



Unified. Simplified.

Partner Solution Whitepaper



Polycom Meets Enterprise Customer Needs With New IP Family of Unified Communications Devices

Overview

Country or Region: Worldwide

Industry: High Technology

Partner Profile

Polycom, based in Pleasanton, California, is a leading provider of collaboration products such as conference phones, IP phones, and videoconferencing solutions. The company employs about 2,400 people.

Business Situation

The company's enterprise customers want highly integrated solutions that can help deliver unified communications, which in turn help improve business processes and profitability.

Solution

Polycom's family of Microsoft Office Communications Server 2007-enabled phones, ranging from personal speakerphones to executive desktop phone, increases business collaboration and productivity.

Benefits

- Empowers unified communications
- Addresses different business scenarios
- Helps provide end-to-end software-based telephony

“With the Polycom devices and the Microsoft unified communications software...our customers get end-to-end solutions that help streamline their business processes and communications.”

Christopher Peters, General Manager, Microsoft Unified Communications Products, Polycom

Polycom is a leading provider of collaborative communication solutions, helping businesses by providing organizations with a broad range of telecommunications and teleconferencing products. The company, a Microsoft® Gold Certified Partner, received requests over the years from enterprise customers for products that provide unified communications solutions with Internet Protocol (IP) based telephony. In response, Polycom launched its CX family of four high-definition telephone devices. The products are optimized for Microsoft Communications Server 2007 and Microsoft Office Communicator 2007. They provide Polycom customers with a wide range of devices that deliver flexibility and choice so that companies can take advantage of the integrated communications and potential cost savings of IP telephony based unified communications.

“With the Polycom CX family of devices and the Microsoft unified communications platform,” he says, “organizations no longer have just solitary products. Instead, our customers get end-to-end solutions that help streamline their business processes and communications.”

Tim Yankey, Director of Product Marketing for Voice Products, Polycom

Situation

Polycom is a global provider of collaborative communication solutions that supply businesses across virtually every industry with a broad array of high definition video, wired, and wireless voice conferencing and other telecommunications products and services that deliver the ultimate collaborative experience. The Pleasanton, California-based company, a Microsoft® Gold Certified partner with 40 offices in 22 countries, offers products such as the SoundStation series of conference phones, video conferencing solutions, and a full range of IP (Internet Protocol)-based desktop phones. Its target base is Fortune 1000 organizations and small to midsize businesses worldwide.

Tim Yankey, Director of Product Marketing for Voice Products at Polycom, says these customers want to take advantage of unified communications products and solutions that can help to enhance communications and collaborative activities while keeping costs down.

“Large organizations are seeing the value that unified communications can deliver,” Yankey says. “They see that business operations no longer run just on voice or on other isolated modes of communication like e-mail or instant messaging. Our customers want communications technologies that work together, because the sum of the parts is much more valuable than the individual, stand-alone components.”

With the advances in IP-based telephony and the push by large organizations to integrate more of their communications technologies, Polycom sought external partners who could help it deliver unified communications to enterprise customers.

Solution

Polycom became an early supporter of efforts by Microsoft to deliver software-based unified communications solutions. Working closely with Microsoft on the development of Microsoft Office Communications Server 2007 and Microsoft Office Communicator 2007, Polycom developed four different models of telephone devices that work seamlessly with the Microsoft software. They include:

- The Polycom CX100, which plugs into a desktop or portable PC USB port to provide a hands-free speakerphone solution.
- The Polycom CX200, a desktop telephone that provides a USB speakerphone and handset combination that uses the Office Communicator 2007 software for call control.
- The Polycom CX400, a cordless handset with a range of about 30 feet and a base unit that plugs into a computer's USB port.
- The Polycom CX700, a stand-alone IP-based desktop phone that connects directly over an enterprise network to Office Communications Server 2007 and runs Microsoft Office Communicator Phone Edition on the phone itself.

The Polycom devices work with Microsoft software to deliver features such as enhanced presence, which shows the availability and contact preferences of people on a network; the ability to redirect calls to cell phones, voice mail, or e-mail; and easy, spontaneous group conferencing.

