

Software Developer Accelerates Innovation

Activision Publishing, Inc. upgraded to Unified Communications Manager 7.0 to enhance global collaboration and simplify management.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

ACTIVISION PUBLISHING, INC.

- Software Developer
- Santa Monica, California
- 2300 employees

CHALLENGE

- Accelerate innovation to gain a competitive advantage
- Simplify IT management

SOLUTION

- Upgraded to Cisco Unified Communications Manager 7.0 in just one hour

RESULTS

- Facilitated collaboration within global teams
- Added 200 phones in just 15 minutes, four to six times faster than previously
- Saved 50 to 100 hours by not having to develop routing groups
- Enabled three IT personnel to manage voice and data for 1500 employees

Challenge

Headquartered in Santa Monica, California, Activision, Publishing, Inc. is a leading worldwide developer, publisher, and distributor of interactive entertainment and leisure products. Its portfolio includes best-selling video game franchises such as **Call of Duty** and **Guitar Hero**. The company employs 2300 team members in 17 global offices in North America, Europe, and Asia Pacific.

In the fast-paced interactive entertainment industry, success depends on Activision's understanding of the quickly changing global market. The more easily that global team members can collaborate, the more quickly the company can adjust to the changing market.

Activision's previous voice system, a traditional private branch exchange (PBX) system, lacked the

advanced communication and collaboration capabilities needed to accelerate innovation and increase productivity. Team members had to remember to dial area codes, country codes, and international calling codes. And without knowing whether their coworkers were in the office, on the phone, or traveling, team members often had to leave multiple messages that might not be heard for some time, postponing decision making. "To facilitate global collaboration, we wanted to be able to call or transfer a call to any team member in any location as easily as if they were just down the hall," says Mike DeDecker, network engineer, Activision.

Solution

In 2007, Activision began using Cisco® Unified Communications for voice, unified messaging, and presence. Two Cisco Unified Communications Manager clusters, one in North America and another in Europe, provide communications services over the WAN to all 17 offices. Team members can dial a four-digit extension to reach any employee.

Approximately 50 mobile employees, including sales personnel and executives, use Cisco Unified Personal Communicator, a desktop application that integrates voice, instant messaging, presence, voice message access, click to call, video, conferencing, user directory, and call history. They can consult their coworkers' presence information to see if they are available before taking the time to dial. "Executives like Unified Personal Communicator because they can use their familiar office

communications and collaboration tools at home or a hotel, and be reached at the same number no matter where they are,” DeDecker says.

Cisco Unity® Unified Messaging is integrated with Microsoft Outlook so that employees can listen to and manage their voicemail messages right from their email inbox.

In 2008, Activision upgraded to Cisco Unified Communications Manager 7.0 to enable collaboration features such as Cisco Unified Mobility and visual voicemail on smartphones, as well as easier management. “Migrating to Cisco Unified Communications Manager 7.0 from version 6.0 only took one hour, with almost no business disruption,” says DeDecker. New management features in Cisco Unified Communications Manager 7.0 significantly reduced planning time for the upgrade:

- Standardized route plan: “With other unified communications solutions, we would have had to create different route groups for different call destinations,” DeDecker says. “Cisco Unified Communications Manager 7.0 supports local route groups, which saved us 50 to 100 hours during deployment.”
- Simplified dial plan (“plus-sign dialing”): Cisco Unified Communications Manager 7.0 automatically adds dialing prefixes, such as international country codes, based on the caller’s location. If someone in the United States clicks to dial a team member in France, the system adds 0-1-1 and France’s country code. But if someone in France clicks to dial the same person, the system knows to not add those digits.
- Enhanced bulk administration tool: “Adding 200 phones took just 15 minutes with Cisco Unified Communications Manager 7.0, four to six times faster than before,” DeDecker says.

Results

Enhanced Collaboration

Team members save time every day by checking each other’s presence information before calling. “If we see that someone is on the phone, we can just click to send an instant message or leave a voicemail rather than taking the time to wait for the phone to ring,” DeDecker says. “Over the course of a week, the time adds up.”

“Cisco Unified Mobility [single-number reach] improves our responsiveness to coworkers, partners, and customers because they can reach us directly if we are available instead of having to try several numbers or leave a voicemail.”

—Mike DeDecker, Network Engineer, Activision Publishing, Inc.

Cisco Unified Mobility makes it easier to collaborate with mobile team members. Employees receive notification that they have an office voicemail, including the caller ID, right on their smartphones, and can just click to listen. “If I see a message from a reporter while I’m out of the office, I call right back,” says Ashley Dyer, Activision’s senior manager of corporate communications. “Without visual voicemail, I might not realize I had the message before the reporter’s deadline, missing a publicity opportunity.” Earlier awareness of messages can even

reduce costs, for example, by avoiding printing rush charges if the printer calls with a last-minute question.

