

CLOUD EDITION

Unleashing IT

VOLUME 5 / ISSUE 2

BACK TO SCHOOL

In an era of digital transformation, businesses are learning how to swim again. Page 3

PAGE 5

New customer experiences

PAGE 8

Compliance in the cloud

PAGE 12

Shattering norms

RELEARNING... EVERYTHING

The fundamental tenets of enterprise success remain unchanged. But everything else—including the pace of business, the level of competition, the support required, and the criticality of performance and differentiation—has been forever altered.

This edition of *Unleashing IT* showcases the cresting wave of digitization, and the ways modern enterprises—with the help of cloud services—are navigating a riptide business environment.

Aero Fulfillment is carving out new forms of differentiation in a largely commoditized industry (page 12). Etihad Airways has virtualized and integrated its global contact centers (page 14) to fulfill heightened consumer expectations (page 5). CityMD (page 8) and CECO Environmental (page 23) are finding new ways to maintain compliance in heavily regulated markets. And Rogers Communications (page 10) has “re-envisioned” its business, its ability to innovate, and its portfolio of customer services.

All of these companies have been immersed in traditional business streams for years. But with hybrid cloud technologies (page 3), application-centric solutions (page 7), and the help of Cisco Powered™ services, they are relearning how to swim and finding new waters as a result.

For more information, follow the links inside or contact Cisco at 1-877-897-4262. For more information on Cisco Powered services, visit cisco.com/go/ciscopowered.

Sincerely,



Ellen Berlan
Director Cloud, U.S.
Cisco



Unleashing IT is published by Cisco Systems, Inc. To receive future editions of *Unleashing IT*, visit UnleashingIT.com.

© 2016 Cisco and/or its affiliates. All rights reserved. Cisco, the Cisco logo, Cisco Jabber, Cisco Powered, Cisco Telepresence, Cisco Unified Computing System, and Cisco UCS are trademarks or registered trademarks of Cisco and/or its affiliates in the U.S. and other countries. To view a list of Cisco trademarks, visit: www.cisco.com/go/trademarks. Third party trademarks mentioned are the property of their respective owners. The use of the word partner does not imply a partnership relationship between Cisco and any other company. (1605)

Unleashing IT

VOLUME 5 / ISSUE 2

STRATEGIES & SOLUTIONS

THE NEW INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION 3

RE-ENGINEERING THE CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE 5

AN AUTOMATED CLOUD CONCIERGE 7

EXPERIENCES

WE'RE USING HOW MANY CLOUD SERVICES!?! 8

CONNECTIVITY ELEVATED 10

GROWTH AND DIFFERENTIATION, FULFILLED 12

LANDING A LASTING IMPRESSION 14

MANAGING DISTRIBUTED OPERATIONS AND ASSETS 18

POWERING THE MOST CONNECTED GAMES EVER 20



Ellen Berlan,
Director Cloud, U.S., Cisco

THE NEW INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION



How cloud technologies are helping both established brands and budding companies transform and grow their business.

The Industrial Revolution of the 19th and 20th centuries helped produce things faster, with machines instead of hands. We are seeing a similar—and equally impactful—shift with modern technologies.

“We are in an era of digital transformation, and just like the Industrial Revolution, it’s all about automation, scalability, and speed,” says Joann Starke, senior marketing manager for data center and cloud solutions at Cisco. “The cloud is both the enabler and the connective tissue for these changes, bringing together megatrends like social media, mobility, and big data.”

Business is moving faster than ever before, she explains, and companies in every industry must move swiftly to develop applications and maximize data in ways that create competitive differentiation. They are being forced to improve operational efficiency. And they are being compelled to establish new connections among employees, partners, and customers.

Cloud technologies are helping on all of these fronts, but in different ways for different companies. Market disruptors like Uber and Airbnb have built their business on the cloud. Continually evolving companies like Netflix have used the cloud



to overhaul their delivery models. And countless entrenched brands have tapped the cloud to modernize—and in many cases reinvent—their operations and the ways they serve customers.

“Every industry is facing digital disruption,” says Michelle Bailey, vice president of digital infrastructure and data center initiatives at 451 Research. “Just think about online courses in higher education, real-time algorithmic trading in the financial services industry, machine-based analytics in manufacturing, and remote health consultations and care. The cloud is the underpinning for all of them.”

A PHASED APPROACH

It is clear that cloud technologies are enabling and fueling widespread digital transformations. But it doesn’t happen overnight, and there is no “right way” to move forward.

Established businesses may use the cloud to bridge the gaps between legacy systems and new, digital operations. Upstarts may build their business on the cloud, and then reach a point of critical mass where a purpose-built, on-premises data center is needed. Others may simply use the cloud to offload certain applications and reduce the time and cost of software and hardware management.

“Digital transformation is a very personal thing, and most companies will do it differently,” says Bailey. “It largely depends on the maturity of their business, their IT needs, and their experience and comfort level with the cloud.”

A hybrid approach—one that features a combination of on-premises systems and cloud-based services—is a likely endgame for many companies, she adds. But it requires a phased approach, typically starting with infrastructure virtualization, expanding with private cloud, and eventually including an integrated mix of public cloud services.

“For all the talk of hybrid cloud, most companies are still in the virtualization process,” Bailey says. “You have to walk before you can run.”

