

# What is Unified Communications as a Service (UCaaS)?

Unified Communications as a Service (UCaaS) and Unified Communications and Collaboration as a Service (UCCaaS) are the key to affordable, manageable communications and collaboration technology in your organization.

📅 March 26, 2018 ✍️ James Brendle 💬 Leave a Comment

In 1998, WebEx was the first SaaS, subscription-based system that I came across. It was web-conferencing and had integrated audio. It quickly became a great system and is still widely used today, although web-conferencing no longer has the excitement that it once had for web meetings and webinars are now part of everyday life. However, since 2014, app developers and integrators can provide UCaaS. And now we have UCCaaS. Problem is, no one can specifically define UCaaS or UCCaaS and its components. Collaboration has become muddled and some UCaaS vendors are touting their "collaboration solution", when it may only contain the basics of audio, messaging and/or video.

In its simplest but broadest sense, UC (unified communications) can encompass all forms of communications that are exchanged via a network. UC is an evolving set of technologies that automates and unifies human and device communications in a common context and experience. UCCaaS is unified communications with collaboration capabilities added in.

There are many ways to collaborate; however, in today's world, collaboration tools should be all inclusive for any size business. Sure, video conferencing, white-boarding and/or messaging added to your telephone call is pretty cool, but is it enough in today's world?

With UCCaaS set to continue to grow, many vendors are trying to jump on the "collaboration" bandwagon; yet serious providers of collaboration solutions will not be claim-jumpers, but instead will offer a complete product with features comparable to these:

- Management of files and documents in folders, binders or conversations that can be securely shared with the collaboration group or team, whether inside or outside of the organization
- An ability to compress files, open files, view files, annotate on files and manage files (including e-mail and voicemail) related to conversations, projects, customers, vendors, departments, etc.
- Private and group threaded chat and messaging
- Notifications for conversation or folder updates, project add/change/deletes, meetings & to-dos
- Record/Edit/Playback/Storing of MP4 recordings and clips embedded on top of documents
- Task tracking by member or team and management of projects/conversations/folders/etc.
- Web meetings with integrated audio, video, screen sharing & remote desktop control
- Mobile & Desktop (all platforms and operating systems) – Emphasis on Mobile and wireless
- Military-grade security, end-to-end
- eSignature
- Reporting, analytics & easy management
- Full or Limited Suite
- Integrated audio, VoIP and whiteboarding
- Integrated to cloud storage and other storage systems
- Free and unlimited storage
- Bots and AI
- API & SDK integrations-for communicating with in-house or 3<sup>rd</sup> party apps, CRM, accounting, etc.
- Private-labeling & branding
- And yes, hosted via cloud or in-house

## UCaaS

*Unified Communications (UCaaS) / Collaboration (UCCaaS) / as a Service – A system of sending or routing information between persons + (collaboration, in this context) the act of working together with other people or organizations to create or achieve something + As a Service – offered thru an Internet connection for a subscription fee.*

### Why would I need these features?

Examples:

1. Made-for-Mobile design approach and available on every platform. New generations expect it.
2. Companies that have two or more remote workers or team(s) and/or 3<sup>rd</sup> parties that might need to work together on a project or conversation in real time.
3. Any business or government that wants to keep all related information together, accessible and auditable from one place, even if multiple applications are being used. E-mail, chat, messaging and voice messages are good examples, but other documents, files and app integrations should be considered as well.

Also, the projects, conversations or folders could be related to:

- **Sales project** (collecting info, strategizing, preparing quotes, proposals, closing, CRM, coordination)
- **Closing document** (real estate, property management, loan package, contracts, e-signatures)
- **Business project** (planning, purchasing, developing, branding, meetings, stockholders, HR, assets)
- **AR or AP lists and details** (customer, vendor, account, audits, collections, development, resources)
- **Professional or specialist on-call** (doctor, lawyer, CPA, manager, architect, engineer, teacher)
- **Advertising** (planning, branding, events, results, ads, strategizing, budgets, messages)
- **Tax/Accounting** (customers, GL, stockholders, managers, audits, tax & financial planning, budgeting)
- **Legal** (history, communications, statutes, director meetings, minutes, contracts, advice, e-signatures)
- **Training** (K-12, CPE, training management, remote worker, new employee, software, procedures)
- **Field service** (communication, tracking, preparation, documents, e-signatures, experts, pics, schematics)
- **Customer or vendor tracking** (doc management, competitive options, data base, history, meetings)
- **Transportation and logistics** (tracking, bill of lading, delivery, e-signatures, history, vehicles)
- **Human resource (HR)** (onboarding, offboarding, policies, documents, payroll, reviews, emp. manual)

What good is a collaboration solution to a salesperson that can't get his order signed when the prospect is ready? How can you collaborate with a specialist or team member when he/she is always out of the office? A complete collaboration solution can help to solve many business problems, accommodate remote workers and dispersed companies and keep business conversations and projects from stalling. With a good product, companies can replace a portfolio of overlapping services, reduce the number of vendors, simplify processes and save money.

Resellers can create more opportunity by leveraging their understanding of clients' businesses, rather than focusing on just delivering what is easy or generates a quick profit. Provide a solution that focuses on a client's full needs, rather than only on technology and service delivery. Get paid residually for your efforts, and with the right solution, you too can possibly be rewarded for decades.



James Brendle, [President of Innovative Network Computer Solutions](#), Member of the ASCII Group since 2005. Considered an expert and pioneer in the collaboration industry by many, his

first collaboration venture began in 1999 as WebEx's first Partner east of the Mississippi. This company was started, managed and operated solely by him as a part-time venture, also acquired in 2010. He and his Partner grew the business to over 50-employees providing IT solutions for professional firms, construction companies and other businesses for over 32-years, until it was acquired in 2010.