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Benefits of Customizable Cloud Voice Services

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Table of Contents

Executive Summary	3
One Size Does Not Fit All	4
Benefits of Private Cloud Voice Services	5
Unique Requirements for larger enterprises – government and universities	5
Case Studies	6
Conclusions/Recommendations	7

Executive Summary

It might be easy to believe that most business communications has moved to video meetings and chat and, yes, businesses do increasingly rely on these tools. Since 2020 when the pandemic hit, meetings and chat have become important tools for connecting with employees, partners, and customers, regardless of locations. However, the importance of the traditional phone call has not gone away. Metrigy's *Employee Engagement Optimization: 2025* global study of 400 businesses found that for 68% of participants, the phone system remains critical for communications.

From the retailer to the doctor's office, to a high school office, to the municipal water department, the phone system remains critical for interfacing with customers, partners, and internally with other employees. The ability to receive and send calls will remain critical for the foreseeable future, but where the calling system resides and how it is managed continues to undergo a transformation as businesses continue to migrate their phone systems to the cloud and managed service providers.

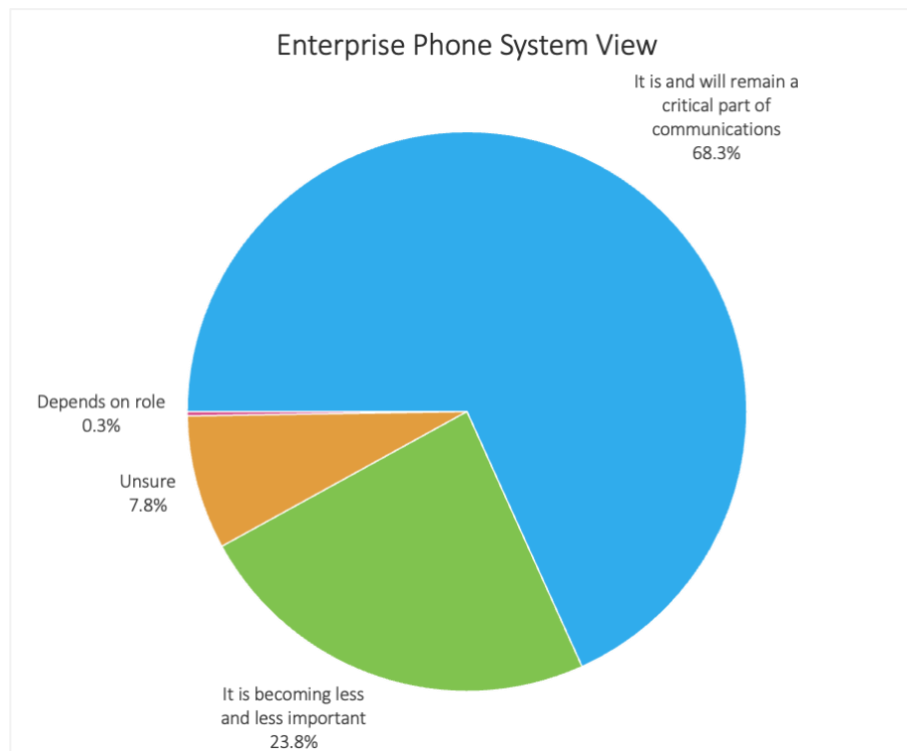


Figure 1: Enterprise Phone System View; source: Metrigy Employee Engagement Optimization: 2025 study

One Size Does Not Fit All

Calling, as an important communications tool, is not going away any time soon, but it is not one-size-fits-all on how it is implemented across businesses. In North America, businesses have been migrating to multi-tenant cloud voice services in the form of unified communications as a service (UCaaS) for roughly 20 years. It's been a slow and steady movement away from on-premises PBXs. A third option is customizable, dedicated, private-cloud voice service, which offers service providers and large enterprises all the benefits of a third-party managed service in a cloud environment but with a dedicated single-tenant platform.

According to Metrigy's *Workplace Collaboration MetriCast: 2024* global study of 998 organizations, slightly less than 50% of those based in North America have migrated all their calling to UCaaS. There are valid reasons for companies that maintain on-premises PBXs and private cloud voice services. There are benefits to each of the three calling options and every business needs to assess what criteria and investment is most important to them in the near-term. There is no right or wrong choice to any of these options, just varying degrees of resources, investment priorities, transformation strategies, and risk aversion.

