

Magic Quadrant for Web Conferencing

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Pressure placed on prices in the Web-conferencing market by cloud collaboration suites is accelerating consolidation and causing leading vendors to rethink their go-to-market pricing strategies. In light of these developments, Gartner assesses 15 providers of Web-conferencing products.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

The Web-conferencing market is experiencing heavy consolidation as acquisitions continue.

Concerns about archiving and compliance are growing, especially among organizations in regulated industries.

Free and low-cost Web-conferencing services such as Dimdim and Yugma are contributing to downward pricing pressure on more expensive and established market leaders. Adding to this pressure is Microsoft's inclusion of Live Meeting as part of its Microsoft Business Productivity Online Standard Suite (BPOS) cloud collaboration suite, along with Exchange, Office Communications and SharePoint, for around \$10 per user per month. These developments are commoditizing Web conferencing and impacting vendors' pricing strategies.

Google acted as a catalyst for cloud collaboration services with Google Apps. Microsoft and other major vendors, such as IBM and Cisco, are also adopting this strategy. This threatens niche players that charge a premium for Web conferencing. We believe this trend will continue to drive down the cost of Web-conferencing services, making this a buyer's market.

Although Web conferencing has traditionally been a stand-alone market, convergence with unified communications and collaboration (UCC) offerings and bundling with cloud suites are making it a more strategic decision for enterprises.

Web-conferencing vendors are also investing in adjacent areas such as webcasting and virtual events, which already have established providers. Leading companies have turned some of their larger conferences and events into virtual events. We are still seeing growing interest in large virtual-event providers like Inxpo, ON24, Accordent and Unisfair. Offerings from these vendors overlap with those from traditional Web-conferencing vendors that are now offering support for larger events.

MAGIC QUADRANT

Market Overview

Web-conferencing products are real-time collaboration tools that support interactions over a network between participants in multiple meeting formats. The various types of meeting and communications that fall into the category of Web conferencing include webinars, online meetings, messaging and audio communications.

The primary justifications for Web conferencing are the cost savings and other benefits from reduced business travel. When meeting participants cannot travel because of security or other individual or environmental reasons, Web conferencing is used to facilitate important meetings.

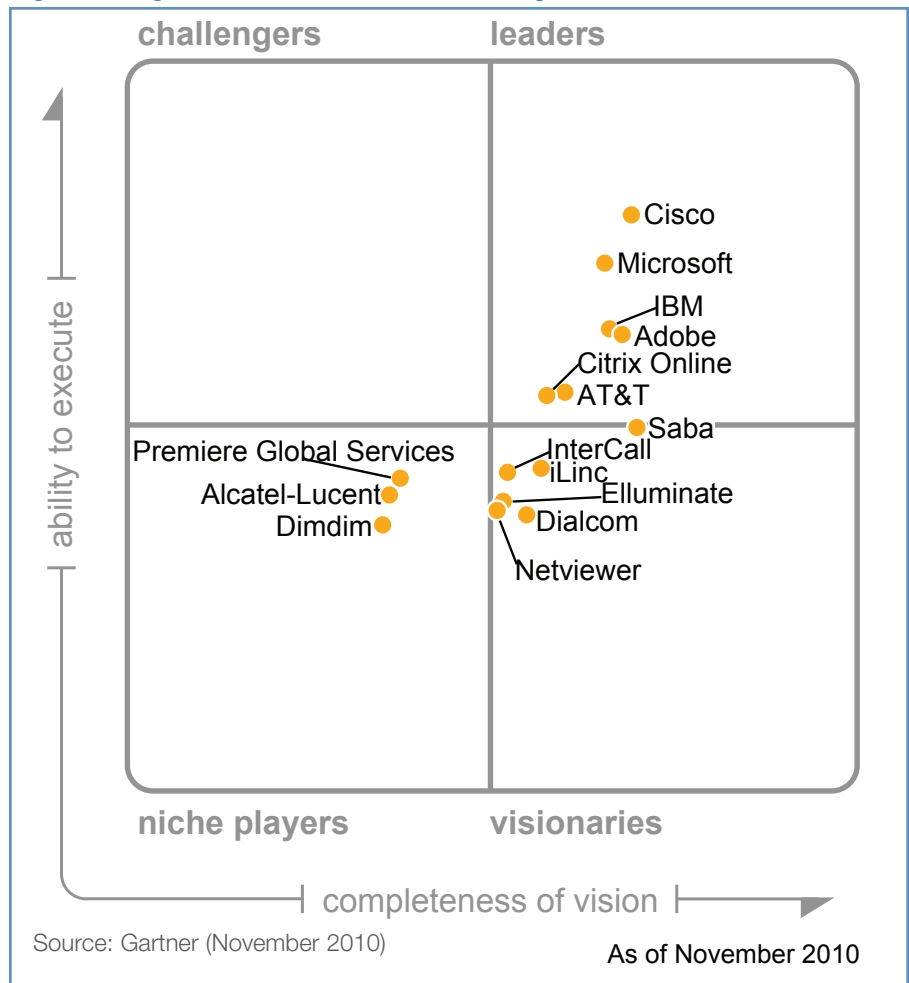
The market for Web conferencing, teaming and social software will grow at a compound annual growth rate of more than 20% through 2011.

