



# Seamless Transitions - from calls to conversations

Business is about relationships. And relationships start with a conversation. But with colleagues rarely in the same office, state or time zone, how do you make those conversations happen? The answer lies in Seamless Transitions.

# Anywhere workers. A major challenge or massive business opportunity?

Not so long ago, a conversation with a team member was a face to face affair. Occasionally you might have to get someone on the phone. And if they couldn't be reached, well, you'd just catch them in the morning when they got back to the office.

Technology allows us to work from anywhere, so that's exactly what we do. And sometimes we pay the price. Missed calls, inefficient online meetings, low levels of collaboration and poor decision-making all impact the success of your business.

But what if they're homeworkers? What if your closest colleague is now based a thousand miles away? If they're always on the road and rarely afforded the luxury of conducting business from HQ?

Technology allows us to work from anywhere. So that's exactly what we do. And sometimes we pay the price. Missed calls, inefficient online meetings, low levels of collaboration and poor decision-making all impact the performance of your virtual teams. And the success of your business.

But it doesn't have to be this way. Your Anywhere Workers, and your business, can thrive. You can bring the best people together from wherever they're based to create the best teams. You can accelerate the kind of productivity-enhancing collaboration your business needs. And you can do it all while addressing the challenges and frustrations caused by today's myriad of communications devices and applications.

Make no mistake, if your teams haven't already gone virtual, many soon will. And it's not just technology that's driving this potentially disruptive trend:

**Globalization** has dramatically increased the distance between team members. Cutting across time zones and bringing together your best people means having conversations with colleagues who won't always be at desks or in a conference room.

**Mobile working** has become the norm for many. Workplaces have blossomed from office buildings into agile networks spread across time and space. Your people need to be able to communicate on whatever device they have with them.

And in this new mobile space, it is not just conversations that are everywhere, content is too. It's on your corporate server (on premise), up in the cloud or hosted by a public carrier. Devices and networks need to be capable of securely accessing, amending and sharing this new 'everywhere content'.

**Multi-modal communications** have changed the nature of conversations (generally for the better). But the sheer range of applications, devices and media available to users can lead to disruptions and frustration that outweigh the benefits.

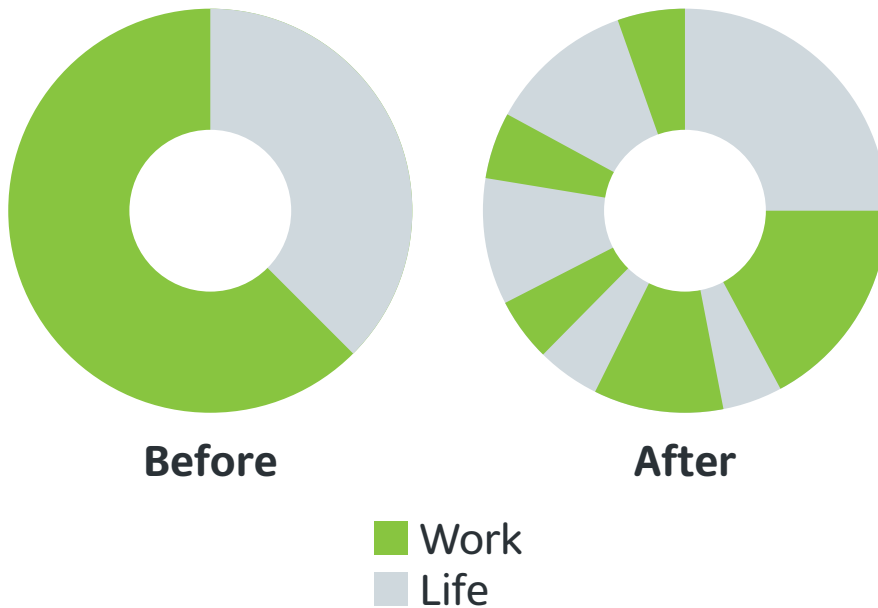
**Consumerization** has radically boosted the influence of end-users across your business. If you haven't already 'enterprise-enabled' your people's personally-owned phones and tablets via Bring your own Device (BYOD) policies, chances are you're planning to.