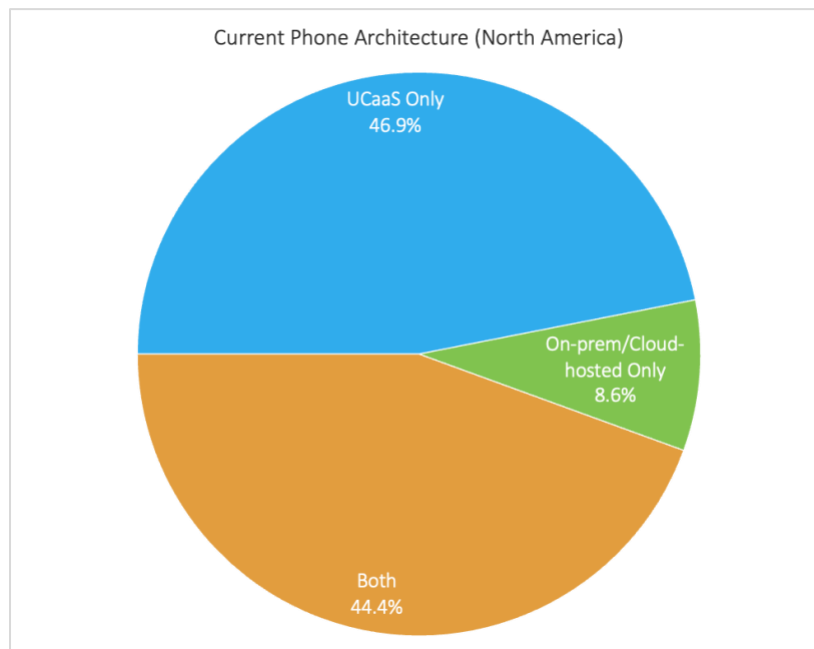


Figure 1: Current Phone Architecture (North America); source: Metrigy Workplace Collaboration MetriCast: 2024

Benefits of Customizable Private Cloud Voice Services

Dedicated, private cloud phone services offer service providers and enterprises the benefit of a system run in the cloud, allowing centralization of features and functionality, benefiting highly distributed businesses, especially large enterprises. Additionally, with dedicated cloud voice, service providers and businesses benefit from third-party management of the system, including keeping the system operational, ongoing maintenance, and the deployment of new and enhanced features.

Per Metrigy's *Workplace Collaboration MetriCast: 2024* study, important decision criteria businesses utilize for dedicated cloud voice service are reliability, security, features, and custom integration. A dedicated solution provides organizations with the ability to customize features and requirements including integrating with third-party applications and services unique to their operations. Additionally, these services offer a unique level of security by the nature of the platform being private versus multi-tenant with multiple businesses sharing platform resources.