Due to global economic challenges, interest in Web conferencing is at an all-time high as companies look to cut costs. While the benefits of Web conferencing are obvious, there is still a huge opportunity to tap into the large percentage of enterprise users who still have not used it. Penetration rates are increasing, though.

The following are the minimum requirements that vendors had to meet to be included in this Magic Quadrant:

- **Presentation delivery:** All participants can see an online presentation (usually delivered by Microsoft PowerPoint), which is under the control of one participant designated as the presenter.
- **Desktop or application sharing:** All participants can see, but not directly interact with or modify, the presenter's desktop or a specific application on the presenter's system. Some Web-conferencing products deliver presentations by sharing a presentation application, rather than using embedded presentation facilities.
- **Text chat:** Participants can exchange real-time text messages with other participants or the presenter using an instant messaging (IM)-like interface.
- **Shared whiteboard:** A meeting participant can add annotations – that can be viewed by all – by typing or drawing on a specific whiteboard application, or on top of a presentation or shared application window.
- **Basic security:** Encrypted data transfer and password-protected meetings.

Figure 1. Magic Quadrant for Web Conferencing



- **Remote control:** Useful for technical support, this gives one participant control of applications or the desktop on another system.

Web-conferencing products are increasingly being augmented by more advanced, optional features, although vendors did not have to offer these to be included in this Magic Quadrant. Examples of these features are:

- **Integrated public switched telephone network audio:** Users can dial into an audio-conferencing bridge that is linked to the Web conference. Participants can “see” who is speaking and presenters can control individual phone connections (for example, they can mute them or give presenter rights).
- **Integrated voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) audio:** To remove or reduce the need for telephone-based audio, some products can use a PC’s speaker and microphone (or a headset) to enable participants to listen to a presentation or – more rarely – to both listen and speak.
- **Video conferencing:** Some products can show live video feeds of participants or the presenter, which come from a desktop webcam or a dedicated video installation. Some vendors integrate these video streams into sessions running on dedicated video-conferencing equipment.
- **File sharing:** Participants can exchange files during the conference.
- **Application/document sharing:** Participants can write directly in the presenter’s application or document.
- **Advanced security:** Extra features that are required for sensitive meetings. These include participant-level passwords to prevent sharing, forcing the use of new passwords for every meeting; the ability to block anonymous users, limiting participants to those with specific IP addresses; and automatic purging of online documents after the meeting.
- **Archiving:** Audio and interactive portions of the conference can be recorded for later viewing. Participants can “sit in” on a conference if they were unable to attend it in real time. Archiving mandated by regulatory audit trail requirements is on the rise.
- **Feedback:** Participants can indicate whether they want the speaker to slow down, speed up, answer a question, and more.
- **Polling:** A quick survey of participants can be conducted to answer a specific question in real time.
- **E-learning:** Specific functionality to support online and blended learning scenarios, such as participant testing, instructor monitoring of student desktops, and corporate learning system integration.

