

Extending the Value of your Skype Deployment



Unified Communications (UC) is top of mind with IT buyers around the globe, with Microsoft® and other tech giants as the dominant providers. Most enterprises realize the importance—and complexities—of a well-managed and strategic UC deployment. PGI, as a cloud-based collaboration company that has a long-standing strategic relationship with Microsoft, brings a unique perspective on how to ensure that UC is not only a success within an organization, but also helps extend the collaboration synergies outside the organization.



While UC is becoming vital to ensure operational efficiency, a standard UC deployment does not provide a complete collaboration package.

Enterprises that frequently conduct meetings with external participants—such as employees on their smartphones, customers or vendors—have to complement any UC deployment with audio conferencing integration.

UC in the Enterprise

Microsoft® Skype for Business®, an integral part of Microsoft's Office 365™ suite of products, is one of the most popular unified communications products on the market today. Skype for Business® provides companies with real-time communications such as instant messaging, Voice over IP and video calls with presence information integrated with Microsoft® Outlook®, Exchange email and SharePoint® online. With the release of Office 365™, Microsoft introduced Microsoft® Skype for Business® Online, a cloud-based, hosted version of Skype for Business® that is deployable at considerably less cost than a traditional Skype for Business®, Server installation.

A large number of companies have completed, are currently engaged in or are considering a Skype for Business® deployment. In fact, over 50% of all mid-to-large businesses worldwide are utilizing a Microsoft product for their instant messaging and presence needs (*Wainhouse Research, Worldwide Enterprise Trends of UC Survey 2013*). While Microsoft and its products are ubiquitous in the enterprise, a few questions remain :

1. Does IT have all of the tools they need to successfully deploy, manage and support Skype for Business®?
2. While a UC deployment drives internal collaboration, how does IT extend the capabilities of Skype for Business® to power outside their organization?



[COLLABORATIVE ADVANTAGE]

Understanding the Complexities

A Skype for Business® deployment already poses several challenges and adds additional complexity to your organization's existing network infrastructure. When incorporating audio conferencing, new challenges emerge; audio conferencing in a modern business environment is a complex endeavor that is constantly evolving. The expectations of users are borne out of the landline era, when conference calls were a simple matter of your desk or mobile phone connecting directly to a conferencing provider's PSTN.

Today, the proliferation of additional endpoints, access methods and audio technologies has exponentially increased the difficulty of creating and maintaining a high-quality audio conferencing experience. The expectations of users, however, are unchanged: the audio should simply work.

PGi, a pioneer in audio conferencing technology and support, understands these complexities and currently is the audio provider for over 75% of the Fortune 100™. We can help you and your organization navigate the challenges of this new audio landscape to provide a seamless unified communications experience both inside and outside your organization.

Extending the Collaboration Behavior

While using Skype for Business® Online's "Meet Now" feature, you can select the "Use Skype" option for a full-featured Voice over IP audio experience. However, business needs often arise that extend beyond these capabilities. For example, while utilizing the "Use Skype" VoIP feature, external users such as customers or prospects may not be able to join your Skype for Business® meeting. Users without an active internet connection will be unable to join a VoIP-based Skype for Business® conference. Other examples of business needs PGi can address include:

- Meeting with mobile users on their smartphones who want to dial-in instead of using VoIP;
- Meeting in noise-prohibitive environments; and
- Meeting in an area with limited bandwidth or bandwidth restrictions.

While there are on-premise, hosted options for businesses to address these issues, ultimately they find that they're attempting to create their own global infrastructure. Instead, all of these business cases—from facilitating external users to mitigating VoIP bandwidth concerns—can be eliminated by seamlessly integrating audio conferencing into your Skype for Business® Online deployment with GlobalMeet® Audio for Skype for Business®.

Complement the UC Experience

While Skype for Business® can provide all of the tools for basic, ad-hoc, small internal meetings, PGi can provide support for larger, scheduled meetings with advanced collaboration functionality. GlobalMeet Audio for Skype for Business® can complement your organization's Skype for Business® Online deployment, providing integrated, high-quality audio conferencing to enhance Skype for Business® existing meeting features. In fact, according to a survey of IT executives conducted by Forrester Research, an integrated audio deployment with Skype for Business® is one of the top three requested UC features (*Forrester Research, Insights Networks and Telecommunications Survey, Q1 2011*).

