

Q&A

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Open Communications, Business Continuity and the Digital Work Experience

How can open communications deliver on the vision for seamless digital work experiences now and in the next 12 months?



Digital communication is the foundation of all work today. As such, the platform used for the organization's digital communication must enable work experiences that are efficient and that boost workforce productivity in as many ways as possible. The vision for seamless digital work experiences is realized through having the technology that can support frictionless transitions from chat and messaging to voice, video and email—from any location, using any device—while sharing information among workforce members and with customers, partners and suppliers.

Can a digital communications platform deliver short-term cost savings that translate into long-term operational efficiencies for work across processes?



Using an open digital communication platform that is common to the entire enterprise provides a foundation for organizations to unify and simplify technology efforts for work and the workforce. Immediate savings come from the reduced costs and resource requirements to manage disparate tools, and operational efficiency is improved over the long run since the communication platform allows for simplified business processes across the organization. For instance, communications that can be embedded or integrated directly into applications like marketing, sales or customer service allow workers direct access which means they need to touch fewer systems overall and need to switch tool contexts less frequently. The result is achieving a target ROI with a lower TCO and improved organizational resilience.

What benefit does an extensible open communications platform provide for work-from-home policies and programs, especially for business continuity?



Maintaining business continuity when the workforce is functioning virtually requires the organization to be as responsive as possible. During times when work-from-home (WFH) is a necessity, it's even more important that the communication tools in use are effective, have the right capabilities to support workforce productivity, can be easily managed by the organization and

appropriately implement cyber security policies. Efficiency and security are key, since business continuity comes down to individuals within the organization being able to conduct work, complete their tasks and maintain operations from any location. A unified and open communication platform is a core technology that must be in place to enable this level of organizational agility.

What business resilience and organizational readiness does an open communications platform approach provide?



Everyone in the workforce should have the ability to complete tasks and activities using digital communications in a sustainable manner, in spite of any type of disruptive event or condition; this is the essence of business resilience, to operate in a continuous manner with little-to-no impact on the workforce or relationships with customers, partners and suppliers. And organizational readiness hinges on empowering the organization's workers to use digital communications to collaborate at any time, for any reason (while also extending these communication capabilities outward to customers, partners and suppliers). Utilizing an open communications platform allows for the agility and responsiveness that supports business continuity.

What are the skills and resources required for the deployment of an open digital communications platform?



Deploying an open digital communications platform first requires that the organization's leadership recognize this technology as a business tool that is required to empower the workforce and support the objectives of the organization. Then, in order to fully harness the open nature of the platform, the organization must be equipped with the technical skills (including those spanning from architects to developers) that allow for the platform to be integrated with key business applications and tools. It is important to utilize resources that understand and that can address the business and technology needs of the departments within the organization—while also applying best practices and ideally establishing or supporting a digital communications center of excellence.



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Mark Smith, is the CEO and chief research officer of Ventana Research and drives the company's global research agenda. Mark is an expert in enterprise software and business technology innovations including the business areas of customer experience, sales and marketing. Mark covers the digital technology innovation areas of artificial intelligence, business analytics, big data, bots and natural language processing, collaboration, Internet of Things, mobile technology and wearable computing.