**User expectations** have increased pressure on IT organizations to deliver delightfully simple and intuitive communications experiences - across regardless of application or device.

**Personal and professional distinctions have blurred** as the nature of work evolves from the well-defined boundaries of the '9 to 5' world. Work can happen anytime and anywhere, and the Anywhere Worker needs to be equipped for it.

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### Work / Life Dynamic



# Seamless transitions: what is it, and why does it matter?

In this era of the Anywhere Worker, are you giving your employees the communications tools they need to seamlessly engage in the conversations and relationships that your business is built on?

Seamless Transitions is incredibly empowering for employees - helping them thrive as the conversation extends beyond the confines of the office or their PC desktops.

*In short, are you allowing your Anywhere Workers to succeed?*

Seamless Transitions gives you, and your people, the kind of tools and experiences to deliver success. Users can seamlessly engage in conversations with unprecedented mobility, continuity, and joy of use. And while it begins with mobility, that's just the start.

It involves moving easily among various devices, media and networks with no 'drop out' of conversations, contacts or content. This kind of holistic communications experience is incredibly empowering for employees - helping them thrive as the conversation extends beyond the confines of the office or their PC desktops.

The applications and information they need are fully portable so, no matter what work setting they're in or what device they're using, everything they need is always close at hand. Seamless Transitions means that the experience across devices, applications and media is always in sync - your people don't have to reconcile different versions of content or ways of seeing their relationships.

And they won't be reading manuals or doing cumbersome software configurations. Everything just works the way you, and they, expect, when you need it and how you need it. And, your experience across various devices and networks is consistent and without feature or function "drop out".

## **The value of a holistic view**

Companies have changed with the times. Anywhere Workers now have laptops, mobile devices, and access to Virtual Private Networks for their secure connectivity back to their corporate network. Some firms have even tacitly allowed their people to use personal mobile devices for work. But many of these measures have been implemented without looking at the whole picture. And as a result, many needs have gone unmet.

For example, a recent survey from Unify found only 37% of professionals felt their business applications - the ones they rely on to do their jobs - were optimized for mobile devices. In the context of today's Anywhere Workforce, that's very bad news.

And did they want this mobile functionality? The answer was an overwhelming 'yes'. 90% of respondents stated they would prefer that all of their business applications were enabled for mobility in order to have a truly seamless communications experience.

More worrying still, conversations were being compromised. Almost half of the respondents (46%) had to regularly battle through disconnects and reconnects across their devices and applications in order to sustain a conversation.

The challenge here was the need to manually change devices and networks whenever they moved to and from home,

the car, office, customer site, hotel room and so forth. Only 13% reported never having to deal with reconnecting.

So what does this tell us? First, that users are dissatisfied with the current state of their communications. The second, more damning conclusion has to be that they're struggling to build the relationships that are essential to driving successful business outcomes.

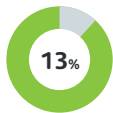
They most certainly recognize the need for technology to help them engage in vibrant conversations smoothly across devices, networks and processes, but, right now, it's not delivering.

Users certainly recognize the need for technology to help them engage in vibrant conversations smoothly across devices, networks and processes

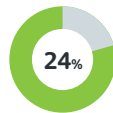
## Are you as seamless as you need to be?

We took a global snap shot of users' preferences and experience with virtual working.

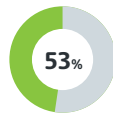
1. As of today, how often do you find the business applications you reply on to do your job are optimized for mobile devices?



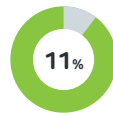
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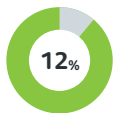


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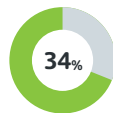


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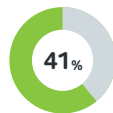
2. When working mobile, how often do you find yourself connecting, disconnecting and reconnecting across different devices and networks during the course of an online session or conversation?



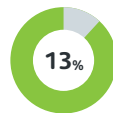
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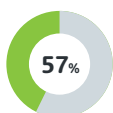


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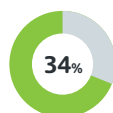


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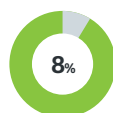
3. If your experience were truly seamless, secure and reliable, would you prefer all the applications that you use for work to be enabled for mobility?



