

# Building an Enterprise Communications Strategy

## BEYOND VOICE MAIL

When it comes to workplace communications in the early 21st century, it's the best of times and the worst of times. Today's employees have more ways than ever to stay in touch—from desk phones, mobile phones and PDAs to pagers, e-mail, instant messaging, fax and telephonic and Web conferencing. While all these technologies allow for greater access and mobility, the increased onslaught of communication requests and messages, and the expectation of an immediate response, can be overwhelming for users, IT personnel and enterprise infrastructures.

Today, it's not acceptable to always be unavailable or slow to respond to your messages. With today's real-time communications capabilities, a reply is expected almost immediately by customers, clients, partners and other employees. Not responding quickly can result in missing an important business opportunity or cultivating a perception that you're unresponsive.

The more avenues open to reach someone, the more places people will send a message. The caller, from personal experience, likely knows the intended recipient is dealing with a glut of voice, e-mail and fax messages. To ensure that the message gets immediate attention, the caller sends it wherever he or she can. For the message recipient, the increased need to have immediate access to and prioritize multiple messages illustrates why it's so important for companies to equip their employees with the best tools available to manage today's increased message flow. One of the best tools available today is unified messaging which, according to a study conducted by Kirkland, Wash.-based COMgroup, Inc., enables workers to manage their messages in less than half the time it took with traditional manual methods ("Unified

Messaging Time Saving Study," February 2004).

Few employees today have the ability to control how all their messages are handled. While they may set up call forwarding or e-mail forwarding, for instance, most don't have one tool to control all the data points. They have few options to alert them to important calls and messages when they're away from their phone or computer, and fewer options to filter out unimportant messages.

Across every occupation and industry, effectively dealing with the increasing communications barrage is a serious business issue today. The question you should seriously consider is whether your legacy communications infrastructure can handle the increased demands of how businesses need to communicate today.

### TRANSITION ON THE HORIZON

Why has communication become so overwhelming? One reason is because the workforce has become increasingly mobile. No longer does work equate to going to the office. Effectively, work has become an activity, not a location. A second reason is that each communications technology



UNIFYING COMMUNICATIONS

typically sits in its own silo—unable to integrate with the others. So instead of accessing one application or dialing one number to send and receive communications or access all voice and data messages, today's employees typically log into multiple systems, dial several numbers and access messages on more than one device.

Nowhere is this problem more evident than in companies where employees thrive on IP-based communications tools such as e-mail and instant messaging, yet must resort to legacy PBX and voice mail systems for the "first" communications medium—the telephone.

The convergence of all of these workforce and technology factors has driven enterprises to an important transition point in the evolution of their communications infrastructure. Indeed, the significance of this current shift was last experienced during the transition starting in the early 1980s from live operators to touch-tone auto attendant and message pools to voice mail. To meet the current communications requirements of their workforces, many corporations are now making the move to second-generation enterprise communications solutions (ECS) that include unified messaging, speech-enabled applications and unified communications capabilities as part of their feature set.

assistant applications deployed to maximize productivity and optimize worker and customer connectivity.

3. **Third-generation ECS:** Universally accessible unified communications, in which further intelligence is added to provide enhanced call-routing capabilities based on user presence, as well as real-time remote access to enterprise data (like CRM or ERP applications).

## DEFINING UC VS. UM

To understand the key components and value of adopting such second-generation technology for your business, it's crucial to first understand the difference between unified messaging and unified communications:

- **Unified messaging (UM)** allows users to access e-mail, voice mail and faxes by a common interface via a variety of means including PCs, telephones, wireless devices, PDAs and the Internet, among others. UM solutions support mobile workers who need to access their messages while on the go.
- **Unified communications (UC)** is a superset of UM. In addition to the message-management capabilities of UM, UC allows enterprises to maximize the connectivity of their workforce with their customers while enabling the individual worker to choose the best method for them to communicate and access corporate information at any given moment. Location and call control play a key role for the second-generation UC solution through two factors:
  1. Tools (such as those for filtering and routing) to manage and control communications.
  2. Multiple interfaces (speech, telephone and GUI) to optimize business processes that use human communications as part of their workflow.

UC is about connecting two parties—human or computer—that have a desire to communicate or access information in real time. For example with a second-generation UC solution, a mobile worker can use voice commands via the telephone to access enterprise groupware solutions for real-time contact and calendar access.