Another feature in Cisco Unified Communications Manager 7.0 that speeds up decision making is the built-in Cisco Unified Mobility single-number reach application. Team members can specify multiple phones to ring, including their mobile phone, when their office phone number is dialed. “Cisco Unified Mobility improves our responsiveness to coworkers, partners, and customers because they can reach us directly if we are available instead of having to try several numbers or leave a voicemail,” says DeDecker.

Improved Caller Experience

When customers or partners call the Activision main number, the operator can now check employees’ presence information to see if they are available before transferring the call. If the presence information shows the employee is on the phone or out of the office, the operator offers the caller the choice of leaving a voicemail or speaking with someone else. “Callers appreciate this courtesy,” DeDecker says.

Reduced Workload for IT

The Activision IT staff can manage Cisco Unified Communications with the same skills that they already use to manage the Cisco network. “Using the network as the platform for unified communications has made it possible for a three-person IT staff to manage voice and data services for 1500 people,” says DeDecker. “We would probably need to double our staff if we didn’t have unified communications.”

“Migrating to Cisco Unified Communications Manager 7.0 from version 6.0 only took one hour, with almost no business disruption”

—Mike DeDecker, Network Engineer, Activision Publishing, Inc.

Personalized Workspace

As an entertainment company, Activision tends to attract creative employees who expect advanced communications and productivity tools. With Cisco Unified Communications System 7.0, employees not only enjoy presence, visual voicemail, and Unified Mobility, they can also personalize the color background and ring tones on their Cisco Unified IP Phone using Phone Designer, a Cisco Unified Communications Widget that is free to download and easy to install.

Next Steps

Activision currently uses a voice conferencing service bureau and plans to soon begin testing Cisco Unified MeetingPlace instead. “We can save the service bureau fees and also enrich collaboration by sharing documents and providing services other than just voice,” says DeDecker.

“I look at Cisco Unified Communications like a construction set. Once you build the foundation, you can just add on different applications as it suits the business.”

For More Information

To find out more about Cisco Unified Communications go to:

<http://www.cisco.com/go/unifiedcommunications>

PRODUCT LIST

Routing and Switching

- Cisco Catalyst 6509, 6513
- Cisco Integrated Services Routers, Models 2801, 2811, 3825, 3845
- Cisco 871 Series Routers
- Cisco Catalyst 3550 Series Switches
- Cisco Catalyst 2960 Series Switches

Voice and Unified Communications

- Cisco Unified Communications Manager 7.0
- Cisco Unified IP Phones 7940G, 7941G, 7945G, 7960G, 7961G, 7965G 7971G, 7975G
- Cisco Unified Personal Communicator
- Cisco Unity Unified Messaging
- Cisco Unified Mobility
- Cisco Unified Presence
- Cisco Unified Communications Widget – Phone Designer

Wireless

- Cisco Aironet Wireless Access Points 1100 Series



Americas Headquarters
Cisco Systems, Inc.
San Jose, CA

Asia Pacific Headquarters
Cisco Systems (USA) Pte. Ltd.
Singapore

Europe Headquarters
Cisco Systems International BV
Amsterdam, The Netherlands

Cisco has more than 200 offices worldwide. Addresses, phone numbers, and fax numbers are listed on the Cisco Website at www.cisco.com/go/offices.

CCDE, CCENT, Cisco Eos, Cisco Lumin, Cisco Nexus, Cisco StadiumVision, Cisco TelePresence, Cisco WebEx, the Cisco logo, DCE, and Welcome to the Human Network are trademarks; Changing the Way We Work, Live, Play, and Learn and Cisco Store are service marks; and Access Registrar, Aironet, AsyncOS, Bringing the Meeting To You, Catalyst, CCDA, CCDP, CCIE, CCIP, CCNA, CCNP, CCSP, CCVP, Cisco, the Cisco Certified Internetwork Expert logo, Cisco IOS, Cisco Press, Cisco Systems, Cisco Systems Capital, the Cisco Systems logo, Cisco Unity, Collaboration Without Limitation, EtherFast, EtherSwitch, Event Center, Fast Step, Follow Me Browsing, FormShare, GigaDrive, HomeLink, Internet Quotient, IOS, iPhone, iQuick Study, IronPort, the IronPort logo, LightStream, Linksys, MediaTone, MeetingPlace, MeetingPlace Chime Sound, MGX, Networkers, Networking Academy, Network Registrar, PCNow, PIX, PowerPanels, ProConnect, ScriptShare, SenderBase, SMARTnet, Spectrum Expert, StackWise, The Fastest Way to Increase Your Internet Quotient, TransPath, WebEx, and the WebEx logo are registered trademarks of Cisco Systems, Inc. and/or its affiliates in the United States and certain other countries.

All other trademarks mentioned in this document or website are the property of their respective owners. The use of the word partner does not imply a partnership relationship between Cisco and any other company. (0809R)