

COMPUTERWORLD
HONG KONG

USER GUIDE

November 2009



UC

Unified
ommunications

Forget voicemail, it's time to unify

Brought to you by



COMPUTERWORLD
HONG KONG

Cisco's UC: Unified Communications

Even "digital immigrants" like ourselves can leverage collaboration techniques, says Cisco's Argon Ho

By Stefan Hammond

By now, Cisco should have outgrown its image as "the company that makes the Internet hardware." Sure, they still make switchers and routers and all that essential stuff. But the US-based firm isn't resting on their

Collaboration is people-to-people and machine-to-machine

laurels—they're actively seeking new market-sectors, and if necessary, creating them out of whole cloth.

A typical example of Cisco's forward-thinking was put forth during a recent interview with Argon Ho, Cisco's head of marketing and channel operations. "People of my age group are 'digital immigrants,'" said Ho. "People who were born in the 90s and grew up with the Internet are 'digital natives'"

New channels

Ho's right: gone are the days when a new-hire was given to a

desk with a desktop computer and telephone. The newest generation of workers come equipped with digital skills that they'll use on the job, either on their hardware or the employer's, whichever works best. They communicate using the medium they prefer—be it voice, video, audio, email or IM. Whatever's on their desk either works with their preferences, or it's pushed aside or simply ignored.

This is a concept Cisco understands innately—Chairman and CEO John Chambers has said for years that people will communicate using their preferred medium. Like Ho and myself, Chambers is a "digital immigrant" but that doesn't mean we can't choose our channels as deftly as the "natives."

Collaboration

Although the acronym "UC" usually means Unified Communication, Cisco prefers the term "Collaboration." "Collaboration is our means of working better together with clients across multiple platforms and operating environments," said Ho. "Collaboration is people-to-people and machine-to-machine: it's about interoperability—unifying multiple technologies. It's how we work better together when we support

Cisco Collaboration Portfolio

Unified Communications

- IP Telephony
- Contact Center
- Conferencing
- Mobility
- Unified Messaging

Business Video

- TelePresence
- Desktop Video
- Video Conferencing

Web 2.0 Applications

- Team Spaces
- Applications Development
- DMS 2.0 Platform

Business Applications

- Mashups
- Client Services Framework
- Presence/IM
- Email

Cisco
webex



Cisco's Ho: Wants interoperability between different platforms

clients—including hospitals, hotels and public-safety institutions.”

Ho gave one example currently in use in Hong Kong: “Authorized security guards at this institution have IP-enabled wireless video feeds on their walkie-talkies.” Although Ho didn’t give away any important information on this particular deployment, he did say that the wireless network reveals the walkie-talkie’s location, so that if the video displays a situation where assistance is required, nearby guards also equipped with the units can respond instantly.

People who were born in the 90s and grew up with the Internet are ‘digital natives

This example of decentralized control is an excellent metaphor for collaboration: a creative use of unifying multiple technologies that allow authorized employees to collaborate. “TelePresence is only part of the col-

laboration technologies that make up our overall Collaboration strategy,” said Ho. “Cisco wants interoperability between different platforms.”

The “new verticals”: horizontal

Ho suggested a new way of looking at traditional verticals: instead of the typical industry-silos, he said: “when we support clients across multiple platforms and operating environments, we tend to look at the functionalities. Clothing outlets have retail components and banks have retail components, for example—how do we work together to support the flow of business?”

“Every business has mission-critical components, and often these are across multiple departments,” pointed out Ho. “The goal is not just to unify the various systems and make sure they can all co-exist, but


to maintain privacy throughout.”

“No single company can do everything,” noted Ho, “which is why Cisco relies on our partners.”

Smart+Connected

One of the networking giant’s more interesting strategies of the last few years revolves around real estate. With broadband often referred to as the “fourth utility,” Cisco is taking it that extra step forward by working with property developers to create what they call “Smart+Connected Real Estate.” The idea is to ensure that whether you are on a wired or wireless network, services are delivered seamlessly.

Much of this technology is still under development, but Cisco’s involvement in the real estate of Korea’s IFEZ (Incheon Free Economic Zone) is designed to produce residences and workplaces that are more effective and efficient, easier to manage with centralized functions, and more environmentally sustainable.

