

UCaaS

Buyer's Guide

How to select the best communication and collaboration tools to drive flexibility and profitability

Table of Contents

[If you're communicating, it has to be UCaaS](#)

[1. Banking-grade security for your peace of mind](#)

[2. One solution, many features \(phone, meetings, and messaging\)](#)

[3. Scalability for when you want to grow your business](#)

[4. 24/7 support from a UCaaS partner you can trust](#)

[5. Seamless user experiences that win over everyone](#)

[6. The affordability factor – enterprise features within your budget](#)

[7. Makes life easier for IT, the ones running it all](#)

[A blueprint for UCaaS implementation in a flexible working world](#)

[Remember to avoid 5 pitfalls](#)

[Discover the <company name> UCaaS suite, designed for flexibility](#)

If you're communicating, it has to be UCaaS

The use of online communication and collaboration tools has seen a remarkable rise in the last two years, and now, there is no going back. A web-based communication stack allows you to reduce your dependence on on-premise infrastructure and associated costs. According to Gartner, nearly 80% of workers used such tools in 2021, up from just about 50% in 2019¹. Unified Communications as a Service (UCaaS) allows you to unify or integrate multiple collaboration tools into one solution, so that you have a single license to manage, and can oversee their entire infrastructure from one console.

In other words, UCaaS can be defined as **a cloud-delivered solution that enables call, video conferencing, and chat-based communication on a monthly subscription model**. To further add to its value, UCaaS supports collaboration features like file sharing and analytics. Since UCaaS is hosted on the cloud, it can be accessed from any device – whether it is an employee's smartphone, a home computer, or a workstation in the office.

Research suggests that unified communications adoption is growing. 40% of large companies increased UCaaS adoption in 2021, driven largely by remote work, and 38% of small businesses are also planning to invest in UC – 2.5x times higher than in 2020². Businesses need a solution that can support them at every stage of growth, meeting all current and future communication requirements. To achieve this, it is vital to select the right UCaaS solution for your business. There are seven parameters that should guide your decision:

- Banking-grade security for your peace of mind
- One solution, many features (phone, meetings, and messaging)
- Scalability for when you want to grow your business
- 24/7 support from a UCaaS partner you can trust
- Seamless user experiences that win over everyone
- The affordability factor – enterprise features within your budget
- Makes life easier for IT, the ones running it all

¹ <https://www.gartner.com/en/newsroom/press-releases/2021-08-23-gartner-survey-reveals-44-percent-rise-in-workers-use-of-collaboration-tools-since-2019>

² <https://techwireasia.com/2021/02/unified-communications-tech-now-a-must-have-for-smes/>

1. Banking-grade security for your peace of mind

The top criteria when selecting a UCaaS solution has to be security. A Network Instruments survey found that data security is a top concern as businesses adopt the cloud, unified communications, and bring-your-own-device. For 80%, it is their no.1 worry³. The shift to remote work can cause vulnerabilities to creep in, and UCaaS solutions must act as a security *enabler*, and not another challenge. Look for banking-grade security (like the encryption we provide as part of our suite), single-sign-on (SSO) multi-factor authentication (MFA), and a zero-trust approach. This ensures that only legitimate users can access a file or a communication channel without risking data exposure.

2. One solution, many features (phone, meetings, and messaging)

UCaaS brings you the convenience of accessing multiple features in one solution. This simplifies administration for IT teams, and provides workers with a single, non-fragmented user experience. That's why 70% of companies would like to have everything they need to communicate in one place⁴. Voice-based telephony, video and audio conferences, and messaging are the three primary channels you need in a UCaaS platform. These must be interoperable, so that users can switch from one to another. As a bonus, you can look for an integrated customer service solution connected with the UCaaS system. This feature lets you bring internal and external communication under one roof.

3. Scalability for when you want to grow your business

The biggest benefit of UCaaS is that it evolves with you. Unlike an on-premise system, there is no fixed hardware or software infrastructure for you to deal with. Companies can extend UCaaS solutions by adding more users, integrating new services, and upgrading their monthly plan, with very little in-house effort. The more scalable a UCaaS solution, the more beneficial it will be for your business in the long term. Further, in addition to capacity, the solution must drive flexibility for your company. If you are looking to adopt hybrid working on a permanent basis, it must support communication within these new operational dynamics.