Solutions like Cisco® ONE Enterprise Cloud Suite help companies do just that. A hybrid-ready private cloud, it allows organizations to adopt cloud services at their own pace. The solution simplifies and automates infrastructure and application deployment, allows the management of physical and virtual resources in one dashboard, and works with any cloud platform and hypervisor.

“Some private cloud solutions require upwards of 18 components to be purchased and installed, and others don’t play well with public cloud services,” says Starke. “Cisco ONE Enterprise Cloud Suite has four modular components that can be used in any combination, and it was designed and built for hybrid deployments.”

Automation, scalability, and speed—across physical and virtual environments. Welcome to the new Industrial Revolution.

TRANSFORM YOUR OPERATIONS

Industry data shows that companies adopting new digital technologies increase their profitability, market value, and revenue. To learn how to adopt and extend private cloud technologies in ways that transform your business operations, visit UnleashingIT.com/ONE.

RE-ENGINEERING THE CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

Industry experts describe the changing nature of customer service and how cloud-based contact centers are helping deliver frictionless experiences.



Blame it on the e-commerce pioneers. With products arriving on your doorstep after a few simple clicks of a mouse or mobile device, they have forever changed consumer expectations.

“Online retailers have led the way,” explains Steve Pollema, president of eLoyalty, a TeleTech company and premier provider of customer experience solutions. “When you think about a company like Amazon, they are so different because they don’t make products and they don’t set prices. Their differentiation is squarely based on a frictionless customer experience.”

Organizations in every industry—from healthcare to financial services to government—are now working to enhance the ways they engage and support their customers. But the game, and those who are playing, have changed.

MISGUIDED EFFORTS, EMPOWERED CONSUMERS

For decades, contact centers have been built and managed with efficiency and cost reduction in mind. And that has led to frustrating experiences for customers, many of whom have



been forced to navigate automated voice systems and wait on hold, only to find themselves on the line with an agent who can't help. These experiences, combined with the ubiquity of online information, have provoked consumers to take matters into their own hands.

"Customers want the ability to control their experience, and they want fast resolutions," says Peter Quinlan, vice president of unified contact center products at Tata Communications, a global provider of communications technologies and services. "They want to solve a problem themselves online and will try to get as far as they can before they call for help."

"Ten years ago, the contact center was the high-wire act. Now it's the safety net," Pollema adds. "But it's still vastly important, especially for complex or high-value transactions, or in cases where a customer hits a roadblock."

In these cases, the contact center agent needs to know the customer and their situation.

"Customers don't want to start over and explain their situation multiple times. It's one thing to give them a wide variety of channels or choices, but if the channels don't link up anywhere, it can be extremely frustrating," says Quinlan. "Stitching together all of the channels and offering a holistic experience is arguably more important than offering a wide range of choices."

Click to chat, for example, is only beneficial if the agent on the other end can jump into the customer's situation midstream and offer fast help.

"The agent needs to know who I am, what I'm hoping to do, and what I've done up to this point," Pollema insists.

"It's a matter of continuing a process instead of starting the process over, and that requires knowledge, anticipation, and the ability to integrate multiple channels in ways that provide contextual relevance."

HOW THE CLOUD HELPS

eLoyalty and Tata Communications offer Cisco Powered™ hosted contact center and collaboration services. According to Pollema and Quinlan, the cloud has been a key enabler of seamless, omnichannel customer experiences.

"In the past, technologies and people were largely siloed," Pollema notes. "The website was driven by the marketing team, the contact center was orchestrated by services or operations teams, and mobile apps were the domain of the IT team. The cloud helps break down those silos."

"It was hard enough stitching together voice, and now you have voice, web, video, chat, co-browsing, and on-demand experts who may be in different locations," Quinlan adds. "With the cloud, companies can take advantage of these capabilities quickly, without the time, effort, and cost of implementing and integrating them."

And all of it comes with an economic model one would expect from the cloud, featuring CapEx avoidance, seat-based pricing, and the ability to ramp up and down as needed. A full-featured contact center with more than 1000 seats can be built in and delivered from the cloud in less than two months, which would have been implausible just a few short years ago.

TURNING PROBLEMS INTO OPPORTUNITIES

Legacy contact centers and automated voice systems don't just frustrate customers. They also miss valuable opportunities.

"Every problem in the contact center is an occasion to help your customer, to build and reinforce a relationship, and to instill more confidence and loyalty in the brand," says Quinlan.

He cites a global financial services company that had the same loyalty scores for ages and tried a variety of things to move the needle. It wasn't until the company re-engineered its customer experience practices that the scores went up—by double digits.

"Is cost reduction the most important metric for a contact center? Not when you see results like that," Quinlan claims. "This is a c-level business decision, not a technology decision. How do you want to build your brand? How are you going to support your customers? How are you going to create differentiation and loyalty? The cloud simplifies the discussion and the answers."

"Companies need to take a step back and make sure the customer experience is a high priority, and they need to break down silos and align their organization accordingly," Pollema adds. "Those that do invariably achieve their goals faster and have more satisfied customers."

LEARN MORE

To learn more about Tata Communications' hosted contact center solutions, visit www.tatacommunications.com/ig. To get more information on eLoyalty's integrated cloud offerings, visit www.loyalty.com/cloud-differentiated-features.shtml.