“We want to transform people’s mindsets,” said Argon, “users are not longer tied to a kiosk, a PC, a mobile phone or whatever, but are operating on a platform they can leverage in the best way to suit their needs.” 



Macroview's LUCAS brings vital transformations

Adding business value by transforming ICT applications for different industries

Many companies consider IPUC (IP Unified Communications) as a simple PBX replacement. But "IP" is an extensive and fundamental standard in ICT systems. An "IP-based" UC platform is an infrastructure that enables "true" integration across voice, video, email, voicemail, mobility, instant messages, presence, workflows and business processes.

UC devices such as wired/wireless IP phones provide Instant Accessibility and Always-On Availability to UC-connected applications that are not achievable on PCs. The core issue in deploying IPUC is: how to use IPUC to transform ICT applications into vital business values?

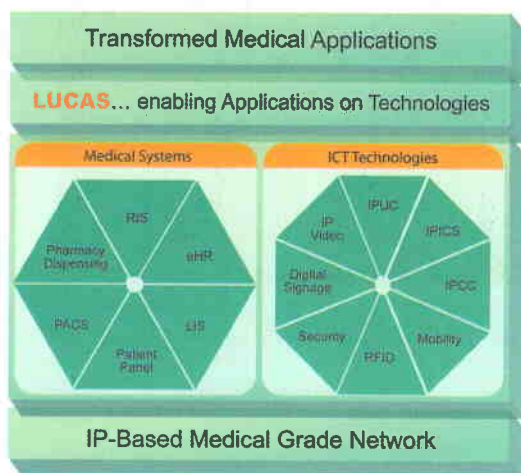
A successful IPUC deployment is dependent on the availability of a secure intelligent IP LAN/WAN infrastructure. Without well-designed VLAN, QoS, PoE and bandwidths on the firm's network, IPUC is prone to inferior voice quality and interruptions to transformed applications – leading to user dissatisfaction.

Macroview has been building network infrastructures for over 18 years, and deploying IPUC platforms since Year 2000. "We understand we need to take our customers' project very seriously and professionally – and so we are 'the First and the Only One' amongst all Cisco Gold Partners in Hong Kong and Macau to achieve the certifications of Cisco Master UC Specialization and Cisco Technology Developer Program." said Mr PHTang, CTO of Macroview Telecom.

Macroview's LUCAS (Leading Unified Communications Application Services) platform encom-

passes a portfolio of value-adding hardware, software and service-based solutions that turns UC into a user-friendly ICT environment while further enhancing ROI. LUCAS gives an integration layer that bridges ICT platforms with known industry systems such as ERP and CRM to deliver a high customer satisfaction in different industries. It helps enhance operation efficiency, improve workflows, reduce human latency, minimize operation risks, and extend workspace and mobility for clients.

Healthcare



Barcode point-of-care: barcode scanners on WIFI IP phones confirm patient-identity helping prevent mistakes in medicine delivery.

Baby security / asset protection: RFID location-tracking and WiFi zone control solutions help monitor and locate infant patients and valuable movable medical equipment within the hospital. Alarms can be broadcasted to wired and wireless IP phones, IPUC-connected PA system and walkie-talkies to trigger security enforcement actions.

Nurse call with IP phone: nurses and doctors can use wireless handhelds to talk directly with the patient via IPUC-connected nurse call systems without having to physically visit the patient – speeding up responses and enhancing job prioritization.

New apps for finance & securities industry

Mobile recording for compliance: compliance policies now mandate voice recording for securities and stocks trading. Macroview LUCAS extends recording from IP phones to any mobile-phone. Traders can now get a compliance recording instantly while using mobile phone to confirm a deal.

Business Process Automation: LUCAS automates contact centre business processes to improve productivity. By integrating caller IDs with customer records, deal histories can be displayed instantly for the traders – enhancing customer experience and loyalty.

Transformed apps for retail

Real-time Inventory control: Space in shops is precious. Wall-mounted IP phones with LUCAS and barcode scanners have small footprints but can connect to retail ERP systems for checking prices and stock, and for reservation of goods at adjacent stores.

Improved marketing: Real-time information distribution is always a challenge to chain-stores. LUCAS enables broadcasts of voice and text messages to shops with an acknowledgement return path. Retailers can promote slow-moving or high-margin products on the fly. [UG](#)