

## **Consumerization gives SMBs technological edge over larger enterprises**

### **- Canalys publishes Unified Communications Analysis trends update**

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**For immediate release**

Canalys today announced its latest trends analysis regarding the impact of consumerization on unified communications (UC) and collaboration, signaling a growing opportunity for small and medium-sized businesses (SMBs) to out-innovate their larger enterprise counterparts. The report also highlights how the consumer experiences of corporate decision-makers are shifting vendor business models.

‘Tools that were once only available to the largest of enterprises can now give SMBs a serious competitive edge,’ said Canalys Analyst Duncan Clark. ‘SMBs, for example, have the flexibility to roll out new pay-per-user hosted services more rapidly. Those SMBs that deploy effective UC strategies can behave like - or even outpace - larger organizations.’

‘Likewise, the end-user experience is becoming more relevant. The move to software and web-based applications, easily accessible from any location, has improved the usability of many solutions, in line with end-user demand for simplicity,’ said Clark.

‘Consumerization is not so much a triumph of the ‘bring-your-own-model,’ but rather a shift in the perception of consumer solutions as valid alternatives to enterprise products,’ said Clark. ‘Regardless of hierarchal level, employees are introducing consumer products and services into all aspects of the enterprise - from devices through to social media marketing and web conferencing.’

Some traditionally enterprise-focused UC vendors have incorporated consumer-inspired products and features into their offerings. Pad-style devices, such as the Cisco Cius, are one such example. Other vendors are forming new alliances across different technology markets to help address hybrid customer demands. Virtualization specialist VMware, for example, announced a partnership with LG Electronics Mobile to promote a single device for business and personal use. Meanwhile, Avaya has opted to focus on a user-friendly collaboration environment via its Desktop Video Device.

More consumer-focused brands, such as Skype, are aggressively seeking greater credibility as business solutions providers. Brands with strong consumer backgrounds, such as Microsoft and Google, are set to gain from this market trend.

‘Consumers’ constant exposure to new technologies in the software and Internet world has put greater pressure on UC vendors to match the pace, which traditional players have had trouble doing in the past,’ said Clark. ‘At the same time, the very heart of lucrative PBX sales - desk phones - is at serious risk, as more mobile and PC-centric end users challenge the status quo, further threatening established vendors.’

‘Due to changing business models, more traditional UC vendors will need to shift not only their offerings, but also their go-to-market strategies,’ said Clark. ‘On the surface, the new UC business environment offers channel partners opportunities to grow, by providing software as a service, or consulting. The slow uptake of the former, however, indicates that the channel has yet to adapt its sales processes to reflect a more value-added approach.’

### **About Canalys Unified Communications Analysis**

Through the Unified Communications Analysis service, Canalys tracks the transition of enterprise telephony from traditional to IP-based solutions, as well as the uptake of video telephony, messaging, conferencing and contact center applications. It examines changes in distribution trends and end-user devices and advises vendors on the best approach for different markets. The service also provides quarterly estimates of enterprise telephony shipments by vendor, technology, size and channel.

### **About Canalys**

Canalys serves the technology industry with high-quality analysis, produced via a rigorously consistent methodology that is complemented by attentive customer service. Members of its talented, ambitious and globally integrated team are leading-edge users of technology. Canalys deploys innovative, web-based solutions to gather research, connect communities and provide customer-friendly deliverables. These investments underpin the company’s long-term approach to consistent, profitable global growth.

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