AN AUTOMATED CLOUD CONCIERGE

Cisco's recent acquisition of CliQr Technologies will simplify the deployment and management of applications across hybrid IT environments.

Imagine a cloud concierge. One that helps you define, deploy, and manage applications across a mix of data center and cloud environments. One that automatically applies your access control and security policies to those applications, no matter where they reside. And one that can measure both the price and performance of your cloud-based applications to help you make informed decisions about where they should be placed.

This is the promise of CliQr CloudCenter, which simplifies and automates application deployment and management across hybrid IT environments.

"Customers today have to manage a massive number of complex and different applications across many clouds," says Rob Salvagno, vice president of corporate development at Cisco. "With CliQr, Cisco will be able to help our customers realize the promise of the cloud and easily manage the lifecycle of their applications in any hybrid cloud environment."

"Cloud management software, like what CliQr sells, is a hot commodity among companies looking to save money by being more flexible about their data center operations than being locked into a single vendor," wrote Jonathan Vanian of *Fortune*. "The startup's technology is essentially a benchmarking service that can evaluate the pricing and features of cloud providers, and then figure out the cheapest way for a company's software to run on those environments."

But that's only a portion of the functionality. The combination of CliQr and Cisco technologies will make it simpler for organizations to automate and manage application policies throughout the entire data center stack. It provides compelling capabilities for companies moving their first applications to the cloud, deploying self-service IT environments, or wanting to gain visibility and control across a vast portfolio of clouds, applications, and users.

CliQr is already integrated with a number of Cisco's data center switching and cloud solutions, including Cisco Application Centric Infrastructure and the Intel® Xeon® processor-based Cisco Unified Computing System™. Cisco will continue to integrate CliQr with its data center portfolio, and CliQr has out-of-the box support for all major public cloud environments.

Your cloud concierge is standing by.

REQUEST A DEMO

Want to see how easy application-centric cloud management can be? To schedule a live demo and see CliQr CloudCenter in action, visit UnleashingIT.com/CliQr.

CITYMD

**WE'RE USING
HOW MANY
CLOUD
SERVICES!?!**

CITYMD
154 North 7th Street
Brooklyn, NY 11249
718.414.2013

CITYMD
OPEN EVERY DAY
Mon-Fri 8am-8pm
Weekends 9am-6pm

After a shocking discovery, CityMD is in the process of standardizing and optimizing its cloud usage to maintain compliance and boost application performance.

CityMD leaders thought their employees were using 15 to 20 cloud services. They were in for quite a surprise.

The New York-based urgent care provider has grown rapidly since its inception in 2010 and now operates 52 facilities in Manhattan, Brooklyn, Queens, Long Island, Westchester, and Rockland County. While cloud services helped make the swift expansion possible, the time had come to get a better handle on CityMD's cloud utilization and ensure there were no cracks through which sensitive data could fall.

"Anyone can sign up for a cloud service," says Robert Florescu, vice president of IT at CityMD, "but not everyone understands compliance requirements."

This became painfully clear when a CityMD employee mentioned they were having trouble uploading documents. After some investigation, Florescu found the problem involved a cloud-based file sharing application that was outside the purveyance of the company's IT staff.

"Cloud services are fine as long as we have data privacy agreements and safeguards in place," he says. "Without them, we could have some exposure."

CityMD tapped Cisco® Cloud Consumption Services to help discover and analyze its public cloud usage. And company leaders were shocked to learn 544 cloud services were being utilized, far more than the 15 to 20 that were on their radar.

REDUCING RISK, REDUNDANCY, AND LATENCY

After the initial shock wore off, Florescu and his team were able to scour the cloud consumption findings. Most of the services being utilized were nonfactors.

"Many of them were financial, e-commerce, and telecom sites," Florescu explains. "We don't have a problem with employees doing personal banking or shopping online or paying for their cell phone bill when they're on a break."

But some of the discovered cloud services were potentially risky. One group, for example, was utilizing a cloud-based help desk service without a data protection agreement.

"If someone got their hands on that data, they could impersonate the identity of one of our employees, get into our server room, and access all of our systems," says Florescu. "That didn't happen, of course, but we need to proactively eliminate any possibility of exposure."

Other cloud services—many of them for file sharing—were redundant, resulting in operational inconsistency and unnecessary cost.

"Why use Dropbox when we already have a contract in place with Google Drive?" Florescu opines. "With better visibility of our cloud usage, we can standardize, optimize, and take advantage of economies of scale."

CityMD can also improve application performance. Some of the discovered cloud services are bandwidth hogs, stimulating internal discussions and formalized practices.

"We want our doctors to be able to watch YouTube for new procedures, conference lectures, and medical news, but we don't want others watching YouTube for entertainment purposes during their lunch break if it's going to impact the performance of clinical applications," says Florescu. "It would be easy to block everything, but we also need to enable our staff. It's a fine line."

And that line is best determined with full visibility of the cloud services being employed. Florescu and his team are still analyzing the Cisco Cloud Consumption findings, and will use the data to optimize the company's firewall, consolidate its third-party services, and develop better standards and practices for cloud utilization.

"The cloud consumption service not only gave us greater visibility and understanding, but it also prompted better conversations between our business and IT teams," says Florescu. "We now have an onboarding process and checklist for cloud services, and we can show the business what is already in place and what they need to do to maintain compliance. It's been tremendously helpful."