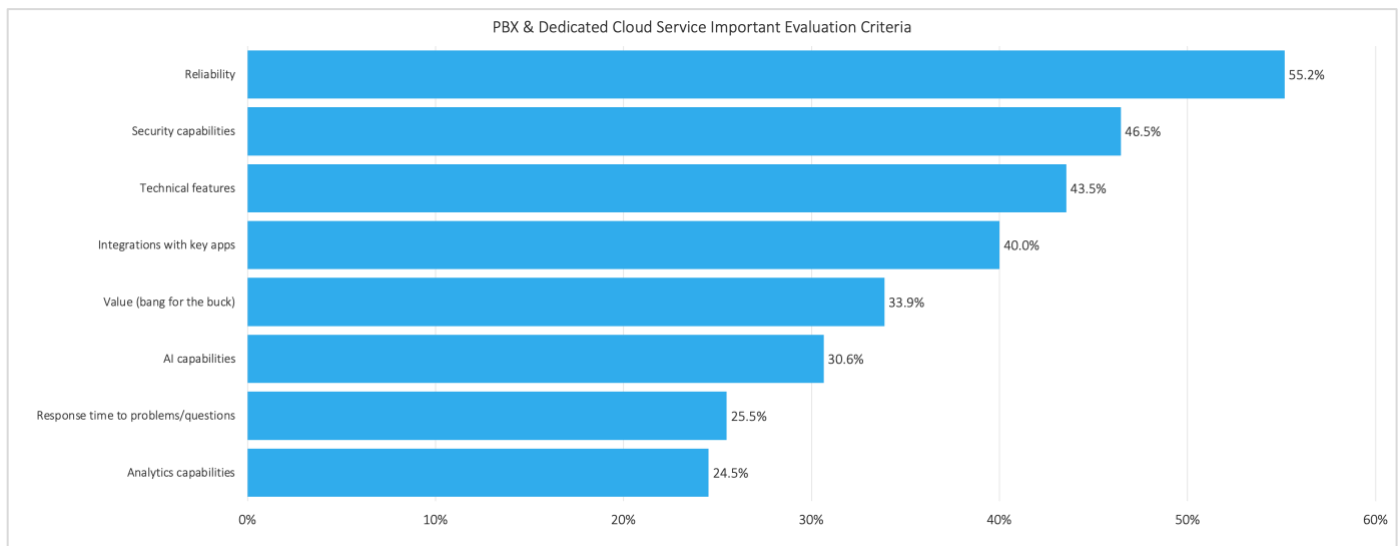


Figure 2: PBX & Dedicated Cloud Service Important Evaluation Criteria; source: Metrigy Workplace Collaboration MetriCast: 2024

Unique Requirements for Service Providers and Larger Enterprises – Government and Universities

Service providers and large enterprises have complex requirements that can be hard to funnel into a UCaaS solution, which are typically one-size-fits-all. A private, dedicated cloud calling solution is well suited to larger organizations that require custom application integrations, custom call flows, and custom call treatments. Many companies that have unique requirements have maintained existing and often long-standing on-premises PBX solutions because migrating to UCaaS does not provide them with the same level of customization required for their unique

situations. Migrating to a private, dedicated cloud service gives organizations the ability to have necessary customizations and potentially maintain legacy endpoints to manage costs while taking advantage of the benefits of a managed cloud service.

Two verticals that fall into the bucket of unique requirements are:

- *State and local governments* – many agencies are working through platform modernization due to outdated PBXs but require capabilities such as dynamic location mapping, security, redundancy, and emergency services (911).
- *Education* – K-12 school districts and colleges and universities must integrate with incident and emergency response platforms, including in support of Alyssa’s Law, which states are rapidly adopting to mandate that in-room faculty and staff be able to silently call for help in an emergency. They also must support telephony platform integration with emergency notification, intercom, paging, and campus-assist recording systems.

Case Studies

The following three case studies from Clearspan Communications illustrate how a state government, a university, and a K-12 school are respectively using customizable, private dedicated cloud calling.

- One of the top 20 largest U.S. state government has 50,000 calling seats on a Clearspan private cloud hosted calling with one of the nation’s largest telecom service providers, that spans numerous state agencies. The deployment includes five levels of redundancy, a custom call flow for advanced 911, and integrations with third-party applications.
- A top 50 university located in the southeast has 20,000 seats on Clearspan’s cloud calling platform, which includes 6,000 PING seats (Clearspan’s collaboration solution that includes voice, video, and messaging), advanced 911 integrated with campus police, and a RAY BAUM’s Act-compliant caller location reporting solution (the RAY BAUM’s Act is a federal law that mandates the provision of dispatchable location information when making a e911 call, ensuring emergency responders have precise location details).
- A top five public K-12 school system in the U.S. moved to a telecom service provider, private hosted Clearspan solution for its 30,000 seats. The school district moved from an on-premises Mitel solution, while maintaining the use of Mitel desk phones.

Conclusions/Recommendations

For those organizations with standard business calling requirements and features, migrating to a UCaaS solution that is integrated with meetings and chat right “out of the box” is an easy choice—single, integrated solution and bill from one provider managed from the cloud. But for businesses, typically larger enterprises, that have unique requirements the move to the cloud is fraught with challenges. As a result, many organizations continue to utilize their on-premises PBXs for calling while taking advantage of a separate messaging and meeting service.

Metrigy recommends that businesses that cannot simply port numbers and platforms to UCaaS for their calling requirements evaluate dedicated, private cloud calling solutions that offer high levels of security and customized integrations. Private cloud calling offers many of the benefits of UCaaS while providing the flexibility of customization, including integration with leading meetings and messaging platforms such as Microsoft Teams, Cisco Webex, and Zoom Workplace.

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