

AS APPEARED IN THE
SEPTEMBER 2007 ISSUE OF:



UC: Slow & steady wins the race

UC for InterCall simply means the integration of tools we use everyday, for example, the integration of phone, email and instant messaging. The integration of these key tools will transform the worker, ensuring greater productivity and results for businesses.



Robert Wise

InterCall has a two prong UC strategy in place. The first involves unifying meetings, and today, the company which is one of the world's largest conferencing providers, has integrated its conferencing meeting tools to achieve this. Meeting participants using InterCall conference solutions can therefore share applications and schedule meetings through their mobile phones for example. Robert Wise, vice president, marketing and strategic business development, InterCall USA, says that the company has been in this space for 2 years, and is strong here. "This is why we will approach UC from the conferencing and collaboration side.

It is our forte and competitive advantage," he explains.

He adds that at this stage of UC, a market trend InterCall has noticed and watched closely is the fact that businesses are doing most of their UC in unified meetings. "Unifying web, voice and video is thus a priority," he says.

The second part of the company's UC strategy involves the building of products to integrate to full UC. Wise says that the company will manage and host other companies' solutions and will also integrate their own solutions here. A lot of R&D is currently being done to achieve this soon.

Wise observes that UC has its fair share of challenges – a key one being that the cost of building the network for UC is more costly than first anticipated.

He also notes that the video conferencing gap is closing in the Asia Pacific, which is playing catch-up to for example to the US. There is a demand here for example, in web conferencing and this together with video conferencing will drive UC's adoption.



Another reason why UC will grow in the region, he says is because of the sheer number of multi-national companies located here. As users of UC, they will introduce it and spur it further on.

SMBs he adds, will also want in on the UC space but for them, it will most likely not be on-premise.

They will instead look for providers who host in the UC space, and this is an area InterCall will also look at.

Wise notes that UC is still in its beginning stages but its potential is huge. "UC still has some way to go. Most people and companies are still in the 'baby steps' phase here and still have a bit of work to do before they reach their vision of UC, but when they do, it's going to be an amazing ride and experience." ♦

By Shanti Anne Morais