Whitepaper

The Top 5 Benefits of Transitioning to Cloud Hosted Microsoft Lync Voice Environment

Avtex
3500 American Blvd W
Suite 300
Bloomington, MN 55431

Phone: 952.646.0800
Email: sales@avtex.com
www.avtex.com

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Organizations of all shapes, sizes and industries rely heavily upon instant and constant communication between employees at their chosen device, in or outside the office, any time of the day. To facilitate this communication, many organizations turn to next generation cloud communications services, such as Microsoft Lync.

Lync's powerful functionality offers a wide variety of communication avenues to connect enterprise customers around the world. Everything from instant messaging, voice calls and conferencing. Lync enables real-time collaboration and increases productivity.

From instant messaging to voice calls, Lync enables real-time collaboration and increases productivity.

Transitioning On Premise Lync to a Hosted Voice Environment

Traditionally, organizations utilize Lync in on premise environments, or those involving the physical presence of the backend infrastructure on company assets.

Recent improvements in the reliability and affordability of cloud hosted voice solutions have offered organizations another option: partnering with a hosted voice provider to utilize Lync virtually, without the need to physically maintain the solution within the organization.

Organizations that make the transition to a Hosted Lync Voice environment will enjoy a number of benefits, including:

- A reduction of capital expenditure
- Fast and easy implementation
- Agility and scalability
- Reduced maintenance responsibilities
- Enhanced integration with Microsoft Office 365 and CRM

Reduced Capital Expenditure

One of the most important considerations when choosing any enterprise solution is cost. With so much of the decision making process tied to ROI and upfront expenses, choosing a solution that is affordable and effective is imperative. Considering all of the costs associated with the solution is also vital.

Hosted Lync Voice services offer many cost-saving benefits over on premise solutions. Savings can be found in a number of areas, including:

Network and hardware updates:

Running a powerful communications solution on your own equipment can be taxing. If hardware or network capabilities are not up to the task of running the solution, expensive upgrades may be needed. While it may be necessary to make small tweaks to your network to run Hosted Lync Voice, you will not have to invest heavily in a complete overhaul of the system or replacement of key equipment.

Pre-purchase exploration:

Many on premise solutions require a costly proof of concept exercise before a purchase decision can be made. Rather than requiring this expensive step, Hosted Lync Voice services offer trial periods, allowing your organization to explore the solution at its own pace, often without cost.

SPLA (Service Provider Licensing Agreement):

This licensing model chosen specifically to provide a cost-effective method of providing services to Enterprise customers while allowing them to still remain on a monthly plan.

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Ease of Transition and Implementation

The task of installing and implementing on premise solutions is complex and time consuming. From start to finish, the execution period of on premise enterprise communication software can take months. Deployment of on premise solutions may require the guidance of expert teams or consultants, which leads to additional costs and delays.

The roll-out process of a managed and hosted solution will be well-known and understood by your chosen partner. In return, a deployment of Hosted Lync Voice can be accomplished in as little as a few days.

Agility and Scalability

As your organization grows, so does the need for your communication solution. On premise solutions present scalability challenges; in many cases, it is necessary to upgrade, lease or purchase additional hardware or network bandwidth to facilitate the increase of users.

Organizations with remote offices or employees face additional challenges when utilizing an on premise communication solution. Using these solutions remotely often requires VPN access or other secure connections, which drain bandwidth and negatively impact the user's experience.

Hosted communications solutions provide answers to these challenges. Since changes can be made by the hosted provider, increasing users or remote accessibility to a cloud-based solution is far easier than doing the same in an on premise environment. In fact, doing so may be as simple as contacting the hosted provider and requesting additional resources, i.e. user licenses, bandwidth, etc.

In short, hosted solutions are far more agile and scalable, making the hosted environment ideal for organizations undergoing growth or predicting future expansion.
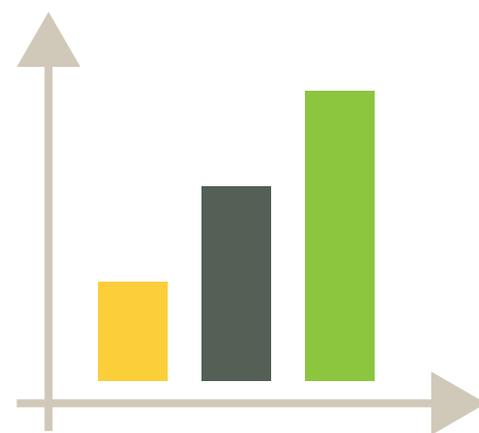
Reduced Maintenance Responsibilities

When running an enterprise solution on premise, the responsibility of conducting routine maintenance and updates likely falls on the shoulders of your IT department. This means that whenever an issue arises, or an update is released, a highly trained, and likely highly paid, IT staffer must address the issue manually. This can lead to overtime pay, unplanned downtime and unnecessary frustration throughout the organization, especially if this is supported by a minimal number of resources.

In a Hosted Lync Voice environment, maintenance and updates are handled by a pool of trained resources with the service provider. This means that the hosted provider is responsible for maintaining the solution's uptime, performing updates, addressing bugs, ensuring that the solution is functioning at optimal levels and retaining their staff's high-level of expertise. This allows your staff to focus on more critical business initiatives whenever an issue arises.

