for Communications and Collaboration

Shifting from an on-premises solution to a hosted collaboration solution typically reduces total cost of ownership (TCO). You pay a predictable, monthly per-user fee instead of incurring upfront capital costs for communications hardware and software and variable operational costs such as maintenance contracts and fees for telephone extension moves, adds, and changes. More savings result from reducing data center space, power, and cooling requirements.

Leisure Travel Services Provider Reduces Operational Costs by 25 Percent

CHALLENGE

To remain profitable in an increasingly competitive industry, a global travel services provider serving consumers in 20 countries sought to reduce operational costs. The company realized that the communications infrastructure was inefficient. Global offices used a variety of communications systems, increasing management and maintenance costs.

SOLUTION

By moving to a secure Cisco Powered cloud service for voice and Cisco WebEx, the travel services provider eliminated the costs of managing and maintaining disparate on-premises systems. After beginning with 15,000 monthly licenses, the company is well on its way to its goal of reducing operational expense by 25 percent. Standardizing on a single communications service is also helping to promote collaboration across the company's three main European markets.



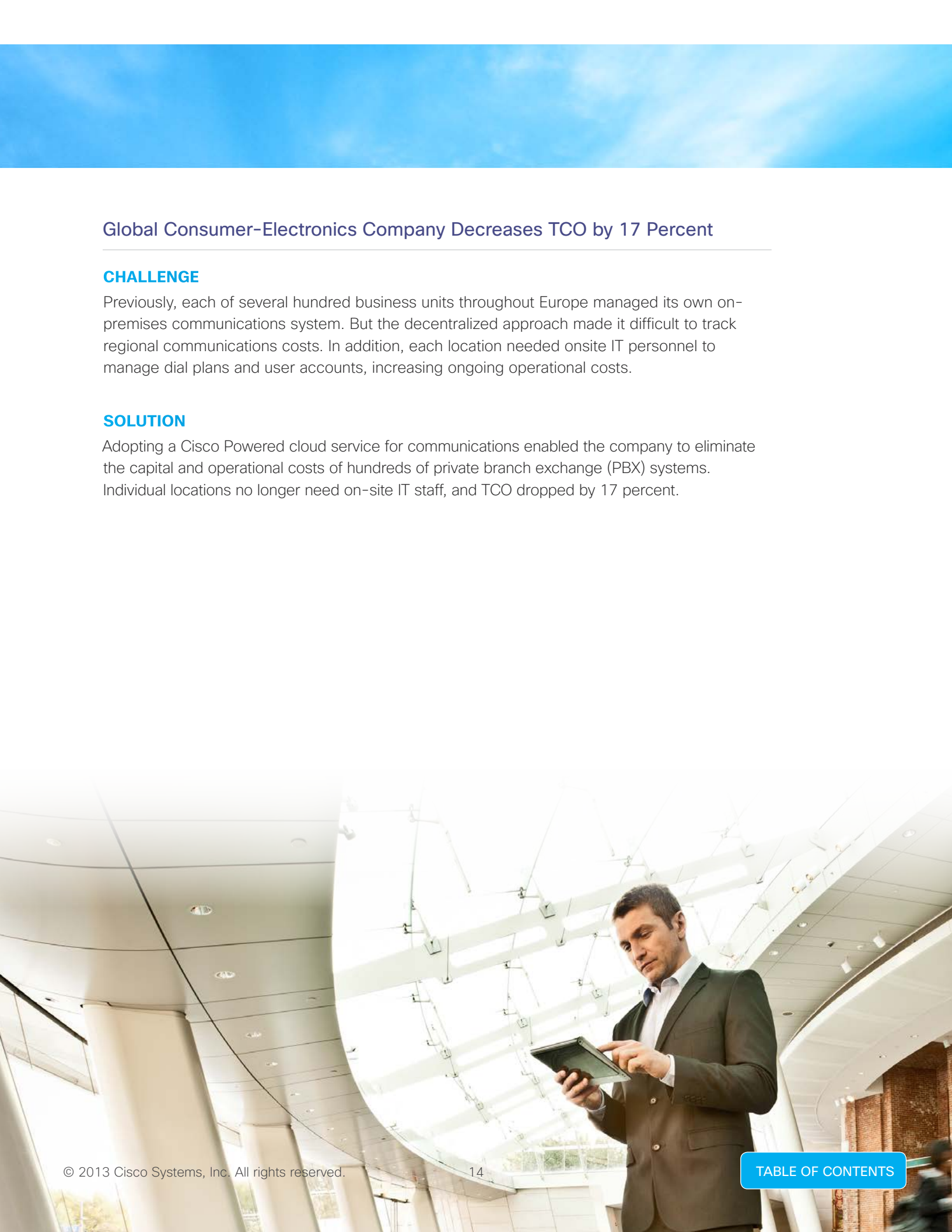
Global Consumer-Electronics Company Decreases TCO by 17 Percent

CHALLENGE

Previously, each of several hundred business units throughout Europe managed its own on-premises communications system. But the decentralized approach made it difficult to track regional communications costs. In addition, each location needed onsite IT personnel to manage dial plans and user accounts, increasing ongoing operational costs.

