

The Adoption And Effectiveness Of Unified Communications Platforms In Large Companies

Independent research of 500 IT workers in companies of 1,000+ employees carried out in November 2023

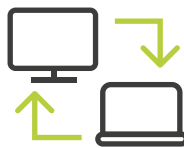
RESEARCH BY ELITE GROUP

Introduction

A Unified Communications (UC) platform combines various communication channels - voice, video, messaging, video and file transfer - into a single platform.

Unified communications solutions allow access to first-class multi-channel communication and productivity tools for powerful productivity, collaboration and improved efficiency.

However, while the benefits of Unified Communications to large enterprises are wide-ranging, what is the current feeling towards UC among employees and employers?



This research aims to discover how IT teams within large organisations perceive the investment in UC platforms and their effectiveness.

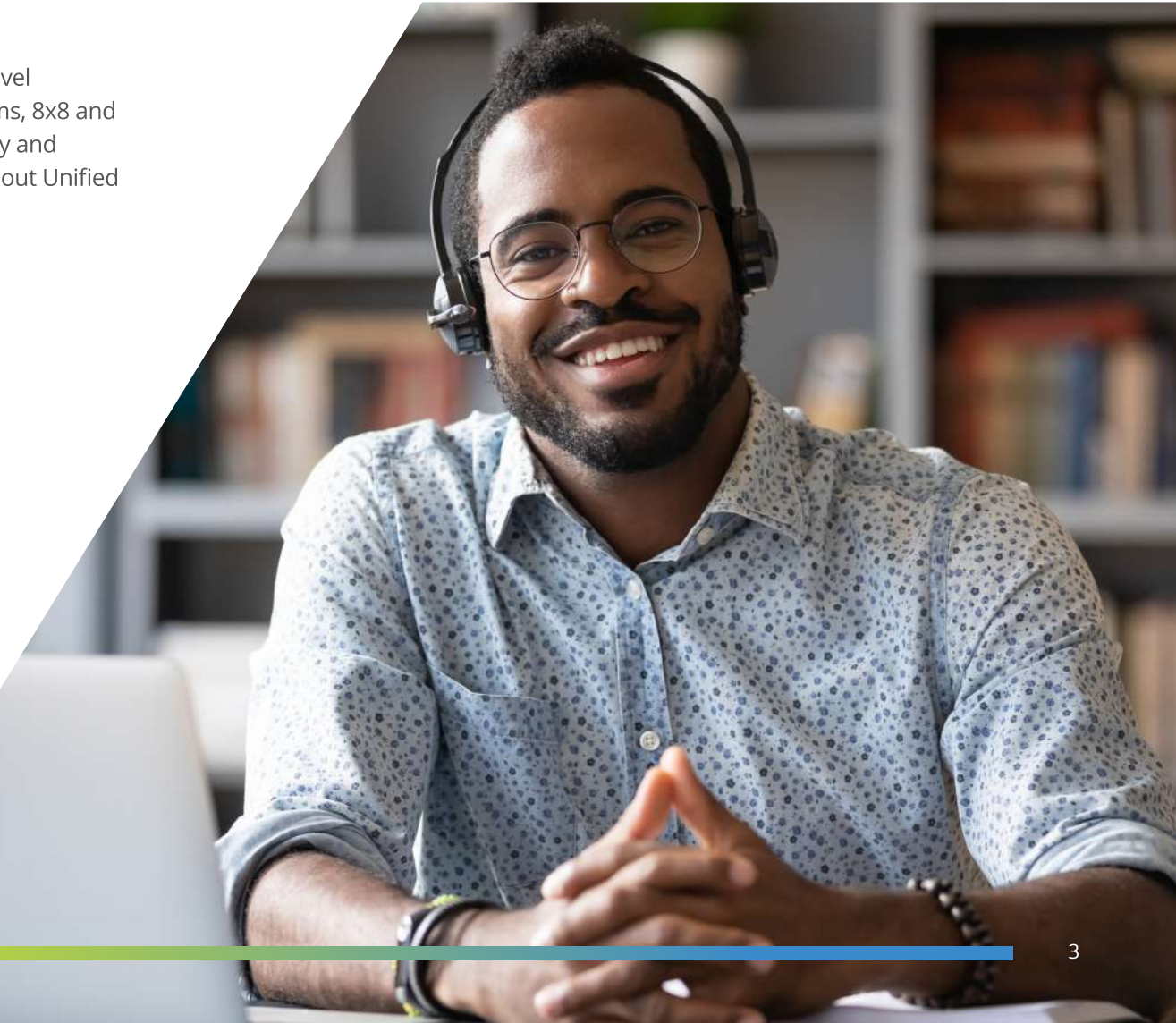
The study was carried out in November 2023 and sampled 500 IT workers in companies with more than 1,000 employees.