## THE SECOND-GENERATION SOLUTION FRAMEWORK

The key point to consider when evaluating second-generation solutions is that *the ideal second-generation solution will let your enterprise evolve at its own pace*. The solution should take a modular approach to adding UM and UC capabilities so that your company can deploy features as the needs of specific workforce segments and/or individual users dictate.

Certainly not all employees today will necessarily require hands-free, speech-enabled unified communications capabilities. Many will need only

## Unified Communications Case Study City of Oceanside, Calif.

**The business:** One of the most technologically innovative cities in the U.S., employing 13,000 workers across public safety, city government and public-sector offices.

**The problem:** The city's Octel voice mail system lacked important features and services the city needed and required expensive upkeep—\$15,000 to \$20,000 per year for outsourced maintenance and administration. The police department needed advanced call processing to handle a heavy load of calls received from citizens daily. Budget was limited, and headcount could not be increased.

**Unified communications solution:** An AVST CallXpress second-generation solution with Call Manager

**IT benefits:** \$30,000 per year savings in maintenance, repair and administration costs. Estimated IT time savings of six man hours per day.

**Business benefits:** Excellent, effective management of calls to police department. Faster and more efficient service from every city sector. Enhanced employee productivity.

"AVST offered the only system that maximized our investment in open standards, including the Windows platform, was scalable to support our growth moving forward, and included a tightly integrated and well-known fax solution. In terms of cost, no one could beat the AVST total package. By going with CallXpress, we spent half as much as we would have spent had we not gotten a Windows-based platform."—Michael Sherwood, IT Director, City of Oceanside, Calif.

What do these "generations" look like?

1. **First-generation ECS:** Voice mail and touch-tone auto attendant solutions deployed to reduce costs and increase efficiencies by eliminating live operator and message pools.
2. **Second-generation ECS:** Unified communications, unified messaging, speech-enabled auto-attendant and personal

unified messaging capabilities to handle the modern day “communications barrage” that we outlined earlier. Unified messaging gives employees real control over their daily communications tasks. It can help them to free up several hours per week for more productive tasks. Additionally, a world-class, modular, second-generation solution will enable an enterprise to provide traditional voice mail capabilities with legacy menuing options to workers to minimize retraining and facilitate the workforce transition from the obsolete first-generation system.

Standardizing on a single second-generation modular system will help the IT or telecom department as well— one networked system is easier to manage and maintain than several disparate systems. Employees

## Unified Communications Case Study Seattle Pacific University

**The business:** Private university of liberal arts, sciences and professional studies with 550 faculty and staff members and 3,800 students.

**The problem:** An existing communications system that was expensive, limited in scalability and difficult to manage.

**Unified communications solution:** An AVST CallXpress second-generation solution with OctelNet networking capability allows for phased replacement of Octel systems and Octel Aria telephone user interface for accessing messages.

**IT benefits:** Better scalability with little extra cost. Smooth transition. Simplified management. Low training costs. Easy upgrades.

**Business benefits:** Enhanced user productivity and ease of use.

*“We’ve certainly seen return on investment and received great value from the investment. ... CallXpress unified messaging works well. It aligns with features and functions of shared mailboxes, handles call processing, integrates seamlessly with Exchange and provides easy transition and management.” —Dave Tindall, Assistant Vice President, Technology Services, Seattle Pacific University*

at different locations will no longer have to use different voice mail systems (all with different features, administration tools and interfaces), and they won’t have to settle for the underwhelming products that many vendors tack onto their legacy switches today.

Moving to a second-generation enterprise communications solution also doesn’t necessarily mean replacing current phone systems or jumping headfirst into the new world of IP telephony. Instead, an enterprise can layer a single second-generation solution across all existing office locations and phone switches—IP and legacy. This can reduce the management burden, provide all users with a consistent set of productivity-enhancing services and present callers with a unified company image while allowing the enterprise to transition its legacy telephony switching environment at its own pace.

### CUSTOMERS FIRST

Giving its customers a single, consistent corporate “face” was one of the key reasons why global law firm Weil,

Gotshal & Manges switched from an Octel® voice mail system to CallXpress®, the second-generation enterprise communications solution from AVST.

“We have 18 offices all over the world,” said Randy Burkart, director of IS programs for Weil, Gotshal & Manges. “It’s very important that our callers have a similar experience whether they call our office in Boston or Shanghai. We also have a certain percentage of mobile users that move from office to office. It really helps a lot if the enterprise communications solution at the remote office works the same as the one at home.”