- **Mobility:** Specific support for mobile phones and PDAs, such as the Apple iPhone and Research In Motion (RIM) BlackBerry devices.

Users have three deployment options for these applications:

- **Software as a service (SaaS) model** – Web-conferencing software runs on the vendor’s (or a partner’s) systems on a multitenancy basis, and the user accesses the capabilities over the Internet (see Note 1).
- **On-premises model** – Installs software on systems owned and operated by the enterprise.
- **Hybrid model** – Combines the SaaS and on-premises models.

Typical everyday internal meetings can be run using on-premises facilities. Unusually large meetings and those with a mix of internal and external participants can be run using software running on external servers. The SaaS model has been the predominant model in the Web-conferencing market.

Market Definition/Description

The Web-conferencing market is characterized by offerings that are predominantly SaaS-based and sold to lines of business first. The IT department gets involved later in the cycle for more strategic deployments.

As a stand-alone market, there are no common protocols or standards. Interoperability has not been an issue. With the IM and presence platform becoming an infrastructure component and a launch pad for many types of real-time communications, including Web conferencing, interoperability will become increasingly important.

Typically, companies use a separate telephone bridge for audio in conjunction with Web conferences. Most of the vendors in this Magic Quadrant have their own VoIP capabilities, which eliminates the need to send out separate bridge telephone numbers and IDs. But bandwidth is a concern and can affect audio quality.

Note 1 Software-as-a-Service Definition

Gartner defines SaaS as software that is owned, delivered and managed remotely by one or more providers. The provider delivers an application based on a single set of common code and data definitions. The application is consumed in a one-to-many model by all contracted customers at any time on a pay-for-use basis, or on a subscription based on usage metrics.

Other important concerns are difficulties provisioning PC accessories (such as headsets), configuring and maintaining them, and being able to bridge VoIP and plain old telephone service for participants lacking a PC microphone. Increasingly, bandwidth concerns also apply to video. Although there is increased interest in video, usage is not very high. Most vendors support video via Universal Serial Bus (USB) webcams during Web conferences. The predominant use case for video in Web conferencing is one-to-many meetings or sessions. Increasingly, some vendors are promoting adaptive bandwidth management features to flexibly control bandwidth consumption on the network.

Most vendors in this market support a similar basic set of features. Differentiation comes primarily from pricing, integration of the Web-conferencing offering into a broader UCC suite, and the overall viability of the company, which gives an indication of its likely longevity.

This Magic Quadrant covers enterprise use of Web conferencing, so it does not address vendors that cater solely for consumers. Some enterprise vendors, however, do offer scaled-down versions of their Web-conferencing services as a strategic way to “seed” the low end of the market and position their brands. Although Google does not have a Web-conferencing offering, we do see business usage of the document-sharing function of Google Apps, which is a basic Web-conferencing feature without the screen-sharing and other capabilities required for inclusion in this Magic Quadrant.

Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

We applied the following criteria for inclusion in this Magic Quadrant:

- The product must provide at least the minimal functionality described in the Market Overview section.
- The product must support at least five participants. Products that support one-to-one interaction or small groups are generally aimed at the consumer market or at other specialized markets not covered by this Magic Quadrant.
- The vendor must market the Web-conferencing product on a stand-alone basis, or as a component of a larger collaboration suite that may include presence and IM.
- The vendor must have at least \$7 million in annual revenue from sales of Web-conferencing products.
- Sales and marketing efforts connected with the product must not be limited primarily to a particular vertical or horizontal process (such as training).
- The vendor must develop and market the primary Web-conferencing product, not resell a “white label” product produced by another company in an OEM relationship. The product can be the result of an acquisition.

