

# Hosted Collaboration Services vs Premises-Based



COMPARISON

## CHALLENGE

One of the basic decisions that the IT group has to make is whether to acquire, deploy and manage the equipment and services themselves in a premise-based solution, or work with a trusted partner, like West Unified Communications Services to provide hosted, or “cloud-based” services. To compare the two approaches, take a look at some of the common business concerns that influence that decision.

ON-PREMISES	HOSTED COLLABORATION SERVICES
<b>Upfront Equipment Costs</b>	
On-premises solutions require a large amount of upfront capital and internal IT resources to purchase, install and configure new equipment.	Upfront costs are substantially reduced with cloud-based solutions, because of the reduced equipment expenditures required
<b>Telecom/Network Costs</b>	
Multiple carriers are required in order to provide basic voice and network services, like dial tone, long distance, Internet and WAN. Multi-location enterprises also face a larger number of regional vendors and carriers required to manage voice services and dramatically increases internal costs, like long distance between locations.	Cloud-based solutions can be delivered across a multi-carrier, nationwide MPLS network that is optimized for voice, video and application delivery. Further, a single vendor for the entire enterprise reduces internal expenses, like long distance costs between locations.
<b>Hidden Costs</b>	
In addition to physical equipment, premises-based solutions have hidden costs like installation, integration and maintenance, not to mention employee resources, physical and virtual security, backup resources, servers, testing, service vendor fees and obsolescence.	Cloud-based solutions deliver a high degree of transparency, so there are no hidden costs.
<b>Ongoing Billing</b>	
On-premises services are based on maximum line capacity and service availability per location, so enterprises end up paying more for underutilized services.	Cloud-based solutions are subscription-based (per user), so enterprises spend only as much as desired. Billing usually occurs monthly or usage-based.
<b>Implementation</b>	
Premises-based deployment of infrastructure is an extensive process, as many service vendors are required to work together to install and test hardware and software components, tying up valuable IT resources coordinating the effort.	Utilizing on-demand capability, cloud-based applications make deployment a simple, fast and effective process;

<b>Upgrades</b>	
<p>Future additions and upgrades to premises-based solutions are traditionally modular and often require additional vendors, which can cause integration issues and additional costs. Due to the length of product development cycles, most “upgrades” are outdated by the time they are finally implemented.</p>	<p>Cloud-based solutions deliver the latest technologies directly to the dealer. Since upgrades don’t require extra hardware components, service updates and functionality upgrades are instantly available to all. Further, receiving applications via the cloud removes integration issues and the need for multiple providers.</p>
<b>Reporting</b>	
<p>Reporting capabilities are limited by the age and capabilities of the equipment purchased. Often, information must be collected in batch runs that only deliver next-day reporting capabilities.</p>	<p>Cloud-based solutions provide a much higher degree of transparency, allowing for finer control of the network infrastructure and real-time reporting of voice, data and other applications used.</p>
<b>Enterprise Scalability</b>	
<p>Each location within an enterprise must expend the large upfront capital at each location, often through regional vendors and separate networks. These additional service and maintenance contracts increase internal costs within the enterprise.</p>	<p>Scalability in the cloud allows for additional locations to be added quickly and efficiently. Often, enterprises utilize our cloud-based solutions as a migration path to bring other locations online as older equipment becomes obsolete.</p>
<b>Solution Scalability</b>	
<p>Premises-based solutions require the purchase of new equipment to add new functionality to the existing network. In addition, new services traditionally require new vendors, requiring greater IT management resources.</p>	<p>Cloud-based services can be added or changed easily, while giving IT administrators the ability to have the visibility and control to make changes on the fly.</p>
<b>Support for At-Home &amp; Remote Employees</b>	
<p>On-premises systems are physically bound to a location to support directly-connected users at a location. Most on-premises systems do not have the ability to include remote or at-home users without additional hardware, which is expensive and difficult to configure and maintain, if possible at all.</p>	<p>Cloud-based solutions allow enterprises with at-home or remote employees to have the flexibility to deliver services and applications, as if they were onsite. Further, they are more efficient and operate at a reduced expense.</p>
<b>Support for Multi-Site Dealers</b>	
<p>Premises-based systems are anchored to a geographic location and are not easily adapted to working with other locations, creating a silo effect. While there are adaptations, they require additional hardware and telecom expenditures. Worse, many premises-based systems include a single point of failure, which can cause the entire system to go down.</p>	<p>A cloud-based solution delivers a comprehensive and fully-managed solution that puts all locations and remote workers on one centralized platform. This significantly reduces IT resources and simplifies troubleshooting and management, regardless of location. Cloud-based solutions provide network redundancy and emergency call routing capabilities, allowing enterprises to have sound business continuity and disaster recovery plans.</p>

## Maintenance

Purchasing a premises-based system usually demands internal IT resources for management and support. However, maintenance is occasionally performed by the vendor or reseller, but may require the purchase of an additional service contract.

Cloud-based solutions include upgrades and maintenance of the applications delivered and the underlying equipment infrastructure.

## Security

In a premises-based security solution, IT departments must manage multiple remote security appliances, which act as single points-of-failure, making maintaining proper security patches and policies incredibly challenging.

Cloud-based service delivery allows providers to deliver a high level of security and data protection. This includes voice/data security, network security, unified threat management services, co-location capabilities, systems /network redundancy and access to a 24/7 network operations center.