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IS THE CLOUD RIGHT FOR YOUR BUSINESS?

Checklist: 7 Trends Propelling
Unified Communications as a Service

IS YOUR BUSINESS RIGHT FOR THE CLOUD?

It's time to find a new communications solution for your company.

Before you start your search, consider this: No two company's operations are quite the same and different organizations benefit from different types of phone systems. Understanding the factors that are driving many businesses to move their communications to the cloud will help you determine if a cloud communications solution is right for you.

Here are seven operational trends propelling today's move to Unified Communications as a Service (UCaaS).

Check off each statement that rings true for your company. The more checks, the more your company will excel in the cloud.

TREND 1:

CHANGE IN YOUR BUSINESS

There's only one 'sure thing' in business, and that's tomorrow won't be like today. Is your operation being affected by these significant changes?

☐ ### Your Current Solution is End of Life or Contract

Maybe you're at the end of your contract. Maybe you're at the end of your rope with a poor-quality system. UCaaS delivers high-quality features with no upfront investment.

☐ ### You're a Startup

New business ventures have given you enough details to juggle. A cloud provider can manage, maintain, secure and back up your communications network and applications.

☐ ### You're Moving

Avoid the cost and hassle of moving and re-installing your old on-premises gear. A cloud solution allows you to leave the racks, hardware and maintenance schedules behind and start fresh.

☐ ### You're Adding Locations

Adding new sites to your on-premises network can be a capital headache. Cloud solutions allow you the flexibility to quickly and efficiently expand operations without additional capital investments.

TREND 2:

SPECIALIZED OPERATIONS

You might have a single location and small staff today, but you've got plans. Can you see your business moving in one of these directions?

☐ ## You Have or Plan to Add Remote Workers

Contract and work-from-home employees need seamless, VPN-free communications. Cloud solutions allow IT teams to get new workers online quickly with just a headset and an Internet connection.

☐ ## You're in Professional Services

Real estate, financial services, engineering, and legal practices often have multiple locations but typically have minimal IT support. The cloud is the easiest, worry-free way to expand for teams with limited resources.

☐ ## You're a Public Institution

Government, education, hospital and sports facilities can be large, complex campuses with unique communication, mobility and contact center needs. The cloud's adaptive qualities make it easy for IT teams to manage these complexities.

☐ ## You're a Franchise

Managing physical infrastructure for hundreds of remote franchise locations is truck-roll intensive. Instead, a cloud provider can take full responsibility for maintenance and redundancy.

TREND 3:

WORKFORCE OPTIMIZATION

It's more than just smart scheduling. It's onboarding employees and agents rapidly and giving them the right tools to excel. Which of the following reflects the way you want to do business?

☐ **Data-Driven Agent Scheduling**

Having the right historical reports takes guesswork out of anticipating call volume in contact center environments. The right cloud solution delivers detailed call records and pre-designed report queries.

☐ **Seasonal Responsiveness**

Service scalability is critical if your call volume is tied to holidays, promotions or fluctuating demand. Nothing's more flexible and immediate than self-provisioning in the cloud.

☐ **Selective Feature Provisioning**

Different job titles have different communications requirements. Cloud solutions boost productivity by letting you assign features and permissions to employees who need them and not requiring you to pay extra for those who don't.

☐ **Pay-As-You-Go Licensing**

Tired of buying bulk licenses that end up sitting idle? Sharpen your bottom line with cloud subscriptions that only charge for the licenses you need, yet let you add on with ease.

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TREND 4:
MOBILITY

Once, it seemed that only sales and senior executives needed mobile phones. Today, everyone's connected. Which of these trends does your company need to support when it comes to mobility?

☐ **Advanced Features**

To be professional, mobile devices need enterprise features like extension dialing and transfer, conferencing, and desktop sharing. Look for the cloud providers that go beyond just a phone system and offer full UCaaS capabilities with their mobile applications.

☐ **Bring Your Own Device**

As workers blend work and personal time, you need a secure way to integrate their smartphones, tablets and wearables into your network. Some cloud providers make it easy to do so.

☐ **Convenience**

"On the go" can mean "in a rush." Look for cloud services that offer short cuts like push-button conference access and auto switching from cellular to Wi-Fi networks.

☐ **Security**

No business can afford compromise customer communications or data. Compare cloud solution providers for encryption that blocks your network from public intrusion.

TREND 5:

COMPETITIVE PRESSURE

You work hard to stand out in the sea of competitors. Your communication system can be your best asset — or biggest liability. Which of these factors is critical to how your business competes?

