UC, Cloud, WebRTC, and the Accelerated Pace of Technology - What is still relevant?

Roberta J. Fox

After a brief hiatus, we are back providing you with our thoughts, observations, concerns and considerations for this crazy, quickly changing, world of communications technologies that we all choose to participate in.

On Feb. 5th, I joined in on a UC Strategies podcast debate entitled "Is Presence Dead?" Interesting point is that some of our Canadian clients are just starting to consider deploying UC collaboration apps like presence, and here some of my US counterparts are already questioning whether it is dead or not?

I also provided my opinion and perspective on 2016 UC predictions for technology on January 8th. I encourage you to take a listen to this podcast. My fellow UC experts certainly have different viewpoints and perspectives. Well worth the time to get our different viewpoints.

Many of my fellow UC experts also attended the recent Enterprise Connect 2016 conference. One of the more interesting notes on cloud technologies was from my fellow analyst Blair Pleasant. I always enjoy reading her perspective as a well-rounded industry analyst and researcher.

For those of you that don't know us, Sheila McGee-Smith, Blair Pleasant and myself are the self-proclaimed female geniuses of the UC/telecom/contact centre space for North America. We consistently attend, participate and comment at leading vendor and industry events, bringing our unique creative, insightful curiosity and commitment to truly understand what the industry is doing, where it is going and what it all means to customers.

As many of you have observed, all three of us are also not afraid to ask the senior leaders the 'tough questions', that regularly bring fear to their hearts when they see us raise our hands.

I think it is important, as consultants and analysts, to probe to understand not only new technologies, but how and why they can and should be applied to business problems. As many of you know, numerous failed technology projects had nothing to do with the technology itself, but were hampered by people and change management issues.

From various economic indicators, 2016 will continue to be a challenging year for the tech sector, with clients tightening up on spending, expecting more from their vendors and also expected to do more with less than ever before. This is on top of growing expectations from internal and external customers expecting us to communicate via the device and application of their choice across time and distance. Go figure!

We continue to evolve and adapt our consulting and procurement and analysis services to "Consulting as a Service" via our growing ePROcurement applications and services, which is also a sign of the times of continuing to adapt to change at an accelerated pace.

Hold on to your hats, keep learning and changing and reach out to us if you need the support through your ICT journey! We are here to help you survive and win the race!

As always, we welcome your thoughts and [feedback](#) on this article and our publication.

INDUSTRY NEWS & COMMENTARY

ICTC Trends Report Released
Check out the latest ICTC report, "Digital Talent, Road to 2020 and Beyond" FOX Chairman, Roberta Fox provided input into for Canada's National Digital Strategy.

IBM Buys Ustream
IBM purchased Ustream, a San Francisco based firm that offers a video services platform that delivers both live and on-demand video for clients such as Facebook, NASA and Samsung.

Editor-in-Chief: More funding for SMBs technology investment is needed, as well as collaboration between various federal and provincial programs to encourage technology investment and development.

Boardwalk Joins Charter

Charter, a Canadian Avaya and Juniper Networks technology solutions provider, has purchased Boardwalk Communications, a Canadian Cisco partner that specializes in the health care industry.

Editor-in-Chief: This is an example of telecom VARs acquiring competitive products and services is following trends that the IT VARs have done for years. It will be interesting to see how this consolidated company can leverage both technology and human assets to grow their business in the future, particularly in the people oriented health care sector. (We look forward to reviewing some of the digital health solutions and reporting back in the future).

Dimension Data Buys Ceryx

Dimension Data, a Global Cisco Partner, has purchased Ceryx Inc., a Unified Communications and collaboration (UCC) solution provider, based in Toronto. All of Ceryx's 55 employees will be retained, and the Ceryx brand will be part of Dimension Data's ITaaS cloud services unit.

Editor-in-Chief: We have been watching with interest the expansion of Dimension Data throughout the globe, and now in Canada. I have had a chance to meet some of the global executives during UC Strategies pod-casts, and believe that they are a force to be reckoned with. We encourage our enterprise and government customers to check out their research white papers on various tech topics as well.

ShoreTel Embeds Inside Skype for Business

ShoreTel has enhanced its integration to Microsoft Skype for Business with a new plug-in that embeds telephony controls inside the Skype for Business client. The plug-in supports Lync 2013, Skype for Business 2015, and Skype for Business 2016 clients in both Office 365 and on-premises environments.

