The Transformational Collaboration Experience

Communication and collaboration are more critical than ever in today's enterprise, and as collaboration-oriented capabilities continue to advance, new themes are evolving that challenge the way organizations operate. Working across traditional boundaries has become business-critical as enterprises look to expand their global and intercompany value chains and achieve competitive advantage. Information and collaborative tools are no longer bound to a physical office and must be accessible to workers, regardless of location. Additionally, on a myriad of social networking sites, millions of people constantly clamor to share almost everything.

The dawn of a new age of participation in the workplace is changing how information is created, published, and consumed, simultaneously introducing new privacy and security challenges. These changes offer a unique opportunity to rethink business models, processes, and cultures. Success in adopting this new environment will require a holistic approach aligned with the needs of today's enterprise.

Successful collaboration initiatives require the following steps:

1. Clear strategies based on business imperatives, not technology

2. Architectural frameworks that evolve with the needs of the organization

3. Analysis and understanding of cultural considerations and business processes that can affect adoption

4. Defined approaches for governance

The value of the architecture is in the creation of a unified solution that integrates mission-critical systems and processes into a flexible and scalable platform.

This represents an opportunity to transform the role of IT in the enterprise. Developing a business-led strategy and accompanying architecture with stakeholders across research, development, marketing, manufacturing, customer service, finance, sales, and other departments, IT can evolve from a service-oriented cost center to a strategic partner that delivers long-term business value while helping to lower total cost of ownership. Cisco and our certified partners offer a business-centric approach and a full portfolio of services to develop collaboration strategies and architectures. This approach defines a minimal set of activities to help you successfully plan, build, and run collaboration solutions.

Without an overarching strategy, the approach becomes fragmented, leading to:

- Excess costs

- High failure rate for technology solutions

- Poor user adoption rates and low return on investment (ROI)

- Challenges with interoperability between systems and across business units

- The inability to rapidly adapt to changing collaborative needs

- Overlaps in tools and processes

- Security and regulatory compliance issues

Approach for Developing Collaboration Solutions

Developing a business-driven collaboration strategy is comprised of three phases:

1. **Business alignment:** Align stakeholders across IT and the business to focus on key collaboration requirements based on specific business needs. Includes:

   - Participation in a collaboration discovery workshop with business and IT stakeholders

   - Series of interviews to identify and prioritize collaboration targets (business areas of focus)

   - Clarification of business imperatives across the organizations that are involved

2. **Process and organizational analysis:** Evaluate existing collaboration environment (people, process, and technology) to determine the current state of the organization. Includes:

   - Discovery of existing collaboration technologies and relevant business processes

   - Assessment of the collaborative capability of the organization (internal and/or external as required)

3. **Target business initiatives:** Develop and refine a collaborative roadmap based on input from thought leaders and the analysis of supporting collaborative business cases. Includes:

   - Indication of the affected areas of the organization

   - Illustration of strategic and tactical opportunities

   - Designation of future-state collaboration process/technology architecture

   - Creation of high-level future-state use cases

   - Estimation of business effect and cost

Cisco Collaboration Services guides your organization through the process of business transformation and helps you realize the full business value of your investments by providing:

· **Innovative solutions:** Rely on network-centric solutions to align your technology investments with business goals

· **Smart, personalized services:** Gather, correlate, and analyze data against Cisco intellectual capital to provide proactive or preemptive services experiences

· **Operational expertise:** Take advantage of Cisco's networking intelligence, leading practices, and proven methodologies

Create a Foundation for Success with Cisco Services

As collaboration becomes increasingly strategic to overall enterprise success, IT organizations must evolve from deploying technology to deploying business-relevant technology solutions that emphasize capabilities, not products. Cisco Services provides a business-centric, product-independent approach to define collaboration strategies and architectures, combining a holistic perspective with a deep understanding of the underlying technologies.

The integration of the collaboration services portfolio within this process delivers business value by:

- Identifying revenue growth opportunities

- Translating capabilities into new prospects

- Promoting positive change through a detailed, comprehensive platform configuration

- Accelerating adoption and mitigating risk with leading practices

- Providing proactive system monitoring

- Offering ongoing support after deployment to maximize investment

Get Started Today

To learn more about Cisco Collaboration Services, contact your local Cisco sales representative or certified partner, or visit http://www.cisco.com/go/collaborationservices.

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