MEASURE YOUR CLOUD USAGE

On average, organizations are using 20 times more cloud services than their IT departments realize. That can lead to security, privacy, and compliance risks as well as service and cost redundancy.

To measure your cloud utilization, get a free 30-day trial of Cisco Cloud Consumption Services at UnleashingIT.com/CCS.

CONNECTIVITY, ELEVATED

Rogers Communications has re-envisioned its business and is expanding its solutions portfolio with managed Wi-Fi and other cloud-based services.



According to a recent survey, a whopping 73 percent of Canadian enterprises say they waste time and money managing their IT infrastructure. Struggling to keep up with mobility demands and the increasing cost of maintaining dated IT systems, many are looking for an alternative.

“Large companies are wasting over 200 hours per week managing their networks alone, and countless small and medium-sized organizations don’t have any IT expertise at all,” says Paul Monaghan, director of product architecture at Rogers Communications, one of the largest communications and media companies in North America. “They need help.”

Rogers is a longtime provider of cable television, wireless telephony, and high-speed Internet for Canadian consumers, and also delivers fiber and Multiprotocol Label Switching (MPLS) networks for Canadian businesses. More recently, however, Rogers has been revamping its services portfolio and expanding its focus from pure connectivity to business enablement.

“We re-envisioned our business and quickly realized that we can offer far more value than an Internet connection,” Monaghan says. “If we free our customers from the burden and complexity of IT management, they can spend more time on business innovation and growth.”

That’s why Rogers is now rolling out a number of virtual managed services—delivered and fully maintained from the cloud.

STARTING WITH MANAGED WI-FI

The first jewel in Rogers’ new services crown is Wi-Fi as a Service built on Cisco Meraki® technology. Developed specifically for cloud management, Cisco Meraki products come out of the box with centralized management, layer 7 device and application visibility, real-time diagnostics, monitoring, and reporting.

“We are the first provider to offer Wi-Fi as a Service in Canada, and the demand has been astonishing,” Monaghan claims. “We knew it would be good, but we didn’t know it would be this good.”

The solution delivers more than mobile connectivity, he explains. Users can enjoy features like in-building wayfinding, and businesses can engage those users with mobile couponing while also leveraging analytics related to on-site traffic patterns. Monaghan says those capabilities are in high demand by retail, healthcare, and other public-facing industries, and also enterprise organizations that have mobile workforces and large or distributed work environments.

Equally important is the minimal equipment required to deliver such capabilities. With only small access points to deploy, there are no disruptive installations or large capital investments. And everything can be managed remotely by Rogers.

“It’s so easy for a customer to understand the costs and benefits of Wi-Fi as a Service, and we can get them up and running in a matter of days,” says Monaghan. “We want to make technology easy for businesses; like getting water from a tap.”



EXPANDING THE SERVICES PORTFOLIO

Rogers is now in the process of expanding its cloud-based services portfolio using Cisco Virtual Managed Services technology. Canadian businesses will soon be able to attain a comprehensive infrastructure, connect multiple sites, and take advantage of firewalls and other software—all through the cloud and fully managed by Rogers.

“Most businesses don’t need a complex MPLS network,” says Monaghan. “They simply need an Internet connection, and that’s been our core business for decades.”

What was old is new again, for both Rogers and its customers. Connectivity has been elevated—from a standalone, commoditized offering to a delivery mechanism for business efficiency, agility, and differentiation.

“The future will benefit the innovative,” Monaghan says. “We are delivering technology innovation, so our customers can focus on business outcomes.”

FREE UP YOUR IT TEAM

With a Cloud Managed Network Service from Rogers, you can give your team the freedom to focus on innovation by offloading day-to-day network maintenance. To learn more, call Rogers at 866-322-0498 or visit UnleashingIT.com/Rogers.

GROWTH AND DIFFERENTIATION, FULFILLED

In moving to the cloud and creating new digital offerings for its customers, Aero Fulfillment Services is taking warehousing and distribution to new heights.

Warehousing and distribution is a numbers game in a largely commoditized industry. It's a matter of getting products from point A to point B quickly and efficiently, with the least amount of storage time and freight cost.

But every industry can innovate, and every company can create competitive differentiation. That's exactly why Jeremy Shubert was hired as CIO of Aero Fulfillment Services.

"We want to develop digital offerings that help our clients grow," he explains. "Things like e-commerce, mobile, and social solutions that create a unique and customized experience—for our customers as well as their customers."

It's clear that Aero has loftier goals than moving products from one place to the next. The company wants to stand out among the traditional warehousing and distribution crowd. And it wants to become an extension and steward of its customers' brand.

MOVING TO THE CLOUD

Aero's first step toward creating new digital offerings for its clients was to shore up its own technology infrastructure.

"Before you can build out advanced digital solutions, you have to first address the data center and the network," says Shubert. "You need a good foundation on which to build."

That's why Aero turned to Peak 10 and RoundTower Technologies. Peak 10 hosts a Cisco Powered™ cloud

environment, and RoundTower helped migrate Aero's virtual machines into the Peak 10 cloud, configure the network connection features, and install the private network equipment.

"We wanted best-in-class, secure infrastructure, so it's great to be in a cloud that is powered by Cisco UCS® [Cisco Unified Computing System™, featuring Intel® Xeon® processors]," Shubert says. "And RoundTower worked closely with Peak 10 to make the migration a smooth one."