Editor-in-Chief: What is interesting about their approach is that ShoreTel does not require a separate license. The plug-in is part of the mid-tier bundle for ShoreTel Connect CLOUD and Connect ON-SITE.

FOX GROUP evolving publishing services

As FOX GROUP evolves and expands its 'Consulting-as-a-service' offers, we will be moving our e-zine publication to their new ePRO site. This will enable us to provide news and commentary on a more regular basis and also provide the opportunity for the readers to add comments on our blog articles.

Editor-in-Chief: Our new ePRO membership site will enable us to produce and distribute not only our

Publisher: Along with their recent purchase of Clearleap, Asperta and Cleversafe, this pretty well completes their push to offer a full, enterprise-level cloud-based video service package. Another example of how the ability to purchase wisely, can speed up your delivery to the market, rather than the slower route of in-house development.

Primus Sold to Birch

Birch Communications Inc., an American-based provider of communications, network and cloud services has completed the Canadian component of its purchase of select assets and customer base of Primus Telecommunications Canada Inc. and its affiliates (Primus). Birch plans to continue to use the Primus brand, and will also expand the Birch brand into Canada.

Editor-in-Chief: It will be interesting to see how Birch markets, sells and supports its future Canadian customer base. Many US firms still believe that we are the 51st state and should be treated the same as their US customers. This is not the case, and hopefully they will figure this out sooner rather than later.

Over Two Million Cloud Subscribers by Mitel

Mitel announced that it surpassed the mark of two million cloud business communications subscribers. This latest milestone reflected the addition of more than 70,000 seats since the beginning of the year.

Editor-in-Chief: This news items reinforces the growing adoption of cloud telephony, contact centre and UC services for not just the small business market, but moving up size to mid and large enterprises.

Interactive Intelligence Wins Award

Interactive Intelligence has won the Cloud Computing Magazine's 2015 Product of the Year Award for their PureCloud Engage product.

Publisher: PureCloud Engage is a comprehensive set of Cloud-based contact center/IP PBX services running on Amazon Web Services.

Xerox Includes Language Translation Services

Xerox's new printers include language translation services for $1USD a page. Xerox has released 14 new Xerox Connectkey-enabled MFPs under the i-Series brand. Their new app is called Xerox Easy Translation Services and is able to translate a document into more than 35 languages using the ABBYY translation engine.

Editor-in-Chief: We are pleased to see that Xerox continues to develop innovative technology products.

automated ePROcurement applications, but will also enable us to share our blog articles, white papers and growing library of information 'how-to' technology oriented webinars on a faster, more regular basis.

Changing how organizations design, select and implement successful technology solutions

CTC, InfoTelecom and Telecom20xx discontinue operations in Ontario
We are disappointed to advise our Ontario readers and customers that Neotelis will no longer be producing their quarterly English publication, their annual Telecom20xx conference or running the Community of Telecommunications Consultants in the Ontario region.

Editor-in-Chief: It is unfortunate that we, in the Ontario based tech sector, consultants and customers did not fully support Neotelis and InfoTelecom. We guess this is a sign of the times related to the evolution of how customers and vendors interact. We will miss working with them, and also the opportunity for face-to-face networking with vendors and customers. We wish the Neotelis team continued success on their education, conference and publishing activities in the Quebec markets.

FOX GROUP Leader to be involved in Upcoming Regulatory Activities
FOX GROUP leader, Roberta Fox will be involved in various CRTC activities in 2016 as it relates to a variety of filings that we believe customers should care about. They include the #TalkBroadband Review of basic telecommunications services as well as the recently released CRTC 2016 - 116 Regulatory framework for next-generation 9-1-1 in Canada.

Editor in Chief: Both of these filings can and will impact all of us as consumers and customers in Canada. With the demise of the CBTA, and the growing lack of involvement of customers and vendors in CRTC activities, we are concerned, and have decided to try to use our voice as consultants and analysts to put forward the customer views.

We appreciate any guidance and support from our readers to help us put your viewpoints forward!

FOX GROUP in the Tech Industry and Business Community

FOX GROUP is a proud member of various professional, business and community organizations highlighted above. We believe it is important to not only be involved in the technology and business associations to keep up-to-date, but to give back to the local communities in which we live and work.

 Reduce time, cost and risks to ensure successful technology acquisitions and deployment

Click HERE to contact us to set up a 15-minute web chat and get a demo of our new ePROcurement analysis and acquisition applications or call 1.866.FOX.GROUP (369.4768)

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