In many cases, hosted providers maintain disaster recovery sites and conduct comprehensive active monitoring of cloud based software to ensure that the platform is secure, stable and resilient.
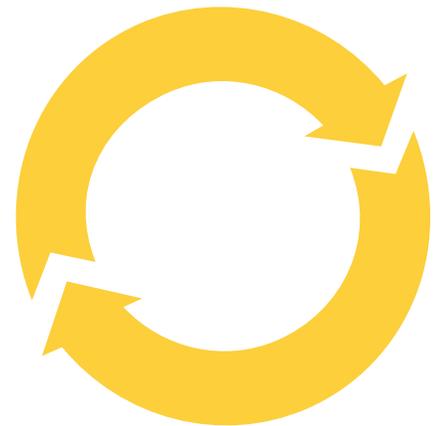
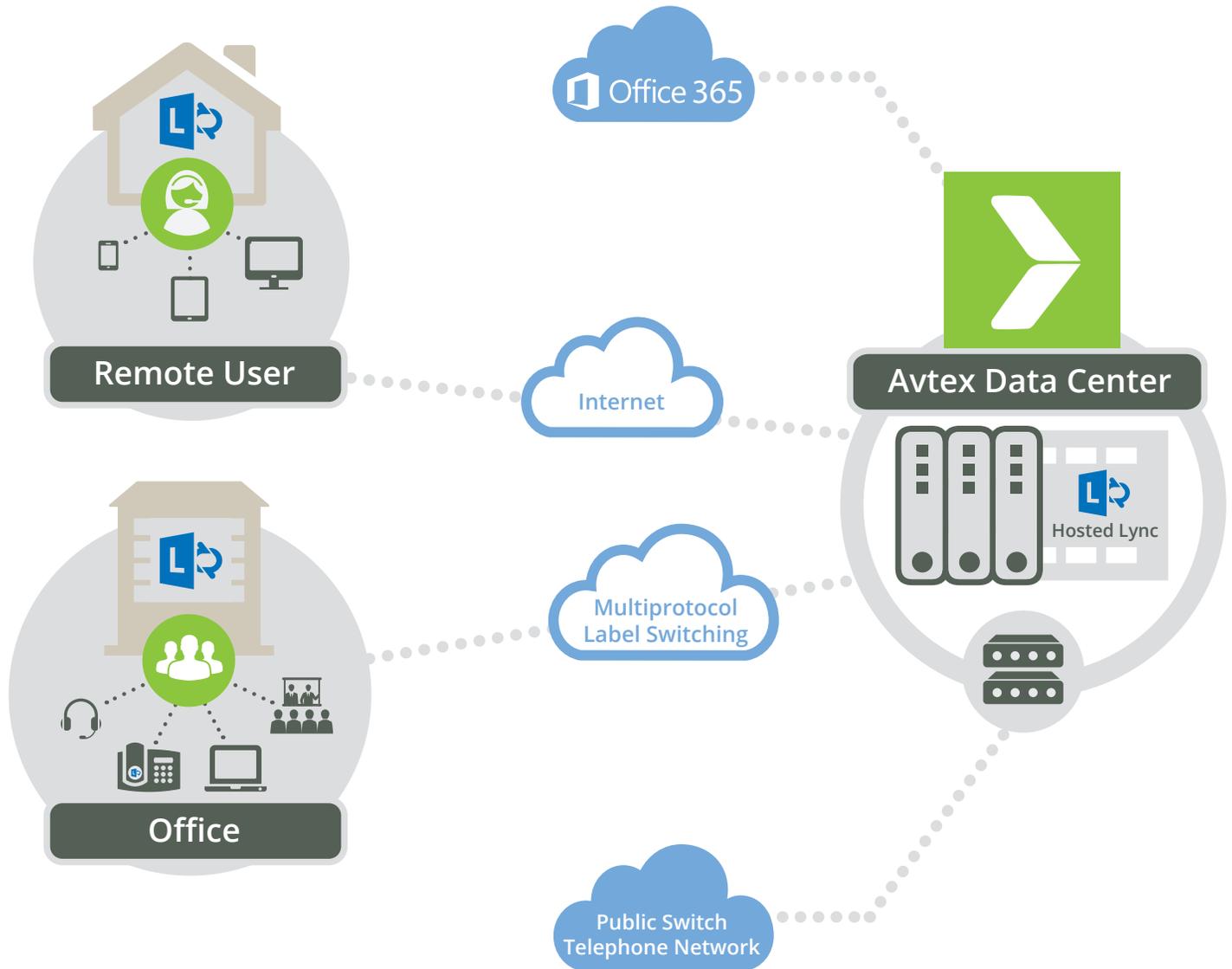# Enhanced Integration with Microsoft Office 365 and CRM

For a business communications solution to truly be efficient, the solution must integrate well with other systems and applications within your enterprise. After all, even the most powerful communications solution is worthless if it is too difficult or inconvenient for employees to bother using.

Microsoft Lync Voice is fully integrated with the Microsoft Office 365 suite and Microsoft Dynamics CRM, making it simple to utilize within the course of daily activity. Lync can be accessed easily through Outlook to schedule conference calls with the same process used to create meetings, show presence in Dynamics CRM and SharePoint for fast collaboration on opportunities and document editing.

Optimizing the integration between Lync and routinely used Office programs will improve each employee's productivity and accessibility.

How Hosted Lync Works

Remote User

Office 365

Internet

Avtex Data Center

Hosted Lync

Office

Multiprotocol Label Switching

Public Switch Telephone Network

Conclusion and Suggestions

Migrating to a Hosted Lync Voice environment offers many added features and benefits, including voice enablement in a cloud environment, enhanced employee collaboration and the ability to quickly respond to expansion, focus your critical IT resources on business critical projects and the changing needs of your organization. By making the transition to a hosted environment, your organization can save a great deal of money and frustration.

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