The benefits of the move have been significant. Aero's applications are performing better and are backed by stronger, faster disaster recovery capabilities. The company now provides enhanced data security and PCI compliance to its customers, and can more nimbly support their fluctuating needs. And Aero is already capitalizing on a wealth of time and cost savings.

"I always say that companies should stick to their core competencies," says Shubert. "Peak 10 runs a world-class data center way better than we can, and that frees us to focus on projects that help grow the business, generate revenue, and create differentiation."

ALIGNING BUSINESS AND CONSUMER MODELS

Aero supports mid-market manufacturers and Fortune 500 companies with complex distribution needs, helping them ship a wide variety and volume of products to consumers, small businesses, and retailers around the world. Just like Aero, their business models are evolving.



“Many of our clients have new or expanding direct-to-consumer operations,” Shubert says. “So we need to seamlessly support—and increasingly align—business-to-business and business-to-consumer models.”

To do so, Aero must orchestrate complex operations on the back end and provide a seamless experience on the front end. It must align the activities of countless suppliers, manufacturers, freight partners, and retailers. It must facilitate customer orders placed online, through call centers, and in brick and mortar outlets. And it must accommodate a wide variety of promotions, rebates, and coupons that impact orders and shipments.

“The cloud gives us better agility, which allows us to manage all of the backend complexity,” says Shubert. “We never have to worry about scalability or security, and neither do our customers.”

FOCUSING ON GROWTH, ANALYTICS

Aero’s new technology services are booming. With a powerful and flexible cloud infrastructure at its disposal, the company can optimize its warehouse and freight management operations. It can quickly spin up new microsites for campaigns and promotions. And it can create consumer-focused, omnichannel experiences that are tightly integrated with backend systems and work seamlessly on any device.

“These are revenue opportunities that spur new business, for us and our customers,” says Shubert, noting a revenue increase of roughly 50 percent in Aero’s technology services over the past year.

The company will continue to innovate, he adds, shattering longstanding warehouse and distribution norms in the process. Aero plans to invest in advanced analytics capabilities in the near future, and Shubert looks forward to creating new and unique digital solutions as part of Aero’s evolving services portfolio.

“Our clients are looking to grow their business,” he says, “and we have data and technology resources that can help.”

All backed by a world-class cloud.

FORGET COOKIE-CUTTER IT SOLUTIONS

Peak 10 supports production and business-critical workloads, tailoring services to fit your company’s unique needs. To learn more, call 866-473-2510 or sign up for the Peak 10 monthly newsletter at UnleashingIT.com/Peak10.

LANDING A LASTING IMPRESSION

Etihaad Airways virtualized three contact centers into a single virtual entity to improve customer service and efficiency in the competitive air travel industry.

As the air travel industry continues to consolidate, global standards are being employed to ensure control systems talk to each other, and this trend is starting to appear in airlines' internal systems too—particularly contact centers.

Etihad Airways has grown to become one of the world's leading airlines, serving 116 destinations around the world in multiple languages. It has also taken minority stakes in seven international airlines. When it set out to virtualize its contact centers, it wanted all three far-flung locations—Abu Dhabi and Al Ain in the United Arab Emirates and Manchester, United Kingdom—to act in perfect harmony.

“The challenge was those legacy contact centers were run as individual sites. There was no sense of a single contact center servicing the entire Etihad Airways business,” says the airline's project manager, Alex Holcroft. A transformation was required to establish uniformly high service standards, he said, and it also had to ensure easy contact center integration for new acquisitions.

Holcroft sought to make lasting changes that would drive the airline's future success and continue to provide guests with a first-class experience in 16 languages across 40 countries no matter where their call landed.

TURNING THREE INTO ONE

Contact centers are the airline's most important opportunity to create a positive first impression, and Etihad Airways anticipated enormous business benefits from transforming its three contact centers into one virtual entity.

“As the national carrier of the United Arab Emirates (UAE), we want passengers to feel like our guests from the very first call, wherever they are,” says Ruth Birkin, Etihad Airways' head of global contact centers.

The airline chose to implement the BT Cloud Contact Cisco platform delivered from the cloud on pay-as-you-go terms. It combined all three of Etihad Airways' contact centers and transformed them into one virtual entity that integrates inbound calls into a single queue.

“We're consuming the contact center as a service,” says Robert Webb, Etihad Airways' CIO and CTO. “We're able to use our 450 multi-lingual agents around our centers much more effectively. We've already started to see a 10 percent increase in their efficiency.”

PRECISION PLATFORM FOR THE FUTURE

Etihad Airways now has a complete set of advanced features, including interactive voice response (IVR), call recording, multichannel call handling, and workforce optimization. Callers from 40 countries can be directed to one of 16 language teams across the three contact centers.

“This is really a set of next-generation capabilities that's critical to the success of interactions with our guests around the world,” says Webb.



One particular feature from which the airline and its customers benefit is precision queuing, which uses logic to go beyond skills-based routing. “When the call comes in, precision queuing routes that guest to exactly the right agent,” says Birkin. “The agent may be in Manchester or they may be here in the UAE.”

