



Solution Brief

The Innovative Communications Alliance

The Innovative Communications Alliance (ICA) between Nortel and Microsoft accelerates the business-driven transformation of today's email, voice, video and instant messaging communication silos into unified communications (UC) solutions that are rich, intuitive and accessible from any device, that are contextually integrated into business processes and that can be efficiently and securely deployed into existing customer environments.

There are a number of factors that have contributed to the rapid adoption and usage of unified communications solutions available through the Innovative Communications Alliance, these include:

- A phased, modular approach, which allows UC capabilities to be deployed based on business need
- A focus on leveraging existing assets, thus providing investment protection and reducing barriers to deployment

- Deep technical and business expertise offered through a comprehensive services practice

While the move to UC entails transition, the ICA portfolio is designed to minimize these risks and to drive improved business performance.

The UC Journey

Often most companies begin their UC migrations with some or all of their IT and communications assets in



what could be considered a Segmented environment. They then implement UC capabilities in stages, progressing to an Integrated environment and then to a Transformed environment.

- Segmented environments are characterized by fragmented, stand-alone applications and infrastructure, thus underutilizing the business intelligence available to the organization and requiring that employees use multiple communications modes to gather and share the information they need.
- Integrated environments bridge the gaps found in the segmented phase, providing productive collaboration capabilities for users, as well as a foundation on which to expose business intelligence, end-user context and communications abilities.
- Transformed environments accelerate business performance by providing people with the ability to access and share more intelligence about the business and to use that intelligence in ways that naturally support existing business processes, thus driving direct business results. This intelligence incorporates information from the network itself in order to further improve those business processes and ensure that rich, contextual communications are woven into the fabric of the business.

Offering Solutions Today

The Innovative Communications Alliance has already provided a wide array of capabilities to enterprise customers, who are reaping the benefits of strategic partnership to bridge today's communication and collaboration silos. The portfolio of solutions available today helps companies move to the Integrated

phase by integrating their IT capabilities with their telephony infrastructures. These efforts encompass voice, conferencing and integrated data networking capabilities, all offered across a variety of Nortel and Microsoft® platforms to meet customer needs and collectively provide the investment protection customers require. Key attributes of the portfolio today include:

- Providing a single, integrated user experience within familiar Microsoft Windows and Office software applications, accelerating end-user adoption of UC. Seamless integration between familiar PC applications and the familiar desk telephone also eases the transition from traditional telephony to UC.
- Leveraging existing network investments and a single, complementary architecture. This means a lower Total Cost of Ownership (TCO), as there are fewer components to procure, deploy, operate, maintain and support.
- The flexibility to be implemented with the most appropriate deployment model for any enterprise — on the customer premise, in branch offices, totally off customer premises (hosted) or in a hybrid fashion.
- World-class reliability and scalability, making it possible to enjoy reliable performance as you evolve your unified communications solution over time.

Delivering Transformation

A critical piece of the migration to an Integrated phase, and to a Transformed state, is the expertise offered by Nortel Unified Communications Services, which offers a full unified

communications lifecycle of services to advise, integrate, support and manage multi-vendor, multi-technology networks. As customers move toward offering Transformed UC capabilities, this expertise becomes particularly relevant because it drives both the dialog with customers and the resulting execution plan.

The Transformed state harnesses the power of software and services to provide:

- Investment protection for existing PBX and handset equipment
- Enhanced context to support business processes
- Targeted Web services that adapt to any environment
- Improved utilization of network intelligence to optimize business applications

This state utilizes Microsoft Office Communications Server (OCS) 2007 to provide voice services, anchored by value-added software and services from Nortel. The focus on software provides maximum flexibility for customers in terms of being able to respond to new business needs, optimizing for specific scenarios and utilizing existing investments. It also underscores the importance of having a trusted partner to provide the services that can transform an enterprise UC vision and strategy into a real-time communications-enabled network.

Moving to the Transformed state is a highly strategic step for customers and likely entails navigating through a variety of transitions as the plan is implemented. As a first step Nortel and Microsoft are working closely together to offer pilots using Microsoft OCS 2007. The Nortel team works with customers to define the business and technical objectives for the pilot



and follows through to assess results. At the end of the pilot, we map out a company-specific plan that guides your organization through the recommended next steps in the UC transformation. Software-powered voice offers a particularly compelling value for mobile workers, who gain immediate benefits from Microsoft OCS because they can seamlessly contact colleagues or customers, even when out of the office and, in turn, those mobile workers become more accessible to provide information to others. The result is the ability to accelerate business results, which is the real value of UC. To facilitate customer pilots, software and services from Nortel and Microsoft are available to connect Microsoft OCS 2007 through

various voice gateways, as well as offering innovative UC configurations to simplify implementation. The two companies will continue to collaborate to offer additional software capabilities on the Microsoft OCS platform, while providing a robust set of services to suit any enterprise environment, including:

Advisory Services: Specialized consulting, assessment, planning and operation readiness for integration of advanced unified communications.

Integration Services: Resources, expertise, tools and processes for efficient and effective integration of UC technologies.

Support Services: Maintenance that enables maximum value of UC technology investments.

Managed Services: Centralized multi-vendor, multi-technology infrastructure management.

Under the Innovative Communications Alliance, Nortel and Microsoft have defined a multi-year roadmap based on the migration plan introduced above. The companies hold joint customer events, have established over 100 demonstration centers around the world and created jointly-staffed Collaboration Centers. Customers around the world are embracing the benefits of the Innovative Communications Alliance and the tightly integrated solutions from Nortel and Microsoft.

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BUSINESS MADE SIMPLE

In the United States:
Nortel
35 Davis Drive
Research Triangle Park, NC 27709 USA

In Canada:
Nortel
195 The West Mall
Toronto, Ontario M9C 5K1 Canada

In Caribbean and Latin America:
Nortel
1500 Concorde Terrace
Sunrise, FL 33323 USA

In Europe:
Nortel
Maidenhead Office Park, Westacott Way
Maidenhead Berkshire SL6 3QH UK
Phone: 00 800 8008 9009

In Asia:
Nortel
United Square, 101 Thomson Road
Singapore 307591
Phone: (65) 6287 2877