Vendors of the following products are evaluated in this Magic Quadrant:

- Adobe Connect.
- Alcatel-Lucent OmniTouch 8660 My Teamwork.
- AT&T Connect.
- Cisco Unified MeetingPlace and WebEx Web Meeting applications (Meeting Center, Sales Center, Event Center, Training Center and Support Center).
- Citrix GoToMeeting and GoToWebinar.
- Dialcom Spontania.
- Dimdim.
- Elluminate Live.
- IBM Lotus Sametime Meetings and IBM LotusLive Meetings.
- iLinc Enterprise Suite (iLinc for Meetings, iLinc for Webinars, iLinc for Support, iLinc for Learning).
- InterCall Unified Meeting.
- Microsoft Office Live Meeting 2007 and Office Communications Server (OCS) 2007.
- Netviewer Meet, Netviewer Support and Netviewer Present.
- Premiere Global Services Netspoke.
- Saba Centra.

Service providers such as InterCall and Premiere Global Services are included in this document because they market and develop their own Web-conferencing offerings. Other vendors not included, such as BT (with BT Conferencing), only resell the conferencing services of others, but nevertheless remain viable options when evaluating Web-conferencing services and providers.

Added

Dimdim appears on this Magic Quadrant for the first time. Increasingly, it has been added to shortlists as an open-source and low-cost alternative to larger players.

Dropped

No vendors have been dropped in this Magic Quadrant.

Evaluation Criteria

Ability to Execute

Several factors contribute to the vendors' execution ratings. We evaluated the capabilities of the vendors' products separately for basic and advanced functionality. Because this market includes many small vendors with uncertain futures, financial viability was an important factor. We evaluated pricing in terms of comparative price levels and vendors' flexibility in supporting the kinds of pricing model that customers want (such as concurrent user, named user, per minute and flat rate). We judged the customer experience by speaking to those of our clients who use the product and through calls with users supplied as references by the vendors.

Completeness of Vision

We evaluated the vendors' completeness of vision by examining customers' requirements for usage and purchasing and assessing how the products aligned with those. To evaluate vendors' marketing and product strategies, we looked at how they position their products and whether their products adequately address their chosen positioning. We rated the flexibility to support SaaS and on-premises deployment models more highly than a strategy of concentrating on a single deployment model. We also evaluated vendors' product innovation and ability to address the trends we expect to see in the Web-conferencing market.

Leaders

Vendors in the Leaders quadrant have achieved significant market share while demonstrating an ability to respond to customers' needs. Leaders have robust, scalable products with a wide range of features, a large installed base, acceptable financial performance and good distribution. Leaders are doing well today and are prepared for the future.

Table 1. Ability to Execute Evaluation Criteria

Evaluation Criteria	Weighting
Product/Service	High
Overall Viability (Business Unit, Financial, Strategy, Organization)	High
Sales Execution/Pricing	High
Market Responsiveness and Track Record	Standard
Marketing Execution	High
Customer Experience	High
Operations	Standard
Source: Gartner (November 2010)	

Challengers

There are no vendors in the Challengers quadrant this year. Vendors in this quadrant are characterized by operational excellence or good standing in the market. But compared with vendors in the Leaders and Visionaries quadrants, they do not have long-term road maps or their products lack some features.

Visionaries

Visionaries typically have an important, unique or well-developed technical capability and provide key elements of innovation that illustrate the future of the market. However, they have not yet developed sales and support capabilities to address or influence the whole market.

Niche Players

Niche Players may have good technology but are limited by their size, breadth of product line, track record in the market, vertical or horizontal focus, geographic niche or financial circumstances. Some have chosen a niche strategy – for example, regional vendors with a local focus or targeted functionality intended to run on top of, or along with, other technologies.

Table 2. Completeness of Vision Evaluation Criteria

Evaluation Criteria	Weighting
Market Understanding	High
Marketing Strategy	High
Sales Strategy	High
Offering (Product) Strategy	High
Business Model	Standard
Vertical/Industry Strategy	Standard
Innovation	Standard
Geographic Strategy	Standard
Source: Gartner (November 2010)	

Vendor Strengths and Cautions

Adobe

Adobe Connect has a robust set of features, and because the client used is Flash there is no extra cost attached to it. Adobe also delivers webcasting services for larger events with up to tens of thousands of participants. Strong traction in the government and defense sectors attests to the security of Adobe's on-premises platform behind a firewall. Compliance and archiving functionality enables tracking, logging and integration with third-party archiving services. Common use cases for Adobe Connect include Web meetings, training, virtual classrooms and webinars.