The Cisco Powered™ platform is also able to easily accommodate new routes, such as Abu Dhabi to Madrid, which began service in 2015. For example, the process to set up Spanish-language menus on the global IVR system, as well as test new numbers, was fast and straightforward.

The airline was also able to increase productivity and better serve cargo customers, which account for 20 percent of its income. The workforce optimization features of the platform helped the cargo team bring even more professionalism to customer responses.

“The transformation has enabled us to automate tasks that were previously manual, such as rostering and call volume forecasting,” says Alistair Burrows, head of contact centers at Etihad Cargo. Cargo customers tend to have an average call abandonment time of 10 seconds. If a call's not answered quickly, the airline will likely lose the business, he says. “We can be there when they call and answer much more quickly than previously.”

Overall, Etihad Airways now has essential insight and management information across the three contact centers, allowing it to maximize performance and reduce operating costs through optimization, says Birkin. “The tools and technology that agents have on their desktops really put them in control of their work.”

LEARN MORE

BT Cloud Contact Cisco is a modular, omni-channel capability that allows you to scale the number of agents quickly, while only paying for what you need on a per agent, per month basis. To learn more, visit UnleashingIT.com/BTcloud.

MEXICAN RESEARCH CENTER TAKES QUANTUM COMMUNICATIONS LEAP

For more than 40 years, Mexico's Center for Research and Teaching in Economics (Spanish acronym CIDE) has built its reputation on advanced learning. Now the prestigious learning center is gaining recognition for its advanced communications as well.



Established in 1974, the government-run CIDE is part of a network of highly specialized public centers for research and higher education. It offers demanding academic programs and research opportunities in the areas of public administration, economics, international studies, legal studies, political studies, and history.

In 2015, CIDE took steps to put state-of-the-art collaboration tools into the hands of roughly 600 researchers, teachers, and students spread between facilities in Mexico City and Aguascalientes. Up until then, the primary means of communication was conventional telephony supported by an outdated digital distribution box that made the system expensive to operate and maintain.

Facing a limited budget and knowing that any new communication solution would need to meet high availability and security standards established by the Mexican Government, CIDE's IT department decided to investigate managed collaboration offerings as a viable option. A rigorous cost-benefit analysis indicated that moving from an on-premises phone system to an integrated, cloud-based collaboration platform would provide a quantum leap in both functionality and service, at a reduced cost.

"With a cloud service provider model, we knew we could improve connectivity between our two facilities and enable advanced communications, and we could do it while reducing costs and decreasing our IT administrative workload," says Juan Manuel, general secretary at CIDE.

The winning bid went to CollaborationOne, a Cisco Powered™ collaboration solution offered by EVOX, a leading provider of collaboration and communications solutions in Mexico. Its CollaborationOne hosted service uses a flexible, pay-as-you-go model that allows organizations like CIDE to preserve precious capital for core business priorities, rather than supporting infrastructure.

For the first time, faculty, researchers, and students are using voice, video, and chat to communicate effectively at any time, from any location. User profiles are configured according to collaborator type. A basic license is accessible from an office desk only, a professional license is accessible from anywhere that has Internet access, and an executive license is for advanced users, offering mobile support for multiple devices via the Internet and 3G.

"Today, you can dial directly to the extension of an office in Aguascalientes and they can answer on the cell phone, enabling direct communications even if the person isn't in the office," says Manuel, noting that users also have access to 27 integrated videoconferencing rooms.

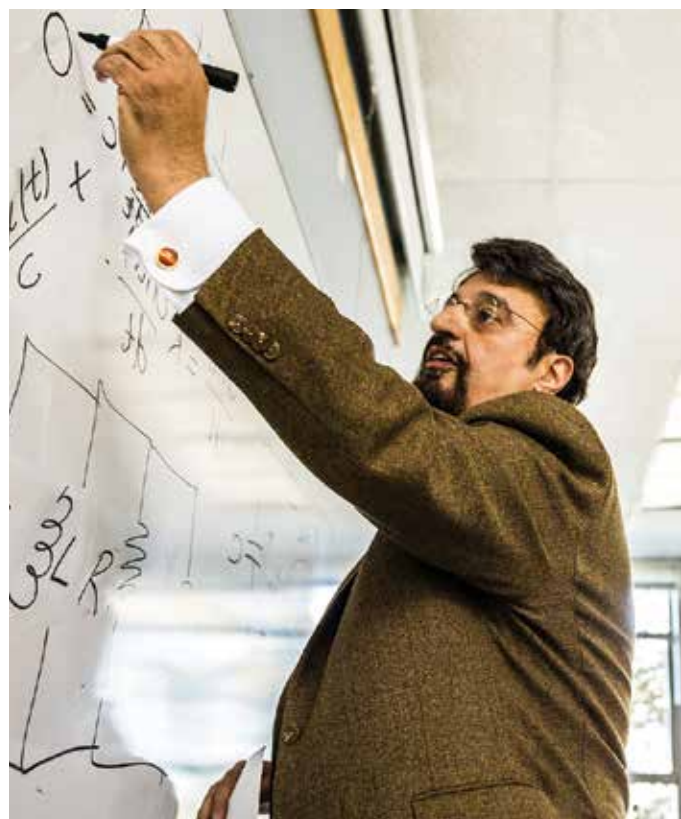
EVOX provided consulting and training services to ensure users understand the new technology, its benefits, and how to maximize its potential.

