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UNIFIED COMMUNICATIONS ADOPTION OUTPACES EXPECTATIONS

Investment in Unified Communications infrastructure is set to expand in the next two years

Johannesburg, South Africa, 20 August 2007 – New research released today by Dimension Data reveals that unified communications technologies are high on organisations' investment agendas following the rapid adoption of new technologies by IT users. Organisations perceive unified communications technologies to be reasonably mature, and will be investing in these technologies in the next six months to two years.

The research, commissioned by Dimension Data and conducted by Datamonitor, surveyed 390 IT managers and 524 end-users across 13 countries in the United States, Asia Pacific and Europe, Middle East and Africa.

The findings show that organisations view click-to-dial on desktops (52%), and presence (42%) as maturing technologies which will be routinely used in the corporate environment within two years.

Most organisations have already invested in infrastructure technologies with 37% of companies currently using IP telephony, followed by 36% using a video conferencing infrastructure. Although mobile VoIP is not widely used, an investment is on corporate agendas, in the next two years.

The United States leads the way in IP telephony adoption (60%) with Middle East and Africa having the lowest penetration at 13%.

Rob Lopez, Managing Director, Solutions at Dimension Data says, "The research indicates that unified communications and the associated technologies are more widely adopted than anticipated. Whilst organisations have been reluctant or unable to adopt these technologies as a corporate standard, Dimension Data clients around the world are telling us that consumers are bringing these technologies into the workplace.



“Organisations intuitively understand the value of unified communications and the associated benefits. These include improved employee productivity and customer service, as well as infrastructure cost savings. In addition, the move to work-from-home - or flexi-working - initiatives around the world has also impacted the increase in adoption.”

The research also confirms that the management of unified communication technologies is being outsourced more frequently than other technologies, with 38% of the sample currently having technologies managed onsite or fully managed, followed by voice/data network management (34%).

Lopez concludes, “While companies consider the functionality that unified communications offers as core to conducting business in a profitable and cost effective way, these technologies can become complex to deploy and manage. Deploying unified communications as a corporate tool requires a stable operating environment, standardised systems and common identity management. Some organisations will therefore opt to outsource the management of unified communications to companies like Dimension Data.”

Other key findings in the Dimension Data survey include: unified communications is a vibrant and developing market; security is a concern rather than an issue; unified communications technologies are more likely to be outsourced or externally managed than other technologies; and unified communications mindshares are dominated by alpha brands within each market.

For more, go to www.dimensiondata.com/uc

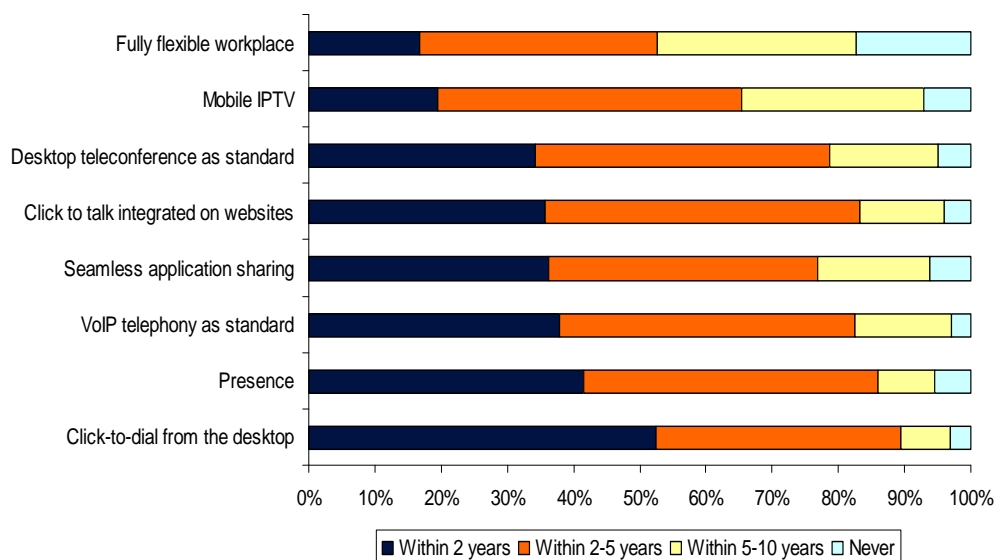
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About Dimension Data

Dimension Data plc (LSE:DDT), a specialist IT services and solution provider, helps clients plan, build, support and manage their IT infrastructures. Dimension Data applies its expertise in networking, security, operating environments, storage and contact centre technologies and its unique skills in consulting, integration and managed services to create customised client solutions.



IT Managers: How long do you think it will be before the following technologies will be mature technologies routinely used throughout the market?



Source: Dimension Data's Unified Communications Study 2007

Glossary of terms

Sources: www.wikipedia.org, www.microsoft.com and www.dimensiondata.com

Click to Dial

Click to dial enables users to automatically call someone from their computer by clicking on their names. The computer places the call. It doesn't matter if you see their name in an e-mail or inside a business productivity application (i.e. Microsoft Word) as their contact information and the ability to reach them is always available.

Presence

In computer and telecommunications networks, presence information is a status indicator that conveys ability and willingness of a potential communication partner to communicate. Presence is a key benefit of unified communications because it unites all the contact information for an individual (telephone, conferencing, instant messaging, e-mail, calendaring). People's availability, their contact information, and the ability to communicate with them are integrated and always just a click away.

Click to Call on Web Sites

CTC is a service which lets users click a button and immediately speak with a customer service representative or other user. The call can either be carried over VoIP, or the customer may request an immediate call back by entering their own phone number. One significant benefit to click-to-call providers is that it allows companies to monitor when online visitors change from the website to a phone sales channel.

**Mobile IPTV**

IPTV (Internet Protocol Television) is a system where a digital television service is delivered by using Internet Protocol over a network infrastructure, which may include delivery by a broadband connection. A general definition of IPTV is television content that, instead of being delivered through traditional broadcast and cable formats, is received by the viewer through the technologies used for computer networks. Mobile IPTV implies the delivery of television services to mobile devices such as cellular telephones and PDAs.