“Lawyers are essentially relationship managers,” Burkart continued. “They live by e-mail and phone calls. If our accounting system dies, they can live with it for a few days, but if we have e-mail or voice mail problems, our entire business grinds to a halt.”

When deploying a second-generation enterprise communications solution, an enterprise should be able to upgrade its existing phone switches, or migrate to IP telephony, with virtually no disruption to employees and the organization, and no need for retraining. Additionally, such a solution should provide a clear migration path to the next generation of enterprise communications solutions, which includes increasingly intelligent call routing based on location and user preference as well as integration with business applications to produce even more time savings and productivity.

In the third generation, presence awareness capabilities will move beyond such technologies as instant messaging to enhanced location and state awareness, so employees can see, on their PC screen, whether the person they need to contact is on the phone before placing the call. Presence applications and further integration of the enterprise communications with business applications will allow employees filling a special order, for example, to find and contact an available person with the authority to approve a transaction from within a CRM application quickly and easily, so customers don’t need to wait.

Let’s examine the components of a world-class second-generation enterprise communications solution and what such a solution can do for your business.

### SECOND-GENERATION FEATURES

If you think that uniting the information silos that represent your current communications solution will result in nothing more than e-mail inboxes full of voice mail messages, think again. Today’s world-class second-generation solutions truly let users take control of their communications through both unified messaging and unified communications capabilities. And the powerful benefit of these systems is that features may be deployed to users based on individual need—there does not have to be a “one-size-fits-all” answer.

The **unified messaging elements** of a second-generation enterprise communications solution include:

- **A single message inbox** containing all of a user’s e-mails, faxes and voice mails. Users of a second-

generation solution will save time formerly spent checking several different message stores and hunting down fax machines. On the business side, a company saves on phone expenses by reducing the time users require when dialing into the office phone system or mobile phone voice mail from distant locations. The personal productivity result is clear. The COMgroup Unified Messaging Time Saving Study found that a single unified inbox cut the time traveling users spent checking all of their messages in more than half—from 17 minutes to five minutes per session.

- **A PC-centric approach** that suits today's e-mail-rich work environment. Users can retrieve and check

trudging over to a fax machine, reduces task time from an average of 8 minutes 25 seconds to 1 minute 39 seconds, according to the COMgroup study.

- **One central directory and contacts list for all communications** including e-mail, voice mail and fax. No more need to input contact information in three or more different places. And no need to go back into three separate databases to update the contact data.
- **Internet and wireless access via a Web browser or mobile wireless devices.** This gives users even more flexibility, particularly when they are outside the office, and saves in communications costs.
- **Fax as a mobile printer.** Users can send e-mail and fax messages to a local fax machine for a quick printout while on the road.

**Unified communications** features include:

- **Speech-enabled phone access to all messages** using text-to-speech and voice-recognition technologies. Users can have their messages read to them automatically over the phone while in a car, taxi, train, or simply walking from one meeting to the next. They can reply via a voice message, which is automatically sent to the originator's inbox as a standard e-mail .wav file attachment, or they can initiate an automatic callback. Using the latest generation of speech-enabled UC applications, users can access their calendar and contacts via the telephone without the painstaking use of phone keys. Speech recognition enables the user to simply speak commands into the phone for safer, hands-free access to information.

"A reliable and comfortable speech-enabled interface really adds significant capability and elegance to messaging," said Burkart.

- **Automated, rules-based message handling.** Users can set up rules to automate the handling of all types of messages, including voice mail and fax. They can have their voice and fax messages moved to specific folders automatically, trigger specific types of message notification, or have messages automatically copied to other users.
- **Immediate message notification.** A user can ensure that he or she does not miss an important message by having all urgent voice, e-mail or fax messages forwarded to a mobile phone, pager or SMS-enabled device. Additionally, a user can choose to forward only certain types of messages, messages from certain senders, or only during specific times of the day or week. This notification flexibility assures that a user receives important messages right away while less urgent messages can be accessed at a later time.

"Our lawyers make extensive use of BlackBerry [devices]," explained Burkart, "which lets them retrieve e-mail regardless of their location. They

## Unified Communications Case Study Indiana Harbor Belt Railroad

**The business:** Largest railroad switch carrier in the U.S. Provides industrial switching for 160 customers, generating 170,000 carloads annually.

