

# Taking a Second Look at the Top 12 Trends

Diane Royer, Senior Marketing Manager, Avaya

Is the year already half over? Where did the time go?

Some of you may have seen my blog back in February about the "12 Communication Trends for 2012." Six months later, the cool thing is that this continues to be a very hot and relevant set of topics for just about anyone who wants to quickly get a perspective on the top communication trends and how to plan for them.

This year's trends have generated so much interest that we decided to take a mid-year review. The second look at the prognostications is captured in the new white paper, "Twelve communications trends for 2012 Update: On target?"

Here are all 12 broken down into three categories: hits, near hits, and misses, along with commentary:

### Hits

#1: Mobility raises the expectation of availability. "It's not hard to find evidence that mobile connectivity is changing what consumers want from businesses and what employers expect from their people. It's the smartphone, tablet or other mobile device you're holding in your hand."

# 4: Businesses advance from social media to social business. "Companies are increasingly using social media not only as a listening post but as a springboard to action. Establishing a command center dedicated to monitoring and responding to social media and social networking activity is becoming commonplace. "

# 7: Social interactions expose customer care's flaws. "Regardless of how much activity they generate on their own, businesses are inescapably immersed in the social media world. If they provide bad products or service, they'll hear about it in the social sphere. "

### Near Hits

#2: Contact centers test the value of voice. "People are now accustomed to finding information they need online or by using interactive voice response (IVR) systems. But sometimes they really want or need to talk with someone. Businesses are increasingly taking a multimodal view that embraces the full scope of interactions, from a customer's query to an online chat to live human interaction."

#5: Social media and customer care enter into an arranged marriage. "Not that long ago, the customer care team and the social media team in most organizations operated on separate tracks. Now, it's increasingly likely that each knows what the

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other is doing and that the two work together. "

#6: The SIP bar is raised again. "Organizations have been taking a stepwise approach to deploying Session Initiation Protocol (SIP) technology, typically starting with the money-saving move of installing SIP trunks. Having used SIP as the foundation to streamline enterprise networks or extend advanced communications to their small and medium-sized businesses, SIP users are now entering the next phase of adoption: deployment of SIP-enabled applications."

# 9: Continuous connectivity drives communications support services. "If you wait for someone to report a problem with mission-critical communications, you may already be too late. Issue response can only be accelerated so much, so it's imperative to head off trouble before it happens."

# 10: Clients take control of managed services. "Organizations are continuing to take a more active role in deciding whether to enter a managed service relationship. Key questions they are asking in this process include: Are our IT operating costs predictable? Do we have the IT staff we need?"

#11: UC managed services/outsourcing facilitates alignment between IT and business units. "In the past, decisions to employ managed services or outsourcing were typically made by the IT department with little business unit input. Today, IT and business units are increasingly coming together to identify whether and where cost savings can be achieved."

### Misses

# 3: Contextual data spans the last mile of personal productivity. "Contextual data provides information that frames up encounters and collaborations, whether voice, video, chat or text. At this point, contextual capabilities remain in their infancy, with promising prototypes surfacing in the marketplace. Adoption will expand as users refine their contextual preferences and vendors respond with flexible, affordable solutions."

# 8: IT support staffs converge, part 2. "Businesses are eager to capture the value in blending voice and data support to accelerate technology deployment and problem diagnosis and resolution. But they continue to proceed cautiously, perhaps too much so in the eyes of some users. Organizations are finding that incident postmortems can provide a helpful stepping stone for driving convergence."

# 12: "True" UC apps proliferate. "Expectations for unified communications continue to increase, especially as BYOD enables true UC applications on smartphones, tablets and other devices. But barriers remain, as conflicting technologies and approaches limit usability and slow adoption."

How do these hits, near hits, and misses align with how your year is unfolding and what 2013 might offer? Pick out the top 3 that are the most relevant for your business operation. Next, challenge your communication provider or

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communications consulting team to recommend 3 near term things that you should consider in order to take advantage of these movements within the communication industry.

As in previous years, we greatly appreciate the feedback and engaging conversations from our clients, industry analysts and global IT leaders. Would love to hear your thoughts and feedback on this recent assessment update.

### **About the Author**

Diane Royer, as senior marketing manager, is focused on directing thought leadership and integrating services into Avaya Client Service solution launches. Diane's more than 30 years of business experience includes telecommunications marketing, sales and field operations. She has also been as a market researcher for a leading international firm and a loan officer for the U.S. Small Business Administration. Her marketing work has earned several honors including a Telly Award and an Aurora Gold Award. A native New Yorker, Diane holds a master of business administration from Adelphi University and a bachelor of business administration with honors from Baruch, City University of New York.

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