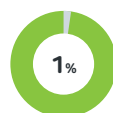
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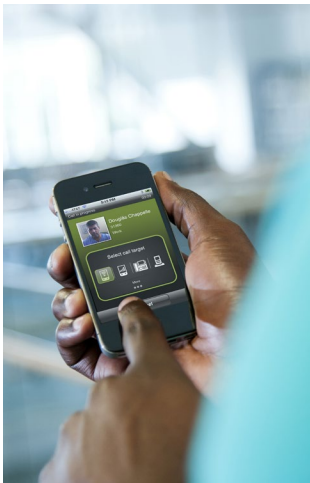
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Sample size n-205, results compiled April 2013.

# Reimagine a seamless communications experience.

Let's think again. What's the perfect scenario for your users and your business?

Simply this: that the communications tools you use feel like second nature, are easy to figure out, learn from the way you work, are self-aware and adapt to your prevailing situation and needs.



- No matter what time it is or where you are, you always have access to the right media, applications and content from whatever device suits you - and that automatically pick up where you left off.
- You can access and share that content and media whether it is stored - on the corporate network, or public or private cloud - without falling victim to authentication problems or the threat of security breaches
- You can move effortlessly between channels, easily harmonizing the medium with your message, and supporting natural communication in any context.
- Conversations move with you and work together across the many devices in your communications landscape, without you having to worry about dropping out and reconnecting.
- Flags, notes, reminders, and calendar integration make it easy to follow up with important people and topics so you never have to wonder if they've been forgotten.

- Enjoy a consistent user experience across devices, but one where your mobile experience is more than just a scaled down version of what you have on your desktop, adapting and leveraging the unique capabilities each device has to offer.

## **What does it take to be seamless?**

Now that we've drawn a picture of what your Anywhere Workers can do with a holistic approach to communications, let's look more closely at the specific characteristics that make up the seamless user experience:

### **Anywhere**

In the world of the Anywhere Worker - you need to reach others and be reached by them at any time, from any location. Whether you're in the office, at home, or somewhere in between, you're available with just one number. You're always connected regardless of the network to both conversations and content, without compromising reliability or performance. Being seamless means communicating

with crystal clear voice and immersive video while sharing content and collaborating, regardless of whether you're using your mobile phone, tablet, or laptop.

### **Consistent**

A consistent user experience means maintaining productivity and agility as you move from one device to another, because the look and feel move with you; you don't have to shift gears or relearn anything. However, consistency can't simply be a lowest-common-denominator game in which your mobile experience is just a scaled down version of what's available on your desktop. The experience must preserve that common look and feel while automatically leveraging the unique capabilities of each device and adapting to any inherent limitations: utilizing touch screens, cameras, and voice recognition to navigate and activate features; optimizing the layout based on screen size; adjusting video quality depending on processing power; or automatically adapting to the network in order to optimize cost and performance.

### **Continuous**

Being seamless means being able to drop the word 'dropped' from your vocabulary. No more hang-ups, reconnects, delays, or interruptions. The conversation continues as long as you want it to. The context of the conversation typically goes beyond the current session: continuity means being able to track and recall past sessions so the current conversation can benefit from all of the information, decisions, and exchanges

of ideas that have already taken place. Flags, notes, reminders, and calendar integration make sure you always know when and how to maintain the dialog to push toward your business objectives.

### **Intuitive**

People hold conversations with other people, not devices. The Anywhere Worker doesn't have time for fidgeting with controls or poring through manuals to have a conversation, so communications tools need to be easy enough to just figure out. It should be simple to use whichever device or application - personal or corporate - makes the most sense to get the job done, without requiring hours of configuration to finally use it. Applications need to be smart enough to make sure features and options are where you expect them to be, designed to seamlessly fit into the conversation when they're needed, and adjust based on the context, all without disrupting the conversation.