About Us

Elite Group have been experts within the business technology industry for over 20 years and has helped businesses to become more productive and profitable with first-class communications solutions.

Led by the brightest and best technical minds, they hold the highest level partnerships and accreditations from brands including Microsoft Teams, 8x8 and Mitel and Content Guru. Looking to improve collaboration, productivity and efficiency within your business? Speak to the experts at Elite Group about Unified Communications today.



Highlights

37% of respondents believe their companies are “not very collaborative”, suggesting serious improvement is needed.

52% of employees believe their companies' internal communications when implementing new technology are 'somewhat effective', while 32% believe they are 'extremely effective.'

25% of companies are running more than 3 separate communications channels, while 7% are running 6 or more. Companies are still investing needlessly in multiple forms of communication, or voluntarily opting to use one alongside the other.

'Improved productivity' and 'operational efficiency'(over 40% for each) are employees' top reasons for investing in UC. In line with their company's view.

89% of employees 'strongly agree' or 'somewhat agree' that their company has a clear business strategy for investing in new technologies, like Unified Communications.

42% of employees believe their company's motivation for investing in UC is for 'cost savings'. This is at odds with what employees think should be the motivation (improved customer experience) with 38% saying so.

Only 3% of IT workers say their company has yet to invest in a UC system, suggesting many large businesses are already on board with UC.

Ineffective security (32%), a lack of operational agility (34%) and concerns over integrations with existing systems (40%) are the most significant barriers to organisations embracing Unified Communications.

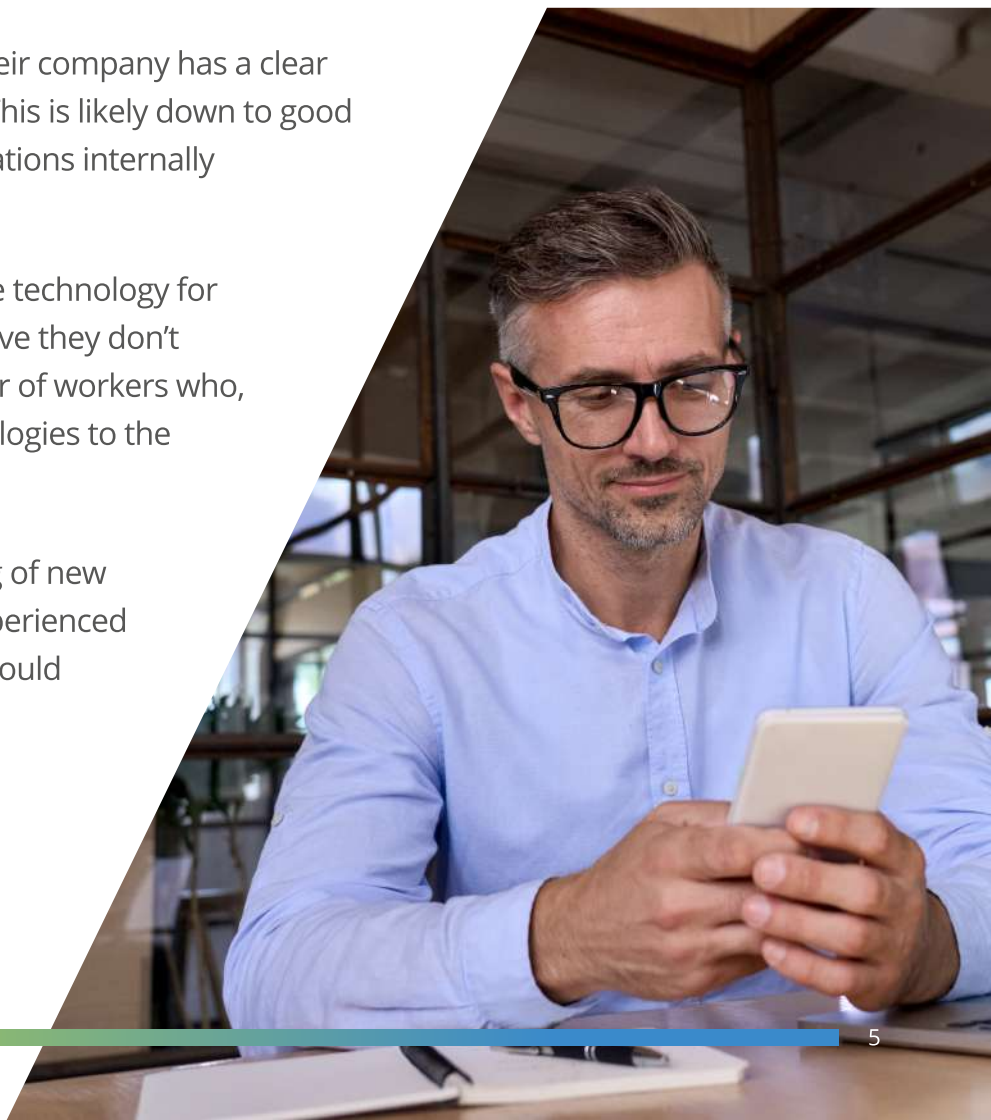
41% of IT workers believe training on new technology is insufficient for them to be confident in using it.