SOLUTION

Adopting a Cisco Powered cloud service for communications enabled the company to eliminate the capital and operational costs of hundreds of private branch exchange (PBX) systems. Individual locations no longer need on-site IT staff, and TCO dropped by 17 percent.





Testimonial

“Having people on the same communications system is amazing. It’s changing the company culture by creating a global mindset.”

– **Debra Capua**
Senior Communications Manager
D+M Group

D+M Group Lowers Total Cost of Ownership by 72 Percent

CHALLENGE

D+M Group is a global company that provides leading sound solutions for the consumer, professional, and automotive markets. Until 2010, D+M operated as a holding company for multiple brands that functioned as autonomous businesses. Each division maintained its own communications systems, increasing costs and making it difficult for employees to collaborate with peers in other divisions for new product development.

“[Now] we can take advantage of unified communications without the expense of hiring or training specialists to support the hardware and software... Better teamwork and collaboration support our go-to-market business strategy and help us be more creative in developing products.”

– **John Jackson**
Vice President of Global Infrastructure and
Vendor Management, D+M Group

SOLUTION

D+M Group lowered TCO and promoted collaboration across divisions by adopting a Cisco Powered cloud service. The company now pays a per-person fee for basic communications services and contact center services. At headquarters, the three-year TCO for communications plummeted by 72 percent, including hardware and software, support, maintenance, and connections to the service provider. Other sites are experiencing savings of 40–50 percent.



[Read the full case study](#)

Replace an Aging Voice or Video Communications System

When your old voice or video communications system nears end of life, you have a choice: assign resources to plan, implement, and test the upgrade, or move to a cloud collaboration solution. Moving to the cloud gives employees access to modern collaboration capabilities that help them do their jobs, without the delays, costs, and risks of a major upgrade.

Entertainment Studio Avoids Costly Upgrade

CHALLENGE

When the maintenance contract for an on-premises communications system came due for renewal, a major entertainment studio faced a crossroads. Continuing to use the system would require a costly and time-consuming upgrade, and the studio did not want to devote scarce IT resources to system maintenance and management. In addition, the studio wanted the flexibility to scale up for production crews that work at the studio for just a week or two, and scale back down when they left.

SOLUTION

Rather than upgrading the on-premises system and purchasing a new maintenance contract, the company moved to a Cisco Powered cloud service. Now studio employees always have access to the latest collaboration capabilities because the Cisco partner takes the responsibility for keeping the system up to date. Executives receive voice, presence, instant messaging, and high-definition video services, helping to optimize team performance and accelerate decision-making. Other employees receive a subset of these services, depending on their role. The studio can expand or contract bandwidth and scale users up or down at any time, avoiding unnecessary costs. Purchasing licenses on a global rather than regional basis has lowered costs. Despite the increased flexibility and more collaboration capabilities, TCO has decreased.