### **Roaming**

As you move from place to place, seamless roaming means being able to easily move an active conversation with you: from one network to another that's faster, more reliable, or more cost-effective; from a handy mobile device to a more comfortable desktop device or PC; from an IM chat to a voice call to a video conference. Just as important, this has to take place automatically, with little or no intervention, freeing you to maintain the conversation while the technology handles the details.

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# Seamless Transitions... a business scenario.

So, what about a business scenario that demonstrates the challenges that need to be addressed in the world of the *Anywhere Worker*? Here we look into the seamless use of virtual technologies in identifying, hiring, and on-boarding a team leader.

Can you ensure that all involved parties in a global workplace are able to meet and communicate in a timely and responsive manner, regardless of where they are?

More than ever before, a company's ability to compete in today's global economy relies heavily on teams and their ability to work together seamlessly across physical or technical boundaries.

Behind every winning team is a capable leader who must be available to provide encouragement, focus, and resolution to various challenges and questions. In this context, it's no surprise that attracting strong business leaders has become a core focus for organizations.

At the same time, in-demand leaders are looking for the ideal situation that will support and even enhance their management style; it's up to companies to demonstrate that theirs is the kind of dynamic team and working environment in which a strong leader can thrive. This is a complex process that asks a number of questions along the way:

**Identifying the right candidate:**

Are you able to easily share information and bring key stakeholders in different time zones and media into the conversations needed to make a decision on whom to bring in?

**Engaging with the candidate:**

Can you ensure that all involved parties in a global workplace are able to meet and communicate in a timely and responsive manner, regardless of where they are? Are they able to engage in vibrant conversations across this divide in order to maintain and progress the dialog?

**Maintaining the dialog:**

As the candidate raises questions and issues, how capable are you at ensuring the conversation keeps moving along by seamlessly bringing in the right people, information or communications media - and responding in real-time?

**Positioning the company for advantage:**

During the ongoing dialog, are you able to demonstrate to the candidate that your company offers the best working environment in which to support his personal way of working and to excel?

**Bringing the candidate on board:**

How quickly can your organization onboard, provision, and equip the candidate so he can get working right away? Does IT have the flexibility to address his specific communications needs in the process?



**Empowering the leader and his global team to succeed:**

Now that the candidate is on board, how can you enable the leader so that he can seamlessly engage in the critical conversations that will lead to overall success?

By being seamless, here's how one company was able to answer these questions:

Doug Smith has been tasked with finding a new leader for a dynamic new team initiative that has the potential to radically shift the company's future.

There are hundreds of potential candidates, but the list is quickly whittled down due to the unique combination of skills, experience and energy required for the role. Finally, one name stands out from the rest...Evelyn Agbeko has built a reputation as a superstar consultant and her latest contract is coming to an end.

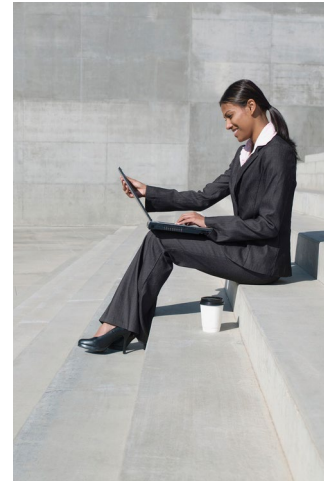
During her screening interview with HR, she's made it known that, while she's looking for an exciting new challenge, she's looking for a full-time role that could let her spend more time close to home following the birth of her first child. On paper, everything looks great, but Doug needs to be sure.

From his desk, Doug quickly pulls together a meeting to go over Evelyn's credentials, leaving no stone unturned. Conferencing in the North and Latin American offices with the European-based team members that were already out of the office via video, Doug then sets up a collaboration session so everyone can share their information and express their thoughts. With Evelyn's CV in the middle, people progressively share articles and interviews Evelyn appeared in and homepages for the projects she's successfully completed. Someone pulls

up and shares her LinkedIn profile, which is overflowing with glowing recommendations and endorsements. Doug can feel the team collectively falling in love. "Alright," Doug says as he pushes a vote dialog out to the team, "Is this the right person?" It's unanimous, and it's a go.