The Strategy Behind Unified Communications (And Similar Technologies)

According to Elite Group research, an impressive 89% of employees agree that their company has a clear business strategy for investing in new technology, like Unified Communications. This is likely down to good internal communication efforts, with 84% of employees agreeing that communications internally surrounding new technology rollouts are effective.

However, the same cannot be said when it comes to employees actually using the technology for themselves. 41% of IT workers who receive training in using new technology believe they don't receive enough training to be confident in using it. This represents a large number of workers who, without an appropriate level of training, will not be able to fully utilise new technologies to the greatest benefit of the business.

This suggests that while employees are mostly enthusiastic about the onboarding of new communication technologies - like Unified Communications - working with an experienced communications technology provider who could offer greater in-depth training would likely help them take advantage of their new tools more effectively.



The Number Of Large Businesses That Have Invested In Unified Communications

As the need for more streamlined communications within businesses has become clearer in the digital age, more and more businesses have onboarded Unified Communications technology - or similar - to raise productivity and the effectiveness of operations.

This shows that Unified Communications platforms have remained a popular trend for businesses, with many leaping to UC to raise their communication efforts.

However, despite the apparent appreciation of Unified Communications, statistics indicate many businesses are still running multiple forms of communication under separate banners.

Businesses are utilising Unified Communications while still investing and running multiple legacy systems alongside. This results in increased costs for businesses and reduces efficiency.

18%

of businesses invested in Unified Communications technology less than 12 months ago (as of Nov 2023).

34%

Over a third of large businesses have onboarded UC technology in the last 1-2 years.

25%

1 in 4 large businesses use 3 major, separate modes of communication, while 6% of businesses are using 8 different modes of communication.

29%

onboarded the technology between 3-4 years ago.

Unified Communications brings all essential forms of communication under one platform - voice, text, audio, video communications, file sharing, etc. - businesses can more effectively streamline communication across all areas and departments while removing the need for multiple, separate monthly payments spread across other communication platforms - to save money and boost collaboration.

Do Employee/Employer Priorities Match When It Comes To New Technology Investments?

While there are many enticing benefits of onboarding UC, for both business owners and their workforces, a shared opinion across different levels of the hierarchy can be beneficial in progressing once the new technology has been onboarded.