4. 24/7 support from a UCaaS partner you can trust

The success of UCaaS relies on a close partnership between you and the solution provider. Since UCaaS is hosted entirely on the cloud and managed remotely by the provider, companies must be able to reach out to an account manager or customer success team to quickly resolve queries. 24/7 support ensures that communication channels remain available – without glitches – around the clock. The infrastructure

³ <https://www.eweek.com/networking/cloud-uc-byod-making-network-monitoring-difficult-survey/>

⁴ <https://mediasite.com/wp-content/uploads/The-State-of-Virtual-And-Hybrid-Events-One-Year-Post-Pandemic.pdf>

should support 99.99% uptime for reliable performance. 74% of business solution buyers would even pay more for solid support and a good experience, indicating how important this facet is to the overall value proposition⁵. Along with 24/7 support, the technology should be geared for self-service so that you can troubleshoot minor issues in-house.

5. Seamless user experiences that win over everyone

The last two years have seen sweeping digital changes in the workplace, and it can be difficult for employees to adapt. Gartner reports that companies have had to prepone their digital transformation plans by at least five years, achieving a level of digital maturity in 2024 that they would have otherwise achieved in 2029⁶. This can be a sort of “culture shock” for the workforce. The UCaaS solution you choose must ease the transformation through seamless user experiences (UX). The learning curve should be suitable for every employee, and the workforce has to be comfortable enough to fully leverage the solution’s potential. The UCaaS provider can help on this journey.

6. The affordability factor – enterprise features within your budget

The cloud makes enterprise-grade features available within your budget, allowing businesses to scale up or down as required. With a UCaaS solution, you should be able to take full advantage of this capability. Keep in mind that digital transformation can cause organizations to exceed budgets. In 2021, 1 in 3 businesses exceeded their cloud budgets by as much as 40%, making this a key parameter to consider⁷. Choose your vendor carefully – 38-54% of SMBs believe that vendors care more about “selling” a solution vs. understanding their unique needs and constraints⁸. A smartly priced UCaaS solution with flexible licensing, transparent pricing, and modular design purpose-built for SMBs is ideal.

7. Makes life easier for IT, the ones running it all

A good UCaaS solution will enhance your communication capabilities, even as it makes life easier for IT. This is an employee group severely impacted by the switch to remote work. Most organizations are now running multiple applications on the cloud, and nearly half of businesses have three or more UC deployments. This increases workloads for IT. 89% of IT professionals felt “immense pressure at work” in 2021 and 12% even said that they want to quit as organizations think about moving to hybrid work. A well-built UCaaS platform will provide IT managers with a centralized console, from which to manage multiple user roles, analytics, reports, licenses, and configurations. It should also be easy to set up and integrate via self-service.

⁵ <https://www.salesforce.com/blog/customer-service-stats/>

⁶ Forecast Analysis: Remote and Hybrid Workers, Worldwide, Gartner, June 2021

⁷ <https://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/new-survey-reveals-one-third-of-businesses-are-exceeding-their-cloud-budgets-by-as-much-as-40-percent-301216394.html>

⁸ <https://www.accenture.com/us-en/insights/software-platforms/perception-enterprises-vs-smb>

A blueprint for UCaaS implementation in a flexible working world

In order to implement UCaaS in your organization without delays, bottlenecks, or buyers' regret, there are a few factors to keep in mind.

First, one must consider licensing.

Typically, there are three types of licensing models available for UCaaS and other Software as a Service solutions for businesses. You can have per-user pricing, where every active user is assigned a license and you can pay as you go, only for what you use. Or, you can have capacity-based pricing where there is a separate plan for 1-49 users, another one for 50-149 users, and so on – with different prices for different capacity segments. Finally, you can have feature-based pricing where businesses choose the granular features and configurations they want, and the provider custom prices the solution accordingly.

The first model (per user pricing) is ideal for three reasons:

- Organizations gain from the same features and pricing rate regardless of whether they have three employees or 300. This makes it highly predictable.
- There are no fees attached to new features or configurations. This makes it transparent.
- Organizations can quickly add another license when they hire, without worrying about capacity segments or individual features. This makes it scalable.