Benefits

The Polycom CX family can meet the needs of its customers who want faster, more efficient communications with better user experience. Because of the company's early development work with Microsoft, it was able to deliver four different kinds of devices that meet a full range of possible business scenarios. And by integrating with the Microsoft software, the

Polycom CX family of devices can share in the benefits of software-based unified communications, such as integration with multiple modes of communication and with business applications such as the Microsoft Office business productivity software.

Empowers Unified Communications

The CX family of devices developed by Polycom will help its customers advance the deployment of unified communications solutions.

“When our customers talk about communications, they are no longer just referring to voice,” says Christopher Peters, General Manager of Microsoft Unified Communications Products for Polycom. “They want much broader integration of all possible means of communications, such as e-mail, instant messaging, and video and Web conferencing. Building our products to work with Office Communications Server 2007 and Office Communicator 2007 helps our customers achieve their goals of greater integration of all their communications technology.”

Peters notes how the technology benefits his own team. “We use Office Communications Server 2007 and Microsoft Live Communications Server as critical components of our messaging infrastructure,” he says. “I see the value of this software all the time.

“Say I’m on a conference call. The presence technology in these products tells my colleagues and sales people where I am. If sales people have an urgent question to answer for a customer, they can send me an instant message and know that I’ll reply quickly, without interrupting my conference call. There is no need to pick up the phone, leave a voice mail, and wait for me to listen to it and respond. Business issues can be

resolved instantly, which results in better customer service.”

Addresses Different Business Scenarios

By creating a full range of devices from personal speakerphones to executive desktop phones—all optimized for Microsoft Office Communications Server 2007 and Microsoft Office Communicator 2007—Polycom was able to deliver different kinds of products that fit different business scenarios.

“Not every employee or every department within a large organization is going to be satisfied with just one kind of phone,” says Yankey. “Companies may have employees such as sales people who are constantly on the move, or temporary employees who don’t stay at one desk for very long. With our products and the Microsoft unified communications software, organizations can choose cost-effective devices that make sense for particular employees while keeping them tightly integrated with the enterprise.”

And by ensuring that the devices are well-integrated with the Microsoft software, all of the devices offer features such as the ability to quickly locate colleagues, transform phone calls into conference calls, or redirect calls to voice mail.

Helps Provide Software-based Telephony

With Polycom’s CX family of telephone devices and Microsoft Office Communications Server 2007 and Office Communicator 2007, customers can benefit from software-centric communications.

“We agree with the Microsoft vision of unified communications that is software-driven and involves integrating different kinds of media,” says Peters.

He says that the company’s enterprise customers continually express their desire to

For More Information

For more information about Microsoft products and services, call the Microsoft Sales Information Center at (800) 426-9400. In Canada, call the Microsoft Canada Information Centre at (877) 568-2495. Customers who are deaf or hard-of-hearing can reach Microsoft text telephone (TTY/TDD) services at (800) 892-5234 in the United States or (905) 568-9641 in Canada. Outside the 50 United States and Canada, please contact your local Microsoft subsidiary. To access information using the World Wide Web, go to: www.microsoft.com

For more information about Polycom products and services, call (408) 526-9000 or visit the Web site at: www.polycom.com

try to streamline the way people work by not forcing them to jump around between software applications and modes of communication. "Our customers want the ability to be working in a Word or PowerPoint® file, and when they get an idea, they can instantly find a colleague or customer and capitalize on that idea instead of having to wait hours or days or more for a voice mail or e-mail to be answered," Peters says.

"With the Polycom CX family of devices and the Microsoft unified communications platform," he says, "organizations no longer have just solitary products. Instead, our customers get end-to-end solutions that help streamline their business processes and communications."

Unified Communications

Unified Communications bridge the gap between telephony and computing to deliver real-time messaging, voice and conferencing to the desktop environment. For more information, go to: www.microsoft.com/uc

Software and Services

- Microsoft Office
 - Microsoft Office Communications Server 2007
 - Microsoft Office Communicator 2007
- Microsoft Server Product Portfolio
 - Microsoft Exchange Server 2007

Hardware

- Polycom CX100, CX200, CX400, CX700