



TELEPHONY SOLUTIONS DATA SHEET

Central Networks & Technologies



IP COMMUNICATIONS APPLICATIONS

MAKING IT EASIER TO COMMUNICATE

Without the deployment of applications, many of the efficiency and productivity gains of an IP Communications environment are not realised. With the investment already made in infrastructure and communications, adding applications is the next step towards achieving excellence.

APPLICATIONS IS A WIDELY USED TERM, BUT IN THE CONTEXT OF IP COMMUNICATIONS, WHAT DOES IT ACTUALLY MEAN?

Applications make it easy for employees and suppliers to communicate regardless of location or whether a phone, mobile, PC or PDA is being used. Practically speaking, applications empower organisations to achieve the following:

- Provide excellence in customer care
- Empower employees with increased personal productivity
- Allow home and remote workers to operate in the same way as office based staff
- Work smarter with the resource available across the association

It's important to remember that the effectiveness of applications is based on the quality of the information available to them and for this reason the importance of integration with other solutions should not be underestimated.

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE DESKTOP

Everyone already uses a plethora of applications on the desktop and as a familiar environment to the user, the desktop is the main vehicle on which many of the communications applications come to life. For office or home based staff, the desktop can be the only device which is needed as it can have a soft phone which provides all the features of a telephone.

With the right mix of applications on the desktop, a user can do all the following from Microsoft Outlook:

- Send text, faxes and voicemails in the same way as an email is sent
- Have caller's information displayed on the screen before the call is answered and after the call is finished
- See who is available to take calls regardless of that person's location
- See whether it's best to phone, email or text someone based on their current status
- Send instant messages to colleagues using a secure messaging system

All of this and more can be done from the desktop but applications can also be deployed on other devices to ensure staff are using and benefiting from the best combination of device and applications.

WHICH COMMUNICATIONS APPLICATIONS?

The range of communications applications available is vast and many organisations choose a different mix of applications to suit their structure and working practices. However, the core applications which are adopted by most include:

- Contact management
- Unified messaging
- Personal productivity
- Surveillance

The scope of functionality in all of these applications is extensive but outlined on the following pages are just some of the main benefits derived from using them.



CONTACT MANAGEMENT

Until recently, many believed that contact management solutions were only relevant for large call centres. In fact, anyone receiving or making calls needs to have a contact management solution in place to ensure the effective handling of the calls.

Deployed in line with customer service objectives, contact management can extend the organisations capabilities beyond the physical locations it occupies. It facilitates seamless home and remote working, reduces the requirement to have onsite dedicated staff and routes calls intelligently to the right person regardless of their location. The addition of multimedia functions like web chat, queuing emails and web forms, means contact management can significantly enhance the contact experience for both staff and customers.

With a contact management solution in place, an organisation can have:

- Improved customer service
- Lower call abandonment
- Reduced call handling times
- Skills based routing
- Priority call handling
- Screen pop housing management database information
- Remote agents
- Information about callers before and after the call
- Detailed reports showing service levels

BENEFIT

Applications make it easy for employees and suppliers to communicate regardless of location or whether a phone, mobile, PC or PDA is being used.

With an IP infrastructure and convergence in place, contact management can be deployed at minimal cost and in multiple stages.

UNIFIED COMMUNICATIONS

Unified communications provides real-time access to information anyplace, anytime and anywhere. With a number of communications devices available and employees receiving an average of 200 messages a day, communication has become more difficult and less efficient as the same message is left on multiple devices to ensure individuals receive it. Unified communications allow access to all communications from a single device.

This offers the following benefits to an organisation:

- Staff can access all communications from a single device
- Emails, voicemails, faxes and SMS all accessible from a single inbox
- Increased efficiency and productivity throughout the business
- Improved levels of responsiveness to customers, partners and colleagues

Adding unified presence to this, it is possible for people to see where colleagues are and which device they are contactable on. Having this information to hand saves everyone a lot of time and ultimately increases productivity.

PERSONAL PRODUCTIVITY

Using the information held in the business management systems, a number of applications can be deployed to maximise the efficiency of staff, whether office based or working remotely. Full integration between these and the PC based applications like email and company directories, greatly enhance each person's productivity.

The following are just some of the applications available to achieve this:

- Soft phone which provides all the functionality of a phone on the PC desktop
- Presence management giving instant visibility of colleagues availability
- Mobile portal providing a single device environment to access all systems
- Advanced console showing staff availability, status, voicemail profile and all contact numbers for employees

The operator console can indicate a wide range of information indicating who is available, in meetings, on holiday and out of the office for the day.

continued overleaf

SURVEILLANCE

The security of people, property and information is vital and with an IP Communications solution already in place, implementing real-time surveillance is simple and cost effective. Connecting the cameras to the IP network means cameras can be monitored from a central location and viewed remotely as required. Recordings can be triggered by motion and everything is stored on standard servers. This type of application makes it more realistic to have wider areas of surveillance both inside and outside of buildings.



ADDITIONAL APPLICATIONS

There are multiple additional applications which can help and each one has its place with a definitive set of benefits. Some other applications to be considered are:

- Call recording and call tracking
- Screen and keystroke recording
- Video conferencing and call conferencing
- PC based hearing impaired communications
- Enterprise instant messaging

“We have a number of our staff working from home now on a permanent basis. Office based staff also have the ability to work from home should they choose to and this is especially relevant for people who attend meetings off-site, they don't always have to come back to the office to check emails and management systems. They can access them from home. We are always conscious of the need to keep flexible workers feeling included in the world of work so we encourage them work from the office from time to time.”

Paul Atkinson, Resources Director, Community Gateway Association



Central Networks and Technologies Ltd

St Chads Court, School Lane, Rochdale, OL16 1QU
t: +44 (0)1706 747474 f: +44 (0)1706 712222
e: info@cnt.co.uk
www.cnt.co.uk