"Our adoption model starts by evangelizing the solution, teaching users how to use the technology, and creating awareness of the pros. We also emphasize the cons of not

exploiting the tools fully," says EVOX director Luis Pedro Padilla. "Once the implementation is complete, our goal is to maintain a continuous process of innovation within their organization."

CIDE's IT department is also benefitting from the hosted collaboration solution. Resources are now focused on identifying further productivity gains instead of troubleshooting connection problems, explains Manuel.

"By seeking external support for our communications requirement, we are free to develop our strategic activities, which include research and teaching in socioeconomic subjects," says Manuel. "Our advanced communications service allows us to keep our focus on advanced learning opportunities."



COLLABORATE IN THE CLOUD

CollaborationOne from EVOX is a cloud-based collaboration solution that integrates applications, processes, and services for more efficient, cost-effective communications. To learn more, visit www.collaborationone.com.

MANAGING DISTRIBUTED OPERATIONS AND ASSETS FROM THE CLOUD

Why mining and tunneling contractor Procon has adopted a cloud-based ERP system.



ERP systems are at the heart of every mining company. With globally distributed operations and work crews, fleets of vehicles and heavy machinery, and razor thin profit margins, they are essential for survival—especially in a challenging market environment.

“The resource sector is in the doldrums,” says Al Harkness, IT manager at Procon, a mining and tunneling contractor based in British Columbia, Canada. “And that places a premium on efficiency.”

Procon’s legacy ERP system wasn’t up to snuff. Built and customized over the course of two decades, only a part-time application developer truly understood its intricacies. And it was primarily an offline system that required timesheets, materials requisitions, and other business needs to be submitted via fax or email, and then manually entered.

“We have job sites around the world, in extremely remote locations,” explains Henry Wulkan, senior project manager at Procon. “Some of our teams had to travel to the nearest town to fax their work hours, and some of those hours were scribbled on napkins.”

PEACE OF MIND

With mining operations in North America, Europe, and Asia, Procon sought a better way to manage its equipment and work crews. It found the answer with an SAP ERP system that is hosted in the Sungard Availability Services (Sungard AS) Cloud—a Cisco Powered™ service—and administered by Illumiti, which specializes in SAP integration and management.

“It’s a hands-off approach, and that gives us peace of mind,” says Harkness. “We never have to worry about servers, patching, application management, security, or monitoring. It’s all handled for us by Sungard AS and Illumiti.”

The cloud-based solution is far more robust and accessible than Procon’s former ERP system, even in remote locations. Procon miners connect to the system via satellite link to enter their time and submit materials requests. Even when the satellite connection is slow, the SAP application is always available and ready to retrieve data.

“All of our finances, payroll, purchasing, and project controls are in the system,” Wulkan says. “It’s a business driver for us, and it would be detrimental if it went down.”

The system also provides better, timelier information about Procon’s mining operations and business performance. What was historically spread among countless spreadsheets is now in a central, online location for quick access, analysis, and reporting.

“We can manage our projects much better and react much faster,” says Wulkan, noting the ability to track projected versus actual costs in real time for each mining site, spanning payroll, materials, and other expenses.



When the resource sector turns back around, Procon is ready for business—and its new ERP system will have no problem handling the load.

“Scalability, availability, and security are important as we grow and pursue additional international projects,” says Harkness. “We feel much more comfortable with our ERP system in an enterprise-class cloud.”

LEARN MORE ABOUT CLOUD-BASED ERP

ERP systems are critical for asset-intensive organizations managing complex projects around the world, often in remote locations. Many are placing those systems in the cloud for better accessibility, availability, and cost efficiency.

Illumiti surveyed 140 executives in asset-intensive industries to learn more about their ERP and cloud strategies. To see the findings, download the report at erp-decisions.com.

POWERING THE MOST CONNECTED GAMES EVER

2015's Pan Am and Parapan Am Games delivered always there, always on communications and collaboration across 30 venues spanning 350 kilometers.

When the organizing committee for the 2015 Toronto Pan Am and Parapan Am games began envisioning the largest multi-sport event ever hosted in Canada, the team was clear on its goal. These games were going to be the most connected ever.

What did that mean? It meant connecting mobile volunteers, athletes, and fans with voice, video, messaging, and social media. It also meant delivering that connectivity and collaboration in a dynamic environment, where sites would go up right before events and be taken down immediately post event.

"We felt as an organizing committee that we wanted this to be one of the most connected games ever," says Kevin Harshaw, director, venue technology and IT communications, 2015 Pan Am and Parapan Am Games. "Achieving that goal required Wi-Fi, Internet services, and data processing capabilities at all of the venues."

PLUG IN, LIGHT UP, AND WORK

To deliver the reliability and security for such an ambitious initiative, Harshaw partnered with Cisco® and Allstream.

With Allstream Unified Communications as a Service (UCaaS) based on Cisco Hosted Collaboration Solution (HCS), Harshaw was able to leverage a number of industry-leading, cloud-based collaboration applications as a versatile, fully integrated solution, managed in real time. Key applications included IP-based voice and video, instant messaging, presence, and mobility services, along with an integrated contact center.

Allstream complemented its cloud-based HCS solution by providing Internet connectivity and remote management for the many networks operating at new, existing, and temporary venues.