GlobalMeet® Audio for Skype for Business®

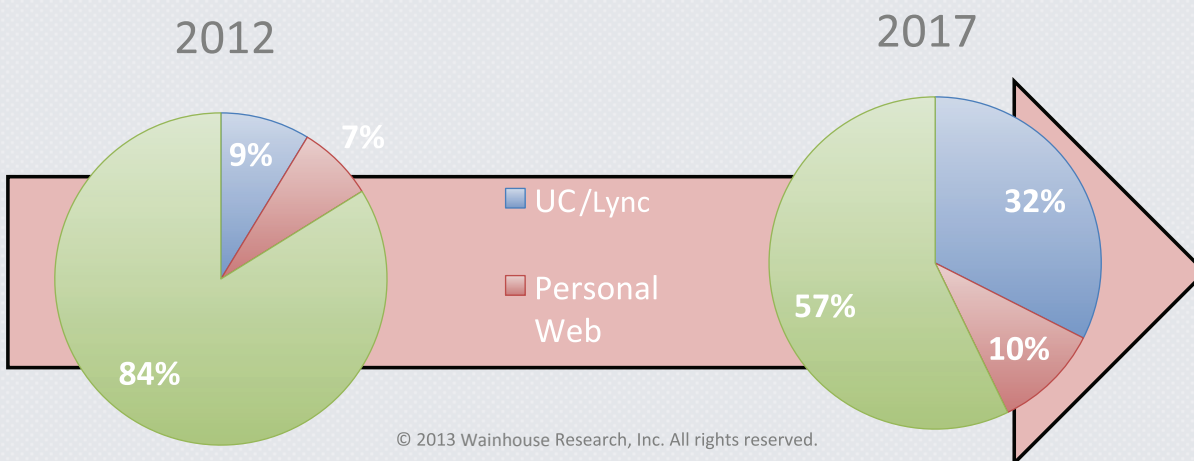
GlobalMeet Audio for Skype for Business® is PGi's proprietary audio conferencing solution for Skype for Business® Online users, integrating the same dependable and high-quality GlobalMeet Audio experience directly with your Skype for Business® deployment. PGi has invested and developed a network infrastructure to support the needs of your Skype for Business® Online deployment. GlobalMeet Audio for Skype for Business® offers a number of versatile solutions for effortless business collaboration, including:

- Audio conferencing dial-in numbers,
- Dial-out to any number of your choosing, and
- Direct Outlook integration for end-to-end, high-quality audio, video and web meetings.



GROWING MARKET FOR LYNC AUDIO

INDUSTRY TRENDS FOR UC: TOTAL AUDIO MINUTES



- From 2012 to 2017, the percentage of Audio minutes that are consumed using Unified Communications (primarily Skype for Business®) are forecasted to increase from 9% to 32%.

Alongside traditional IM, presence, screen sharing and video streaming capabilities, organizations gain access to premium quality audio conferencing that can expand Skype for Business® meetings to external users, as well as avoiding taxing network bandwidth with heavy VoIP usage.

Additional features of GlobalMeet Audio for Skype for Business® include:

- Full audio conference controls, including mute, unmute, volume control, meeting lock and eject;
- Support for meetings with up to 300 audio participants at once; and
- Access to over 100 local and international toll-free access points.

End-to-End Support

Deploying mission-critical technologies like UC with audio integration creates new support concerns for your organization and IT department.

PGi seeks to provide industry-leading, end-to-end support as part of the services and products we provide. Complementing Microsoft's Skype for Business® support for IT administrators, PGi provides end user audio support 24x7x365. And in an increasingly global economy, PGi offers in-region, in-language help to support global employees, clients and vendors.

As part of a GlobalMeet Audio for Skype for Business® deployment, companies have access to PGi's Implementation Services Team (IST) that will work with your company to provision the new audio conferencing numbers and accounts in your Skype for Business® Online environment. PGi's IST also can provide your employees with Skype for Business® training and documentation, so they can immediately start collaborating with Skype for Business® Online enhanced by PGi's GlobalMeet Audio for Skype for Business®. In addition, while on a GlobalMeet Audio for Skype for Business® call, any PSTN participant can press **"*0"** to be instantly connected with a support specialist to address any issues.



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PGi: A Global Leader in Collaboration

For over 20 years, PGi has been a pioneer in collaboration, providing innovative collaboration solutions to businesses all over the world for the shaping and advancement of ideas. In addition to PGi's audio conferencing integration with Skype for Business®, we also offer cloud-based web and audio conferencing tools, operator-assisted audio events and webcasting.

For over 10 years, PGi has enjoyed a close strategic relationship with Microsoft. We are currently one of only three Microsoft Audio Conferencing Providers (ACPs) in the world and we were the first ACP to market with Skype for Business® Hybrid Audio integration. PGi is the largest pure-play collaboration provider in the world, laser-focused on providing businesses the mission-critical tools required to communicate and collaborate in today's business climate, including enhancing your existing Skype for Business® Online deployment with our industry-leading audio network.

PGi Fast Facts

PGi has a global presence in 25 countries, and its award-winning solutions provide a collaborative advantage to over 45,000 enterprise customers, including 75% of the Fortune 100™. In the last five years, PGi has hosted more than 1.1 billion people from 137 countries in over 250 million virtual meetings.

Modality Systems, A PGi Company

World's largest consulting firm dedicated to Microsoft, Office 365 and Skype software application and integration services.

As the largest global dedicated Skype for Business practice and a Microsoft Launch Partner for new meetings and voice services in Office 365, Modality Systems is ideally placed to support customers with optimizing the technology and making the move to the cloud at a time and pace that is right for their organization.

For more information, contact Don Felman at don.felman@pgi.com

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