



IBM Converged Communications Services – network convergence

Highlights

- ***Helps align converged-network initiatives with overall business strategy***
- ***Determines network feasibility and performance capabilities to improve success of converged communications***
- ***Helps support successful converged network projects through design, deployment and management***
- ***Identifies potential cost control and containment benefits by analyzing return on investment***

Building the networks needed to compete in today's marketplace

Enterprises that are exploring the many benefits of converged networks—networks that combine voice, data and video onto a single Internet Protocol (IP) network—face a daunting assortment of strategic, technical and operational decisions. These decisions can have a long-term impact on the business as a whole and can determine whether or not converged communications initiatives such as IP telephony and unified messaging will be successful and provide a suitable return on investment (ROI).

Converged communications can potentially reduce enterprises' operating expenses by lowering both network infrastructure and management costs; create operational efficiencies that

improve employee productivity and streamline business processes; and enhance competitive advantage through differentiated customer service. Yet without the proper tools, expertise and experience required for building converged networks, these potential benefits may not be realized.

IBM Converged Communications Services – network convergence uses proven methods to assess, design, deploy and manage networks that are ready to support voice, video and data communications. It includes ROI analysis services for future converged communications solutions, network-readiness assessments for converged communications, and deployment and management services.

Matching a converged network to the business need

Bringing together separate voice and data networks (and adding video capabilities) is no small task, and it's usually driven by some combination of the need to reduce costs, improve productivity and enhance the customer experience. Converged communications can help your business better manage its growth; provide employees with information and communication tools to improve collaboration; and allow the creation of applications and business processes that create new differentiating advantages, enhance productivity and improve customer service.

IBM's network consultants can help you determine your business requirements and provide vendor-neutral planning and strategy engagements that will match the right convergence solution with your needs. We can evaluate your existing infrastructure, assess business processes and policies, and make recommendations about network design, security, performance, usability and other requirements.

Once a strategy is in place, IBM Converged Communications Services – network convergence can execute it with a broad range of deployment services, from procurement to testing to migration. Ongoing management services can help improve network resiliency and potentially lower operating costs. Our extensive experience in designing and deploying converged communications networks and solutions—including those on a global scale—allows us to recognize the challenges and opportunities inherent in consolidating to a single IP network.

Assessing the network to determine convergence readiness

Converging voice and data from two separate networks into a single network can present technical challenges as well as strategic issues to consider. It is not a simple matter of just adding IP-PBXs (IP-based Private Branch Exchanges) and bandwidth to an existing data network. There are performance, security, reliability, accessibility and cost considerations that must be factored in before making investments. The network convergence assessment service from IBM looks at your current network infrastructure, processes and

policies and helps you determine what changes are required to enable converged communications. Using expertise gained from large-scale deployments of converged networks, plus tools and methodologies used to analyze and test network preparedness, IBM can help you avoid potential pitfalls and lower the risk of disruption to your operations.

With a well-planned converged network, a converged communications environment that supports greater operational efficiency becomes possible. Employees can be more productive through the use of enhanced collaboration tools that enable them to interact with customers and each other. They can also enjoy greater mobility and self-sufficiency by having the ability to manage and administer their own unified messaging environment that moves with them from desktop to mobile phone.

A converged network also makes it easier both to deploy new applications and to more tightly integrate existing applications. Converged communications solutions can give customers, suppliers and partners greater access to the information they need to help them

serve themselves. Converged communications solutions also offer you the opportunity to transform your business processes and to seek new opportunities to improve customer service by integrating applications across multiple communication channels.

Creating a successful convergence to meet goals

Using IBM Global Services' proven methods, intellectual capital and significant experience in designing and deploying converged communications networks and solutions, IBM can help you design and deploy a converged voice and data network that can help meet your immediate and long-term business objectives and provide an ideal platform for future converged-communications initiatives.

Finding the value in converged network investments

The decision to deploy a converged network should be driven by business strategy; but make no mistake, cost is a factor. Whether you need to replace an aging PBX system, take advantage of IP telephony capabilities or simply reduce the management headaches of maintaining two or three networks, you have to make sure your efforts will provide a positive return on investment (ROI).

IBM's converged communications ROI analysis service offers a detailed picture of your existing networking environment and provides data to help you justify investments in new network infrastructures and solutions. Cost reductions and increased ROI can be achieved by eliminating the separate infrastructure for voice—its hardware infrastructure and the skill sets required to manage it are costly—in favor of an all-IP network. And an open-standards-based converged network can simplify management and support by using Web-based administration tools to facilitate the maintenance tasks associated with adding, moving and changing users and devices on the network.

Because IBM has established relationships with leading networking, hardware and software vendors (in addition to our own services and solutions), we take a vendor-neutral approach to determining the best strategy to meet your business objectives. We can help reduce the risk associated with migration or evolution to a new converged environment and help you determine what incremental and long-term investments are needed to help maximize ROI. With detailed planning, analysis and documentation, you can better understand the investments necessary to meet your objectives.

Leveraging IBM's network, application and business process experience

IBM has deep expertise in designing and deploying converged networks. Our global reach and ability to provide end-to-end infrastructure and software solutions can offer you peace of mind that critical investments in a converged network will meet your expectations and provide a positive return on investment. Our strategic relationships and alliances with major software vendors, network equipment vendors and service providers offer you greater choice and flexibility as you build a converged network for your immediate needs as well as the future of your business.

When properly planned and designed, converged IP networks can open the door to significant cost reductions, enhanced productivity and improvements in customer service—business benefits that can help you reinvent your business and differentiate yourself in your marketplace. IBM's leadership in convergence, plus significant resources for designing, deploying and managing converged networks, can help you take advantage of new business opportunities.

For more information

To learn more about IBM Converged Communications Services – network convergence, contact your IBM representative or visit:

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