The <company name> suite of UCaaS solutions is priced per user per month. Organizations can achieve further flexibility by selecting a plan suitable for their use cases.

Another important consideration is the implementation timeline.

Unless it is designed correctly, unified communications can take substantial time and efforts to set up. This is because it comprises several components like VoIP telephony, local carrier-based calling, video and webinar systems, and optionally, contact center systems. Rolling out these components and integrating them can take time, especially if the solution isn't designed for SMBs. A protracted implementation process will delay your time to value and postpone your employees' abilities to bring their best to work. That's why the <company name> UCaaS solution can be implemented in 24 hours or less, aided by 1-on-1 setup assistance, training, and demos.

The last and possibly the most important factor to remember is change management.

79% of employees were using online collaboration tools in 2021, up from 55% in 2019. This means that 44% are using such tools for the first time, which requires careful handholding and an easy learning

curve⁹. Organizations deploying UCaaS must plan for change management – communicate your intentions to adopt new technology to the workforce. Partner with the vendor on pre-onboarding training and onboarding sessions. Monitor adoption rates through the data analytics dashboard built into your UCaaS console. Some employees may require more handholding than others, so make sure to choose a solution vendor geared for these close synergies.

⁹ <https://www.gartner.com/en/newsroom/press-releases/2021-08-23-gartner-survey-reveals-44-percent-rise-in-workers-use-of-collaboration-tools-since-2019>

Remember to avoid 5 pitfalls

1. **Reusing one tool for another use case, for which it wasn't designed** - Research indicates that 60% of SMBs use their video conferencing tools for webinars. But tools *not* designed for a use case will be lacking in features, and will not be able to provide a fully-functional UX. Choose a UCaaS solution that caters to *all* use cases and train employees accordingly.
2. **Settling for a desktop-only or desktop-first experience** - A mobile experience for work applications and data is among the top 5 employee demands in a hybrid workplace¹⁰. Even if a UCaaS solution seems extremely powerful on a desktop, the mobile UX requires equal attention. There has been a 1000% increase in iOS and Android downloads in the last two years, and UCaaS has to be available on both these environments.
3. **Not prioritizing data analytics because you haven't used it before** - Since it is based on the cloud, UCaaS can power detailed analytics insights into usage statistics, employee performance, engagement, etc., on a daily, weekly, or real-time basis. Organizations must make the most of this capability.
4. **Failing to check SLAs and uptime before investing** - The service level agreement (SLA) has to be perused thoroughly before investing. It will give you critical information about what to expect, such as the exact solution up time, data centers used for UCaaS hosting, support availability, and measures taken for customer success.
5. **Mistaking a free trial experience for the real thing** - A free trial can be misleading, as it does not recreate the costs and licensing complexities involved with a full-fledged UCaaS implementation. It is advisable to read the fine print and opt for a transparently priced solution that shows commercial benefits from the get-go.

¹⁰ <https://www.pwc.com/us/en/library/covid-19/us-remote-work-survey.html>

Discover the <company name> UCaaS suite, designed for flexibility

The <company name> Unified Communications as a Service (UCaaS) solution is designed to save you time, money, and effort. We believe that great communication is always seamless, and <company name> UCaaS delivers effective communication services on any device, from any location. As you navigate the world of flexible work, <company name> solutions lift you up and do not weigh you down. These capabilities are backed by 99.99% uptime, 11 global data centers, 24/7 dedicated support, and a zero-trust approach to security.

- **<company name> <product name>**- Unified phone, meetings, and messaging system, with the flexibility to choose between a basic business phone system and a fully-featured UC platform.
- **<company name> <product name>** - A flexible video conferencing tool that supports 150, 250, or up to 3,000 participants per meeting to meet any scale of requirement.
- **<company name> <product name>** - An optional add-on that provides a cloud-based contact center for voice, video, SMS, and chat-based customer engagement.
- **<company name> <product name>** - A hassle-free webinar platform for live and prerecorded events, with useful automations and interactive features.
- **<company name> <product name>** - A physical meeting room solution for hybrid work, comprising state-of-the-art hardware kits at a low monthly rate.

Discover the power of <company name> and you. Contact us at <<email ID>>.