# Competitive advantage with Cloud

## How technology is shaping business communication

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# The workplace of tomorrow

## Welcome to the future of work.

No longer a clearly defined place you go to, work is quickly transforming into something you do any time, any place. Technology is the conduit.

It's empowering the move from structured workdays to flexible workspaces, where staff can still feel connected to the team without being in the office. People are increasingly mobile, untethered from desks and productive.

In short, technology is shaping a new way of working that's built on flexibility.

So, what does this workplace look like? Imagine waking up anywhere in the world and logging on to start your workday when it suits you – with nothing more than a device and an Internet connection. Collaboration tools mean you're able to work more closely with your team, accessing shared resources without being in the office. As you move through the day you seamlessly shift from most devices needed.

It might sound like the future but this scenario may be possible now.

And while advances in technology will deliver further improvements, they'll continue to be driven by collaboration technology. Unified Communications-as-a-Service (UCaaS) – which blends voice, video and other collaborative tools into a seamless stream of data – is at the cutting edge of this connected world.

Most businesses no longer compete with those in the same neighbourhood, or even country. Competition is global. Having a robust foundation to get the most out of processes, systems and staff is key.

At Optus Wholesale, we're also looking to the future. We have an important role to play in helping our service provider partners deliver on this potential. Taking a deep-dive into today's UCaaS market, we'll explore how it enables the workplace of tomorrow and which service models best address business needs. Understanding this emerging marketplace is critical to ensuring service providers deliver the right systems to match those needs.

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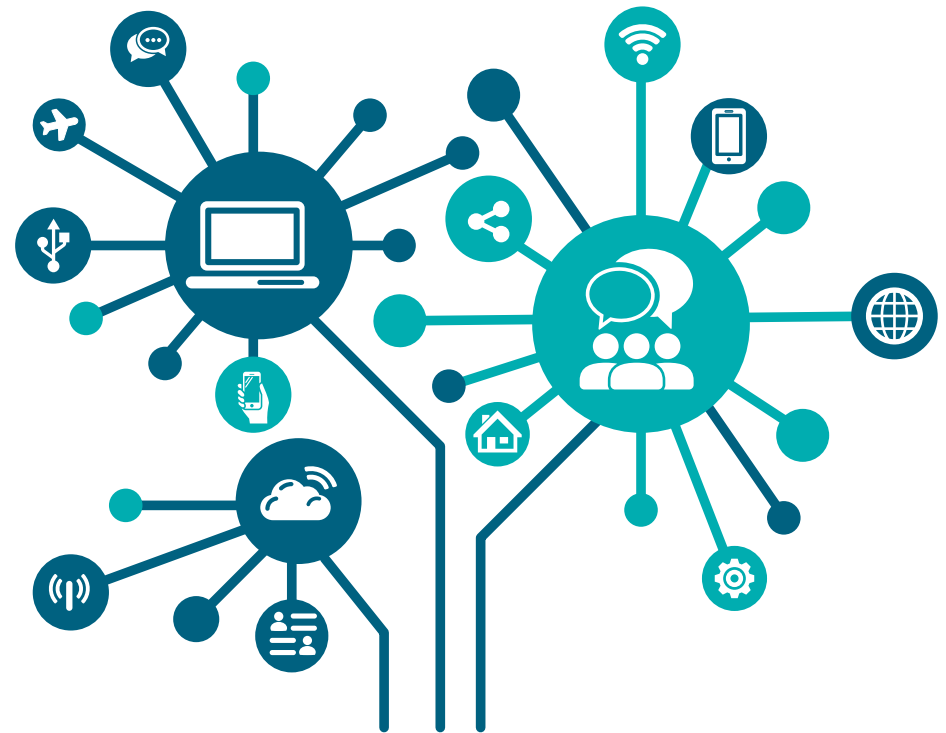
# The future of work in Australia

Today's youngest employees innately understand the power of technology-based collaboration. They expect their workplaces to deliver the same level of functionality they experience when communicating with friends.

This change in attitude is no longer limited to younger members of staff. Citrix's *State of the Flexible Nation* report[1] found 56 per cent of Australian workers were unable to work from home, but 72 per cent wanted the opportunity. It has become a key driver for talent acquisition and retention.