☐ ## Brand Perception

When a customer calls, a tiny startup can sound as mighty as their biggest rival. The right cloud service provides premium call quality, reliability and features in an affordable way.

☐ ## Speed to Market

Need to be more nimble than your competition? You can get cloud services up and running for an entire business practically overnight compare to on-premises solutions that can take weeks (or longer) to deploy.

☐ ## Networked Brilliance

Your business competes on ideas and conversations — by chat, online conferences, shared desktops, video and virtual workspaces. Look for a cloud provider that offers these features in a single user experience to improve team collaboration and productivity.

☐ ## Watching the Pennies

High-volume businesses out-manage the competition to win. A cloud service preserves your capital expenditures so you can pounce on new opportunities that really move the needle.

TREND 6:
CUSTOMER FOCUS

Relationships, relationships, relationships. Customer focus is a strategic imperative for most businesses. Which tactics would keep your pipeline flowing and your customer base loyal?

☐ ### Database Marketing

Tracking customer engagement is today's marketing gold standard. Many cloud providers pre-integrate their call and contact center features into leading CRM solutions for a holistic view of customer interactions.

☐ ### Multi-Channel Support Options

When they need help, customers are known to email, call and chat simultaneously. The right cloud UC solution offers integrated contact center functionality to seamlessly connect all customer touch points.

☐ ### Self-Service Empowerment

Letting customers self-navigate to the help they need not only delivers faster answers to customer questions but frees up staff to handle more complex customer situations. The best cloud contact centers have easy interactive voice response (IVR) menu capabilities built in.

☐ ### Regulatory Compliance

Keeping customer data private is more than good PR. For many industries, it's the law. Look for a cloud communications vendor who offers robust data encryption and security.

TREND 7:

CHANGING THE FACE OF IT

As technologies evolve, IT departments find themselves at the forefront of strategic change management. Are any of these key initiatives for your company?

☐ **Staying Modern**

As technology races forward, on-premises solutions are practically out-of-date when they come out of the box. A cloud UC solution automatically stays current with the latest feature upgrades.

☐ **Deploying More Single-Source Solutions**

Managing multiple communications vendors can be highly inefficient and unsecure. The best UCaaS providers offer their own phones, software, collaboration applications and private networks.

☐ **Embrace Automation**

Customers crave custom mobile apps that make interactions quick and simple. CPaaS — Communications Platform as a Service — can offer deeper customization and integration with your UC solution to support customer care initiatives.
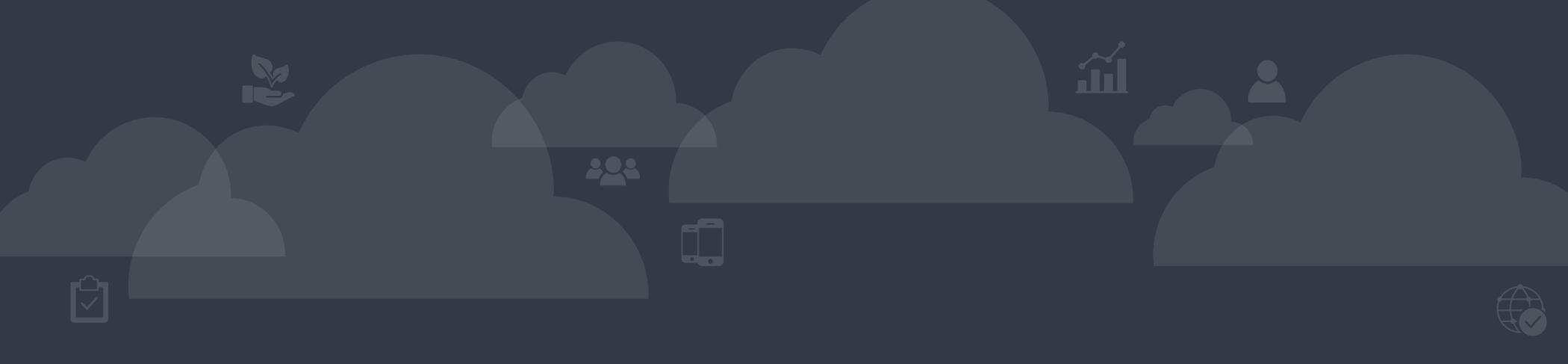
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Continue your research with a quick call to ShoreTel.

We'll be happy to answer your questions and look at what's propelling you forward to help you determine if UCaaS is the right fit for your business.

p: 1.844.746.7383 | **e:** contactsales@shoretel.com | www.shoretel.com

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