**The problem:** Mountains of faxed time sheets that then had to be inputted manually into the payroll system every day.

**Unified communications solution:** An AVST CallXpress second-generation solution with Automated Agent IVR. Employees dial into the IVR application and report payroll information directly into IHB mainframe system.

**IT benefits:** Easy installation, development and integration with mainframe systems. Low support costs.

**Business benefits:** No more faxes. Clerical input costs reduced by thousands annually. Real-time access to payroll information. Lower payroll expenses. Enhanced employee productivity.

"Increased productivity leads to time and cost savings. CallXpress can pay for itself just with those areas. ... The return on investment we receive is expected to easily pay for the system in less than a year."—Jim Wilson, Director of Systems Development, Indiana Harbor Belt Railroad

all their messages from the desktop, notebook or PDA and even sort messages for priority action by sender, date and subject. They can also save time retrieving data as all messages can be filed into folders for easy access down the road.

- **An easy-to-use, intuitive, graphical interface** to all communications features. This helps reduce training requirements and assists in assuring that users are fully aware of all the productivity-enhancing features at their disposal.
- **Offline message checking.** Users can access their e-mail and faxes as well as listen to voice mail while they are in a car, on a train, in an airport terminal or even at 30,000 feet.
- **Seamless flexibility in how employees respond to messages** and ensure responses reach intended recipients in the quickest way possible. For example, users can easily respond to a voice mail with an e-mail, a fax with an e-mail or voice mail, and so forth. They can originate faxes from their messaging inbox or click on a contact to dial the message originator automatically. Simply sending a fax from a unified messaging inbox, instead of

really hate to miss calls. Now they can get voice mail alerts on their BlackBerry screens as well, and use the built-in phone to dial right out.”

- **An automated agent** that can accept caller input for data gathering or provide custom information from corporate databases and other data stores using text-to-speech capabilities.

## Unified Communications Case Study Electrolux

**The business:** A leading producer of household appliances for indoor and outdoor use. Largest producer of floor care products, absorption refrigerators and compressors. Second-largest producer of food service, professional laundry and forestry and garden equipment.

**The problem:** Needed a second-generation unified messaging solution with advanced message notification for a highly mobile workforce. Chosen solution had to integrate with Lotus Notes and the IBM AS/400 platform.

**Unified communications solution:** AVST CallXpress Unified Messaging for Lotus Notes

**IT benefits:** Easy installation, seamless integration with Lotus Notes. Quick development of applications for specific business needs.

**Business benefits:** Fewer missed calls, office employees save a significant amount of time. Estimated communications cost savings of \$630,000 (mobile messaging and related costs).

“The thing I like about CallXpress is the great flexibility of the product. I am able to develop applications for specific business needs very quickly.”—*Jay Mistry, European Telecommunications Manager, Electrolux*

## Unified Communications Case Study Dubai Police Department

**The business:** Police department for the primary port of the United Arab Emirates, the trading hub for the entire Persian Gulf; 700 employees.

**The problem:** Communication overload from public calls, e-mails, faxes and Web site comments. Needed to support 24/7 communications with the public, provide remote employee access to messages and required fax confidentiality features. Business pressure to reduce growing communications costs.

**Unified communications solution:** An AVST CallXpress second-generation solution with RightFax™ enterprise fax and e-document delivery.

**IT benefits:** Easy installation and integration with existing systems. Low training costs. Project completed on time and within budget.

**Business benefits:** More efficient and effective communications with the public sector. Quick response to important messages. Seventy percent time savings in voice, fax and e-mail message retrieval. Enhanced productivity. Centralized, secure fax. Significant reduction in communications costs.

“Integration of all voice, e-mail and fax messages in one place is for us a natural evolution and was considered another component of the e-government initiative. Increased productivity, better community service and responsiveness are all benefits of the Dubai Police e-government initiative. Implementing CallXpress and RightFax on a Microsoft platform helped us achieve that.”—*Captain Khalid Nasser Al Razoqi, EOperations Department, Dubai Police*

## SECOND-GENERATION ECS BUSINESS BENEFITS

Each of the communications features noted above provides its own benefits, yet when combined, the impact to the end user and the organization is even more substantial. The overall benefits of a second-generation enterprise communications system include:

- **Enhanced productivity.** Companies that have switched to second-generation solutions find that employees become much more productive once they are able to take control of their communications and avoid constant interruptions. For example, a mobile worker who reduces the time to access all three message types from 17 minutes to 5 minutes can add an additional hour of productivity each day, assuming he or she checks messages five times per day.
- **Increased revenue and customer satisfaction.** With better control and more efficient access, users are less likely to miss important calls and messages—and most importantly, business opportunities. Customer relationships and company reputation are enhanced, as customers are satisfied with a company's quick response and excellent service.
- **Lower communications costs.** Companies save on communications costs as all messages are transmitted over the LAN or WAN or in a single dial-up call.
- **Fast ROI.** These benefits translate into a quick return on investment. The COMgroup study found that an average office, with 200 users and 20 remote and traveling employees, can achieve 100 percent ROI with a second-generation solution in as little as 52 days.
- **Less costly management and administration.** Second generation solutions bring efficiency and savings to IT administration when they integrate with legacy and IP phone switches and offer a single point of administration for all offices where such a solution is deployed. Administrators no longer have to learn the interfaces and train users on two or more different solutions and—as with many other IT management tools—they can manage the administration of the second-generation solution remotely over the Web.  
Further, administrators only need to manage a single user directory, rather than two, or more. The modularity of a world-class second-generation solution should also allow an organization to save money by providing each segment of the workforce with the exact features they need to achieve optimal productivity and customer service. For example, the 10 percent of the workforce that is highly mobile can get features such as speech-enabled access to messages, contacts and calendar while office-based users can receive a more basic set of features like voice mail or unified messaging.

Weil, Gotshal & Manges understands the importance of an easy-to-manage solution. "We have telephony professionals in our main office," he explained, "but the folks in the regional offices wear other hats, including IT manager and operational facilities manager. The ability to administer end users, delete users, change distribution lists and manage storage capacity at these offices easily on a day-to-day basis is really important."

- **Less disruption during switch upgrades.** Once a second-generation solution is in place, there

should be no need to replace the solution when a company changes its phone switches or migrates to an IP-based switching solution. The second-generation solution should simply integrate with the new IP switches. This means that users don't have to learn new interfaces and companies get to keep the same robust set of features and level of reliability they have become accustomed even as they move to an IP-based telephony environment.

## 10 Questions to Ask Before Investing in a Second-Generation Enterprise Communications Solution

1. Is your business expanding or contracting?
2. What business variables have changed or are about to change that may affect your competitive position?
3. How much time do your employees spend accessing phone, fax and e-mail messages?
4. How many of your employees are desk bound and how many are highly mobile?
5. Do your customers and partners have trouble reaching your employees on the road?
6. How is decision making impacted by employee time spent traveling?
7. Which features would make your mobile and remote users more productive, responsive, effective and connected to activities at your main offices?
8. Do you want to provide a complete set of communications features to alternative devices such as PDAs?
9. How many and what types of phone systems are in use today, both at your main and branch offices?
10. What are your current plans for upgrading your phone systems? Do you plan to transition to an IP-based system?

## Unified Communications Case Study Open Society Institute (OSI)

**The business:** A private operating and grant-making foundation that serves as the hub of the Soros Foundations network, a group of autonomous organizations in more than 50 countries.

**The problem:** Enabling 100 regional directors who travel to international locations with poor communications infrastructures to stay in touch with e-mail, faxes and phone calls.

**Unified communications solution:** An AVST CallXpress second-generation solution

**IT benefits:** Easy integration with Mitel® phone system and Microsoft Exchange. Low-cost administration.

**Business benefits:** Regional directors now have many ways to access all messages, including modem, desk and cell phone. Fifty percent time savings in checking messages. Many fewer missed messages and phone calls. Enhanced productivity. Quicker decision making.

"Using CallXpress, OSI employees can handle messages more efficiently. By improving communications they are able to deal with issues more quickly and get money to the people who need it."—Horace Chang, Systems Director, OSI-New York

## THE EVALUATION PROCESS

Building a second-generation communications infrastructure may seem like a daunting task, but the transition can be relatively smooth if you evaluate your existing communication infrastructure including your call processing and messaging requirements carefully and choose a second-generation solution based on a comprehensive evaluation of features and functionality as well as long-term total cost of ownership.

First, consider the present state of your business. Is your business expanding or contracting? What variables have changed or could change in your business environment that may affect your competitive position? How many of your employees are facilities-based versus mobile, or highly mobile?