Most people now own multiple devices and often use their own smartphones, tablets or laptops for business purposes as well as personal use. Business infrastructure should be strong, secure and flexible enough to allow them to connect wherever, whenever and however they like.

Implementing tools that enable this type of agile working is paramount. Cloud technologies underpin this vision, with the potential to change workplaces for the better.

Most organisations are yet to make the most of the potential in their communications systems. We're only at the start of the journey but now is the right time to look at investing in these tools.

1.  Citrix 2015, *State of the flexible nation*: The benefits flexible working can deliver to Australians, https://whitepapers.theregister.co.uk/paper/view/5445/state-of-the-flexible-nation

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# The perfect storm for Cloud

As businesses focus on increasing efficiency to improve customer experiences, cloud has become the primary enabler of digital transformation.

In the past, cloud was only for big business. Not any longer. Cisco[2] found 62 per cent of Australian organisations use or are planning to use some form of cloud in the next 12 months.

Clearly, we're no longer at the start of the trend to cloud migration.

Advances in storage and networking are making cloud more cost-effective for businesses of all sizes. As technology becomes more sophisticated, it's giving businesses the chance to operate like bigger rivals, using data-hungry applications to increase mobile productivity.

Today, we've reached the perfect storm of cloud services adoption.

2. Cisco 2016, *Cloud Going Mainstream: All Are Trying, Some Are Benefiting; Few Are Maximizing Value*, IDC Infobrief, http://www.cisco.com/c/dam/en/us/solutions/collateral/trends/cloud/bca-australia.pdf

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# What is driving the cloud?

Many businesses have started their digital transformation by moving some applications to the cloud, despite the fact that barriers – including security perception – still exist. Capgemini's, *Digital Transformation: The Road Ahead*[3], outlines that "cloud has been talked to death but it cannot be denied that it is fundamental for digital transformation."

It's a transition that supports the fundamental business goals of improving productivity, flexibility and efficiency. When done right, these benefits flow across all functions including sales, customer services, manufacturing and marketing. Cloud drivers for large enterprises to SMBs include:

**Market maturity**
As cloud adoption increases, the availability of solutions grows, too. This is improving the quality of what's available for businesses. With the national broadband network (nbn™) being rolled out across Australia, opportunities are opening up for more bandwidth-heavy cloud solutions.

**Cost savings**
Traditional IT service models led many businesses to invest in disproportionately large and complex infrastructure. The wide availability of cloud services has driven down the cost of adoption while freeing up businesses from the need to buy expensive hardware they can grow into. With cloud, businesses can pay for the services they need and scale when necessary.

**Productivity**
Cloud technologies have the ability to improve productivity by enabling workplaces to run smarter. Having people in different locations interact with each other as though they're in the same room, even while interstate or overseas, allows businesses to grow without having to open new offices.

**Employee expectations**
Workplace flexibility is becoming an expectation instead of a luxury enjoyed by a few. Cloud services enable staff to balance work and personal life demands, which helps businesses attract and retain talent.

**Competition**
With the above benefits of cloud adoption, enterprises and SMBs that fail to move into the digital age will be at a distinct disadvantage to competitors. Relying on archaic IT strategies is no longer an option. Cloud helps them compete.

3. Cohen, L et al, *Digital Transformation: The Road Ahead*, Capgemini, https://www.capgemini.com/beyond-the-buzz/digital-transformation-the-road-ahead

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## Meeting demand

As cloud usage increases, there's a pressing need for service providers to offer solutions that meet the demand. The past decade has seen strong adoption of Software as-a-Service (SaaS) offerings. More recently, Infrastructure as-a-Service (IaaS) and now Platform as-a-Service (PaaS) have become priorities.

UCaaS will be the next technology service to make a major cloud transition. Researchers at Frost & Sullivan forecast[4] the Australian Unified Communication (UC) services market will be worth more than $1 billion by 2021. Almost a third of that revenue will come from hosted telephony, reaching $323.8 million in the same year.

Beyond staff benefits, companies are keen to adopt collaboration technology to improve business operations. These tools speed up productivity by allowing staff to work on-the-go but also cut costs by improving the efficiency of systems and employees.

With UCaaS already starting to make waves in the business community, solutions are in high demand. As a service provider, you need to offer a whole-of-business system that empowers customers by increasing competitive capability.