According to our research, employees believe their companies' top reasons for investing in UC are 'improved productivity' and 'operational efficiency' (over 50% for each). This is in line with what the employees themselves believe the top reasons for investing in UC should be, with almost 50% of workers citing the same benefits as their top reasons.

This suggests employees and employers may share common ground on the subject; a statement which, pulls the accuracy of the research into question. This shows a desire on both sides to fully utilise UC to push the company forward while making general processes easier.

However, employees are not entirely on board with what they feel their employers' motivations may be. 42% of employees believe their company's motivation for investing in UC is for 'cost savings'. This is at odds with what employees think should be the motivation - improved customer experience - with 38% saying so.

This suggests customer experiences may be lacking and, if employee opinions are to be believed, could be drastically improved with the addition of a UC platform.



How Effective Is Collaboration Currently In Large Organisations?

One of the key advantages of UC is that it encourages more in-depth collaboration across teams, with both office-based workers and remote workers able to contribute to projects and tasks, simultaneously, while enjoying clear communication with each other.

However, collaborative efforts across teams in large organisations may be lacking. 37% of respondents described teams within their company as “not very collaborative”, while 9% described them as “not collaborative at all.” This suggests there is significant room for improvement within teams to boost collaborative efforts.

An over-reliance on multiple forms of communication rather than a central, all-encompassing communications system (such as UC) could be to blame. For comparison, this research shows that 41% of employees work for organisations that consistently rely on 5 or more separate forms of communication.

By removing unnecessary subscriptions to numerous methods of communication and relying on a sole UC platform, companies can remove confusion and awkwardness from their internal communications and streamline and simplify communication efforts, encouraging teams to be more collaborative.



What Role Will Effective Communication Systems Play For Businesses In The Future?

As businesses continue to grow and the need for effective collaboration becomes more apparent, it is reasonable to believe collaborative tools like UC will remain an important component in the arsenal of businesses everywhere, now and in the future.

It seems most employees agree. 60% of respondents said that modern communication tools (including UC) will be 'very important' in driving business success in the future, with 35% believing the same to be 'fairly important'.

With almost 100% of respondents believing these communication tools to be an important part of future business communications, the need for these tools to be put in place sooner rather than later is apparent.

This notion is backed up by the number of businesses that have already onboarded communication tools like UC, with 81% of businesses having onboarded such tools within the last 4 years.

Given the current popularity of UC platforms and the growing reliance large businesses have on effective communication across departments and locations, businesses that are yet to consider UC platforms may wish to rethink their strategy.



How Scalable Is Existing Technology Within Large Organisations?

As time moves forward, technology moves with it to offer innovations individuals and businesses can use to their advantage. This often involves the onboarding of completely new technologies, which can cause some issues in adapting to said technology, or speedbumps in replacing old technology.

However, in the case of modern businesses, the need to onboard new technology may not be as prevalent as it once was. 75% of respondents said it would be 'very easy' or 'fairly easy' to scale their company's current technology stack without investing in new or replacement technologies.

This figure suggests employees believe their companies could simply adapt or update the technologies they already have - which is an advantage of UC systems. As UC encompasses all essential forms of communication - voice, text, audio, file sharing, video conferencing, messaging and more - there is no need to replace it, simply update it when the time comes.

This would be in line with our research, which suggests the majority of large businesses already have a UC system - or similar - in place and are reaping the benefits.



UC Technology, While Widespread, Can Still Improve For Both Employers And Employees

With over 90% of large companies seemingly having onboarded Unified Communications (or similar) technology, the usefulness and popularity of such platforms cannot be ignored.

However, with many companies still paying for numerous methods of communication along with these platforms, it can be assumed needless technology spending is still common, causing businesses to lose cash every month that could have been better invested. On top of this, even though the technology is commonplace, employees are not confident in utilising it to its fullest due to a lack of in-depth training and support.

All of the above emphasises the need for companies to partner with experienced, trustworthy technology experts when onboarding Unified Communications, rather than going it alone and hoping for the best.

With the right support and guidance from the offset, companies can enjoy a seamless transition from their current communications systems, greater productivity, dramatic cost savings and raised employee satisfaction amongst a myriad of other benefits.



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