"Allstream provided a terrific level of support. The team developed detailed engineering plans on how it was going to implement solutions that we devised collaboratively. Leveraging Allstream best practices and providing dedicated staffing during the Games enabled the team to deliver solutions seamlessly," says Harshaw.

For every site "build," time was of the essence. The technology and connectivity had to work when the plug went in. Execution had to be flawless. There was virtually no time to fix issues.



“There’s an expectation that those services are always there, always on, and that you have unlimited bandwidth to meet your needs, whether it’s to send photographs or stories or to do social,” says Harshaw.

With next-generation collaboration tools, the versatility of video, and the reliable, secure IP infrastructure, workers, athletes, and fans were able to communicate, collaborate, share content, and post on social media across the entire games environment. The infrastructure also supported non-stop ticketing services, live broadcasts, event results, and security information.

91,900 CONNECTIONS DELIVERED SUCCESSFULLY

In total, 91,900 connections were delivered successfully at these games, and 98 percent of those connections significantly exceeded performance expectations. As a result, communications were smooth throughout the Games, event staff remained productive, and the user experience was unparalleled.

“HCS played a huge role in communications, not just for the organizing committee, but also for a number of our client groups,” says Harshaw. “We were able to provide services for groups including The National Olympic Committee, the host broadcaster, and the international press so they could run their own IT shops and deliver services to their stakeholders and audiences.”

GET A FREE ASSESSMENT

See if a hosted collaboration solution (HCS) is right for your business by determining the operational improvements and measuring the potential cost savings. For a complimentary HCS assessment, contact Allstream at 855-299-7050 or connect@allstream.com.

PAN AM BY THE NUMBERS

The 2015 Pan Am and Parapan Am Games in Toronto were the largest multi-sport events ever hosted in Canada. The scope of the communications matched the scope of the Games.

A large, dynamic environment:

Pan Am Games

- 30+ venues spanning more than 350km in Toronto and 14 other municipalities in southern Ontario
- 20,000+ volunteers / 6000+ athletes

Parapan Am Games (held two weeks later)

- 10+ venues spread across southern Ontario (leveraging some existing Pan Am sites, but on different days)
- 10,000+ volunteers / 1600+ athletes

Technology, delivered from the cloud for the first time:

- 1571 HCS seats
- More than 9900 endpoints deployed, including fixed, mobile, and softphones
- Applications included Cisco Jabber®, presence and conferencing, integrated telepresence, and extension mobility

Equipment to operate the Games:

- 1500 PCs
- 600 printers/copiers
- 1200 phones
- 1200 wireless access points
- 6000 network drops
- 250 network switches

The most connected Games ever:

- More than 91,900 connections completed successfully throughout the duration of the Games
- 98 percent of connections exceeded expected performance thresholds
- Toronto 2015 volunteers provided live service to more than 42,000 attendees using Cisco Telepresence®

CLOUD FOR COMPLIANCE

To meet Sarbanes-Oxley requirements and facilitate ongoing business expansion, CECO Environmental has placed its accounting and ERP systems in the cloud.



Smoke and mirrors, with liberal use of duct tape, is never a good way to ensure regulatory compliance.

That's why CECO Environmental, a global leader in environmental, energy, and fluid handling and filtration technologies, has adopted the cloud. After multiple acquisitions and international expansion over the past few years, the company was having a harder time meeting Sarbanes-Oxley requirements.

"We went from a handful of offices to 40 locations seemingly overnight," says Rick Burcham, director of IT for CECO. "And these weren't small acquisitions. One of them doubled the size of our company."

CECO found itself with a hodgepodge of infrastructure systems and business applications. It needed a way to standardize and consolidate its accounting and ERP packages for compliance and auditing purposes.

The company turned to 3z, a Kentucky-based provider of virtualization, managed hosting, disaster recovery, and consulting services. 3z's cloud environment—built on the Intel® Xeon® processor-based Cisco Unified Computing System™—has become a central hub for all of CECO's outlets and the business applications on which they rely.

"We want to get out of the hardware maintenance and lifecycle management business," says Burcham. "With our infrastructure, including accounting and ERP applications, in the 3z cloud, we don't have to worry about systems integration, security, access control, or auditing. It's all handled for us."

And CECO can continue its aggressive growth strategy without fear of compliance gaps.

"Instead of duct tape, smoke, and mirrors, we have a more consistent and seamless onboarding process for new acquisitions," says Burcham. "The cloud helps us operate and collaborate as one company instead of a collection of silos."

GET A FREE CONSULTATION

For a complimentary compliance and auditing consultation and the ways 3z cloud services can help your organization, email sales@3z.net or call 859-331-9004.

Optimize your cloud strategy for the connected world



Services designed for your workloads

- End-to-end security from your private cloud and data center to the public cloud
- Enablers of Fast IT – Application Centric Infrastructure, Cisco Intercloud Fabric
- Local and global services – infrastructure, collaboration, database...



Global ecosystem for unlimited choice

- Public, private, hybrid, managed, and virtual managed consumption models
- Cloud services and network capabilities designed to work together
- Cisco and partners strategically aligned from solution creation to cloud delivery



Proven performance

- Enterprise class SLAs for the most demanding applications
- Independently validated services assure performance
- Industry innovation and leadership for enterprise scalability

cisco.com/go/ciscopowered

 Powered