The initial meeting starts off with a simple 1:1 phone call, but as Evelyn starts asking more questions about the people and the working environment, Doug explains, "Rather than tell you, why don't I show you?" Evelyn receives an email invitation to a collaboration session that she opens on her tablet; an encrypted conferencing session automatically sets up and Doug then establishes a video link so that they can see one another. "Great," says Doug, "Now let me show you around a little bit." He then makes a small gesture and the session -including video - is seamlessly transferred to Doug's mobile phone. Moving the camera around while walking through the office, Doug shows off the workplace and introduces Evelyn to various members of the company. Evelyn wonders at the fact that she's able to tweak settings and use the software on her tablet right off the bat.

The conversation is going great, then Evelyn mentions that her beloved iPad is the one device she has with her wherever she is, day or night, and it would be ideal if she could use it for work. Doug feels this question is better answered directly by IT, so he taps on his phone screen to pull in Tim, the local techie - who's currently having lunch in the park with his laptop connected to the public Wi-Fi. "Not a problem," says Tim, "I'd say about 75% of the people at our company use some kind of personal device in the office. We've got a nice and simple back-end process to register and link any devices and services you want to use to your identity, so all you need to do on your end is download our app from iTunes and you're up and running!"



Doug realizes that it's time to really demonstrate to Evelyn that this company is the perfect fit for her. "Alright, so as you can see, we're all about using technology to seamlessly pull our people together to get things done. But the best strength is the quality of our people. Let me introduce you to your global team!" Smiling, he sweeps his finger to conference in Stefano and Angelika, who are sharing a meeting room in the Amsterdam office and using its big screen video system.

Quickly, he pulls in Leo from his home office in Sao Paolo. Richard is on his way from his home in Manchester to his villa in Valencia, Spain, and is actually crossing the English Channel on a ferry when he's conferenced in; sitting in his car, a perfect video stream is coming through his docked tablet. "So here's the team that's going to take our company to the next level," beams Doug. "Even though

you're situated all over the world, you'll be able to work as closely as if you were all together in the same room! I can assure you, we will empower you and your team so there won't be a situation where you won't be able to get together and communicate to get the job done."

Impressed, Evelyn asks how long it would take for all of this technology to roll out to him. Doug lets Tim from IT answer again: "It would take a few minutes to add you as a user, and since your tablet's already in the system because of this chat, it'd take just a few seconds to move it over as one of your registered devices. Your phone and laptop would be ready and waiting for you, so I'd say you'd be fully on board and ready to go before you finish your morning coffee..."

Smiling and shaking her head, Evelyn types a message into the conference window: "Where do I sign?"



# Driving better business performance

As we've seen, positive business outcomes are based on strong relationships. And those relationships are built on better, more vibrant conversations. But enabling those conversations can be a challenging process.



A more holistic approach is required: one that brings together the device, application and network to create a consistent experience that delights the user – allowing them to engage in rich and meaningful conversations.

As our research shows, in the era of the Anywhere Worker – where content and conversations are happening all the time – simply offering a laptop, smart phone and remote access is not enough. A more holistic approach is required: one that brings together the device, application and network to create a consistent experience that delights the user – allowing them to engage in rich and meaningful conversations.

These are guiding principle behind Seamless Transitions. And if you can achieve this, you can say goodbye to

dropped calls and the need to reconnect. You can pick up where you left off – instantly sharing content and carrying on the conversation via instant messaging, a web collaboration session, a voice call or a discussion on a social network; with the same consistent, intuitive and joyful experience on all.

These principles drive both our vision and solutions strategies. Because if you're able to build stronger relationships, you're able to amplify the collective effort of your virtual teams – and can dramatically improve business performance.

## About Unify

Unify is one of the world's leading communications software and services firms, providing integrated communications solutions for approximately 75 percent of the Fortune Global 500. Our solutions unify multiple networks, devices and applications into one easy-to-use platform that allows teams to engage in rich and meaningful conversations. The result is a transformation of how the enterprise communicates and collaborates that amplifies collective effort, energizes the business, and enhances business performance. Unify has a strong heritage of product reliability, innovation, open standards and security.

[unify.com](http://unify.com)



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