Examine your current communications infrastructure. What types of phone systems are in use, both at your main and branch offices? How many different phone systems do you maintain and manage? What are your current plans for upgrading your phone systems? Do you plan to transition to an IP-based system?

Once you have assessed the state of your business and its infrastructure, it's time to think about which second-generation solution features would help you maintain or enhance your competitive position. Which features would make your mobile and remote users more productive, responsive, effective and connected to activities at your main offices? Consider features such as unified messaging, rules-based message handling, find me/follow me, message notification, and speech-enabled phone access to messages and determine need. Do you want to provide a full set of features to alternative devices such as PDAs? Do you want a single message store for all communications?

Then it's time to start researching the solutions available on the market. Compare the solution your switch vendor offers to a robust third-party solution that works across multiple switches. During the evaluation consider each system's total cost of ownership. What are its implementation costs? Does it run on lowcost, industry-standard hardware and operating systems? Does it conserve server resources or do you need to run it on a server farm? Can it work with all existing phone switches as well as support any future migration to IP? Can it integrate easily with your groupware systems such as IBM Lotus® Domino® (IBM Lotus Notes®) or Microsoft® Exchange? Make sure that you perform a complete feature comparison of each system that you're considering today, as well as an evaluation of the vendor's roadmap for the future.

Weil, Gotshal & Manges is a Lotus Notes shop. Of its CallXpress implementation, Burkart said, "We did eight office conversions over four weekends. It was pretty much a cookie-cutter process and didn't take long at all. It was great."

Next, consider licensing costs. Do you have to pay for all features or can you conserve licensing costs by allocating users only the features they need? The ability

grows to more than 100 ports and thousands of users? Can you implement a phased installation without losing networking capabilities?

Consider ease of use, management, and training costs over time. Does the solution offer concurrent global user administration across multiple systems and sites? How usable is the management interface? Does it leverage your existing directory for user administration? How many steps are involved in moves, adds and changes? Does it use existing notification standards such as SNMP? How many personnel will it take to manage the system?

What about training and support? How intuitive is the telephone user interface? Can employees use an interface similar to that of their first-generation system they are already used to?

"We offered some classroom-type user training as what we call 'lunch and learns,'" said Burkart. "But we had virtually no takers. The tips and tricks cheat sheets we gave out were enough to get the users comfortable with the new system."

Don't forget to consider security, reliability, and fault tolerance features provided by the possible solutions. If communications are broken between the unified communications server and the messaging server, can the user still access a unified messaging inbox?

"The most important thing for us the incredible reliability of CallXpress," said Burkart. "Our user community will not tolerate an unreliable product. They expect it to work 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Fortunately it's a very solid platform."

Finally, consider the vendor's track record. How long has the company been in the enterprise communications market? What is its reputation? Does it have a plan for moving into third-generation unified communications? And, if possible, talk with a current user and ask them about results, unexpected issues and level of satisfaction.

Make sure you look at the total cost of ownership picture, not just one aspect. And consider the return on investment in enhanced productivity, customer satisfaction, and management. As with any other technology purchase decision, the road to success starts with due diligence.

## 20 Questions to Ask When Evaluating a Second-Generation Enterprise Communications Solution

1. Does it offer a single message store for all communications including e-mail, voice and fax?
2. Can it work with your existing phone switches as well as support any future migration to IP?
3. Can it integrate easily with messaging systems such as Lotus Domino (Notes) or Microsoft Exchange?
4. Does it run on low-cost industry-standard hardware and operating systems?
5. Does it conserve server resources or do you need to run it on a server farm?
6. Do you have to pay for all features for all users or can you reduce licensing costs by allocating to users only the features they need?
7. What affect will the solution have on LAN traffic?
8. Can it scale effectively as your company grows?
9. Does it allow a phased installation without losing networking capabilities?
10. Does it offer concurrent global user administration across multiple systems and sites?
11. Does it leverage your existing directory for user administration?
12. How many steps are involved in moves, adds and changes?
13. Does it have an intuitive PC user interface?
14. Does it accommodate PDAs and other alternative devices?
15. Does it have a speech-enabled phone interface to features?
16. Does it let the user answer one message type with another?
17. Can users access an interface similar to that of the messaging system they are already used to?
18. Does it utilize a highly resilient architecture?
19. If communications are broken between the unified communications server and the messaging server as a result of the data network going down, can the user still access voice mail?
20. Does the company have a large installed base of enterprise clients, a long track record of developing leading-edge enterprise communications solutions and a clear plan for developing and delivering third-generation solutions?

of a system to provide such modularity should be a critical consideration in your evaluation process.