4. Frost & Sullivan 2016, *Australian Unified Communications* (UC) Services Market 2015, https://ww2.frost.com/news/press-releases/australias-uc-services-market-offers-many-new-opportunities-it-grows-over-1-billion-2021-says-frost-sullivan/

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# Challenging the status quo of the UC market in Australia

Unified communications have been around for years now but, with the availability of faster Internet, it's finally ready to deliver on its potential.

It integrates real-time and other communications services with different devices through a single user interface. Improving productivity is the main aim of any UC deployment but not all solutions are created equally.

Until now, UC has mostly been used by larger enterprises with deep pockets able to meet the hefty price tags. However, the development of cloud-based UC alternatives is opening up these services to both the enterprise and SMB markets.

For this reason, Optus Wholesale is supporting its service provider network with the launch of Cloud-UCX, a fully managed UCaaS solution designed to meet modern business demands.

## Beyond PABX

Cloud UC solutions can deliver high-feature functionality sooner, cheaper and at a lower risk profile than their 'on-premise' predecessors. Providing this kind of functionality to smaller customers is a powerful enabler.

While most enterprises and SMBs are still using traditional PABX systems, the shift has already started. By 2020, there will be just as many new-breed cloud communications deployments in operation[5]. This trend is partly due to improving Internet speeds, overcoming bandwidth limitations, making cloud a more realistic prospect. The shift away from traditional PABX is also due to feature benefits that are inherent to cloud-based UC solutions. Businesses can continue to operate even if connectivity to their physical locations is compromised.

Additionally, cloud solutions can support seamless multi-site deployments without the need to deploy multiple, distinct PABX systems to each location.

5. Broadsoft 2016, *Future of Work survey*, https://www.broadsoft.com/future-of-work-survey, viewed July 2017

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## A cut above the rest:

Service providers have a huge opportunity to reach enterprises and SMBs as they increasingly look to UC – but they need to offer the right service. With Optus Cloud-UCX, Optus Wholesale empowers service providers to help their enterprise and SMB customers move towards cloud UC solutions.

Powered by Broadsoft, we're the first Australian tier-one carrier to deploy its flagship cloud-based unified communications & collaboration platform, BroadCloud.

This allows businesses to connect across multiple computers, tablets and smartphones via a single user interface, wherever Internet access is in reach. The platform features collaboration and communication tools including instant messaging (IM), presence, voice and video calling, conferencing, file sharing and desktop collaboration.

Cost reduction is the most compelling business benefit for cloud-based UC adoption. With Cloud-UCX, businesses save by simply using broadband capacity for communications rather than a dedicated PABX. Businesses will no longer need to waste IT resources on maintaining and upgrading these costly systems.

It also improves the bottom line by better supporting business growth.

No longer will companies be limited physically by how many connections they can make using a traditional PABX system. With Optus Cloud-UCX businesses can scale and grow when they need to.

Benefits for Service Providers include:

- **White-labelled and multi-tenanted:** Optus Cloud-UCX allows service providers to brand all portals and market the platform as their own. It also caters for API-based interfaces where service providers are seeking a B2B solution. As a multi-tenanted solution, each provider is uniquely segregated from others, maintaining privacy.
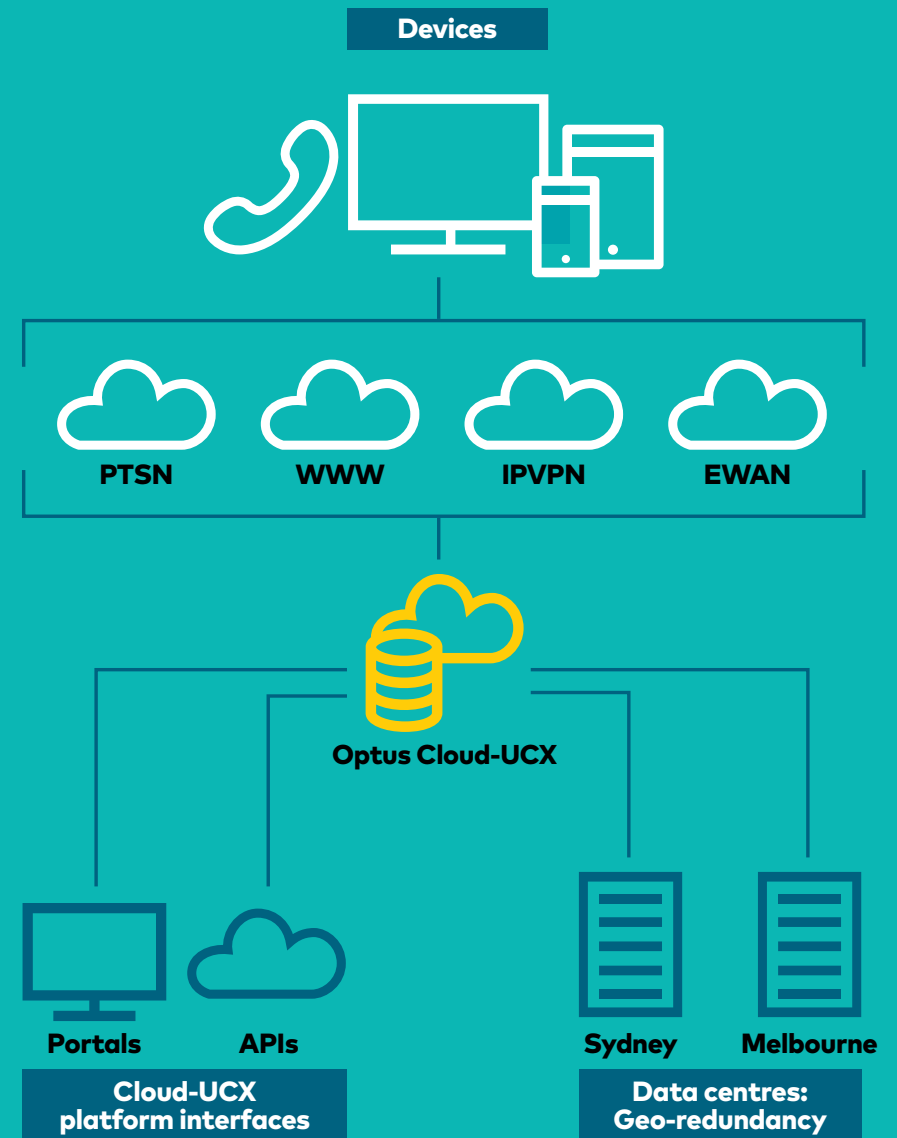
- **Flexible deployment capabilities:** This includes public-based access to the Cloud-UCX platform as well as private connectivity options such as IPVPN and EWAN.

- **Instant access to R&D capability:** Optus Cloud-UCX allows service providers to avoid expensive infrastructure investments, platform upgrades and patches. Instead, users have the benefit of instant access to new BroadCloud features and functions as and when they become available.

- **Reliability:** Optus Cloud-UCX is deployed on a 100% cloud-based carrier-grade network infrastructure. The platform is hosted in geo-redundant Equinix data centres.

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Devices

PTSN   WWW   IPVPN   EWAN

Optus Cloud-UCX

Portals   APIs

Cloud-UCX platform interfaces

Sydney   Melbourne

Data centres: Geo-redundancy

**Conclusion**

# Partnering for success

The move to UCaaS represents a challenge for businesses who must transform their way of working for the digital world. But it's an opportunity for service providers to get on the front foot and help them through this change.

To succeed, having the right partner is critical. At Optus Wholesale, our focus is on supporting the wholesale market with new products and services that keep our partners competitive. Rather than focusing on being first to market, our goal is being the best in market.

Optus Cloud-UCX is a market-leading service backed by Optus tier-one carrier network, enabling service providers the ability to offer compelling solutions to end customers, such as combining broadband, UC and telephony all bundled into a single bill.

For service providers, Cloud-UCX offers platform capability, connectivity and competitive price – with the ability to pass these benefits on to customers.

The next decade will see cloud-based collaboration and communication technology become standard for business. Flexible, collaborative spaces and access to the right tools wherever and whenever they're needed will be commonplace in the office of tomorrow. Today, this is still a competitive advantage.

At Optus Wholesale, we're investing now to enable service providers and their customers to reach this workplace of the future. We hope you'll join us on the journey.

**For more information talk to an Optus Wholesale Account Manager.**

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Yes