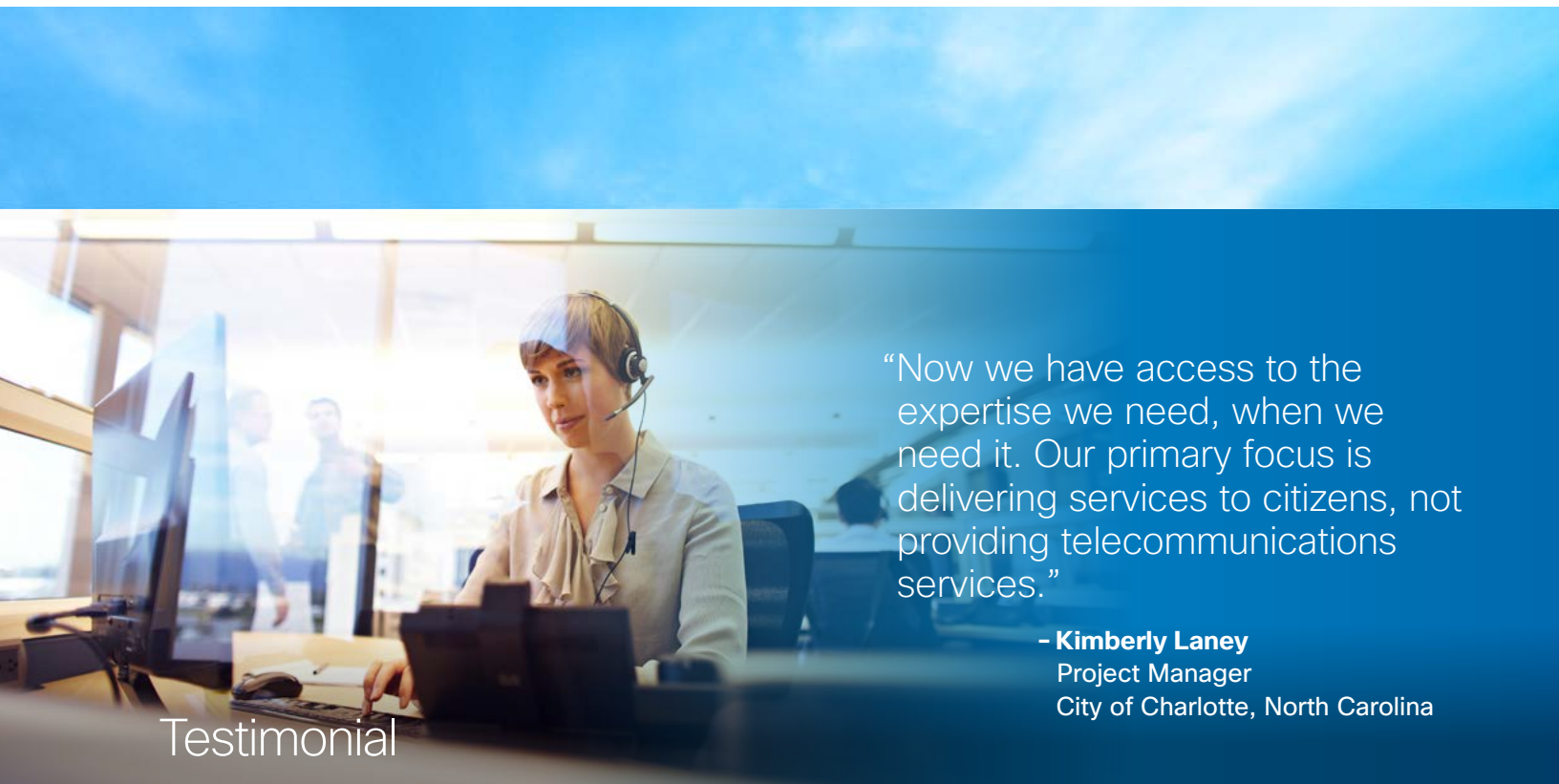
Insurance Company Builds Foundation for BYOD

CHALLENGE

A U.S.-based insurance company previously used an IP Centrex service. Although the service avoided the need to manage on-premises hardware and software, its inflexibility inhibited collaboration. For example, only PC users, not Mac users, could take advantage of the presence and instant messaging features. The company wanted a more flexible service that would increase the efficiency of a distributed workforce.

SOLUTION

The insurance company met its goals by switching from its IP Centrex service to a Cisco Powered cloud service. Now employees can use either PCs or Macs to see whether coworkers are present, and then click to call. The company is also positioned to introduce a bring-your-own-device (BYOD) program so that employees can use personal smartphones and tablets for voice, presence, and click-to-dial. The Cisco Powered cloud service can deliver communications and collaboration services to any Windows, Mac OS, IOS, or Android device.



“Now we have access to the expertise we need, when we need it. Our primary focus is delivering services to citizens, not providing telecommunications services.”

– **Kimberly Laney**
Project Manager
City of Charlotte, North Carolina

Testimonial

City of Charlotte Outsources Contact Center Infrastructure before Democratic National Convention

CHALLENGE

The City of Charlotte, North Carolina operates multiple contact centers, including a 3-1-1 center for non-emergency requests, a transportation and road conditions hotline, a crime-reporting service, and a utility bill payment center. By 2011, the voice system for the contact centers was nearing the end of its support contract. That’s when the City received the news that it had been selected to host the 2012 Democratic National Convention (DNC). The contact center would need to support the higher call volume resulting from an influx of 50,000 delegates, members of the press, and visitors.

“Although cost savings were not the primary driver for the hosted collaboration solution, we are saving taxpayers approximately \$100,000 annually.”

– **Bellverie Ross**
Senior Program Manager
City of Charlotte, NC

SOLUTION

The City provided a consistent caller experience during and after the DNC by using secure Cisco Powered cloud services for voice services and the contact centers. Approximately 200 contact center agents connect to a hybrid service, which integrates with the City’s other solutions for call accounting, call recording, and screen capture. Approximately 100 other City employees receive voice services through the Cisco Powered cloud service, and the City plans to gradually connect other personnel to the hosted cloud solution as existing Centrex service contracts expire.



[Read the full case study](#)



For More Information

To learn more about Cisco Powered cloud services for collaboration, visit: www.cisco.com/go/hostedcollaboration