Consider each system's impact on your infrastructure. What affect will the solution have on LAN traffic? For example, does it make effective use of onboard caching to reduce server traffic?

Evaluate how well the system will serve your needs both today and in the future. Can it scale as your company

### EXAMINING THE AVST ADVANTAGE

AVST's CallXpress second-generation solution provides several total cost of ownership advantages compared to its competition. Unlike most proprietary switch vendor solutions, which only work with their own phone switches, CallXpress supports over 250 traditional PBX and IP-based integrations. This allows a company to substantially reduce their training costs when installing a new system, as well as extend the life of past switch investments.

With the extensive CallXpress feature set and its switch and groupware interoperability, you can also keep it in place as you transition to IP telephony. One of the significant benefits is that users don't have to learn the

interface of a brand-new communications system every time the telephony infrastructure is upgraded.

CallXpress provides a robust, reliable architecture that runs on industry-standard servers and voice cards and uses caching extensively to improve performance and minimize LAN traffic. For unified messaging users, CallXpress moves voice messages to each user's e-mail inbox data store, but also maintains its own directory and voice mail message buffer. That way, if the data network goes down and communications are broken between CallXpress and the messaging server, CallXpress will retain and provide users with access to all new voice messages until network connectivity is restored.

CallXpress can also use a single server architecture for many configurations, with speech, large fax and interactive voice response requiring additional server hardware. Licensing costs are low and seat licenses are only necessary for users requiring unified messaging. There are no additional user license costs for voice mailboxes and certain speech-enabled applications.

AVST CallXpress offers a robust feature set, including:

- A unified e-mail, voice and fax inbox
- Touch-tone and speech-enabled automated attendant
- Rules-based message handling
- Interactive voice response
- Message notification
- Hands-free, speech-enabled phone access to voice mail, e-mail, fax, calendar and contacts
- Global Windows-based administration
- Microsoft® Active Directory® snap-in without modifying the directory schema
- Internet, wireless and PDA access
- First-generation legacy telephone user interfaces

## The Seven-Step Unified Communications Strategy

1. Consider the state of your business, identify the workforce dynamics for each segment of your workforce and evaluate your competitive position.
2. Evaluate the state of your current voice and data network infrastructure including the costs of maintenance, administration, and so forth.
3. Determine the second-generation features needed to help you maintain or enhance your competitive position.
4. Research second-generation solutions that have most or all of those features.
5. Compare a third-party system that works with all of your switches to a switch vendor's solution.
6. Evaluate overall total cost of ownership of each solution.
7. Test the top products as a final step in choosing a solution.

Additionally, because the feature set of CallXpress is completely modular, features can be activated for each user only when the need arises. And CallXpress supports five languages on a single system at no extra cost.

CallXpress is scalable and reliable, with up to 192 voice ports per server and thousands of supported messaging users. It also supports multiple compression codecs for message storage and transmission.

User training is effortless, with familiar e-mail icons and commands for message types, an intuitive Phone Manager PC client for managing user phone settings and a telephone user interface emulation for first-generation Octel® Aria®, Octel Serenade® (VMX), Avaya® INTUITY™ AUDIX® and Mitel® NuPoint with Centigram interface solutions that makes migrating users from those legacy systems trouble free.

"We're very pleased with CallXpress," Burkart said. "We're absolutely convinced that we made the right decision."

### THE RIGHT CHOICE

In today's business environment of highly mobile users, demanding customers, constantly changing market conditions, multiple communications types and overwhelmed employees, a business cannot compete effectively or make the quick, informed decisions necessary to stay alive and thrive without taking control of its communications.

A second-generation enterprise communications solution with a robust set of user and management features can help an organization tame the communications beast and hone the competitive edge it needs to stay ahead of the pack. Today, that solution is AVST CallXpress.

### FOR MORE INFORMATION

For 25 years, AVST has been shaping the evolution of communication, with more than 38,000 customers. Our award-winning CallXpress solution has been unifying communications for companies all over the world. So as the world of enterprise communications advances, you can be assured that AVST has your future covered. **To learn more visit [www.avst.com](http://www.avst.com) or contact us at +1.949.699.2300.**

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