Deployment models supported: on-premises, managed services and SaaS.

Strengths

- Adobe Connect has secure on-premises use cases for government and defense agencies in the field.
- Flash support allows for bandwidth optimization with different types of media, including video, for better network performance.
- Adobe Connect also has a dedicated learning focus that suits the use case for higher education institutions and enterprises.

Cautions

- Because of Adobe's multiple deployment models, licensing options can be complex to understand – but the company is addressing this issue.
- Although good on bandwidth, Adobe's support for multiple webcams for video is still determined by the participants' CPUs and available bandwidth.
- There remains a lack of native support for Flash on some popular mobile devices, although Adobe Connect does work on the Apple iPhone, iPad and iTouch and on Android devices.

Alcatel-Lucent

Alcatel-Lucent bundles its Web-conferencing capabilities within its overall unified communications (UC) offering. Alcatel-Lucent has not achieved great traction beyond its UC customer base. Nor is it particularly well known for Web conferencing in North America. It has better traction in Europe. Alcatel-Lucent needs to focus on its direct enterprise sales as it competes in the emerging UCC space.

Deployment model supported: on-premises.

Strengths

- The offering is a scalable, carrier-grade solution for audio conferencing and Web conferencing.
- Alcatel-Lucent has moved down-market and now offers pricing options for small and midsize businesses (SMBs).

Cautions

- The product still lacks basic Web-conferencing features such as whiteboarding, editing and markup.
- Alcatel-Lucent has not shown strong support for its conferencing assets in the North American market.

AT&T

AT&T Connect is one of the few offerings positioned as a converged conferencing solution combining voice, video and Web-conferencing functionality. AT&T also has other modules such as iClass (for virtual classrooms). AT&T has been less vocal about these offerings and needs to communicate their capabilities clearly to the market as a whole, not just to AT&T Connect customers. As a service provider, AT&T has experience in large deployments and hybrid environments that mix on-premises and SaaS deployment models.

Deployment models supported: on-premises and SaaS.

Strengths

- AT&T Connect supports converged conferencing (audio, Web, video) – as opposed to focusing on these components as “point” tools – which is advantageous given that the trend is toward a more holistic view of conferencing.
- For customers of Microsoft and IBM UCC environments, AT&T offers continued integration with those platforms and clients.
- AT&T supports integration with mobile devices such as the Apple iPhone, which is increasingly a requirement on Web-conferencing RFPs.

Cautions

- AT&T's overall conferencing portfolio is not clearly articulated to the market as a whole.
- Although positioning itself with converged conferencing, AT&T still lacks the promised integration with room-based video-conferencing systems, although AT&T Connect works in a telepresence environment.

Cisco

Cisco is the clear market share leader for Web conferencing with WebEx, but it is facing pricing pressure from free and low-cost services. In pursuit of its broad collaboration aspirations to deliver a complete UCC offering, Cisco is still working to integrate all of the assets it acquired with the purchases of Jabber and PostPath. Cisco has one of the more feature-rich Web-conferencing solutions and has broad market traction in the majority of industry segments. To broaden its reach into the individual consumer and enterprise spaces, Cisco announced the Cius portable tablet in June 2010, which is expected to support all of Cisco's collaboration assets, including WebEx. Cisco, however, still needs to work on the integration of all its real-time collaboration assets.

Deployment models supported: on-premises (MeetingPlace), SaaS (WebEx) and a hybrid of on-premises and SaaS.

Strengths

- Cisco (with WebEx) is the Web-conferencing market share leader, with a wealth of market expertise and a history of successful deployments in diverse enterprise environments.
- As a feature-rich solution, WebEx has modular Web-conferencing features to support a wide range of business use cases, such as training, support, webinars and large events.
- Cisco WebEx has tight integration with Cisco's audio and video assets, which benefits environments that have already invested in these.
- Cisco was an early leader in offering mobile support for WebEx Web conferencing, which includes support for RIM BlackBerry and Apple iPhone smartphones and the Apple iPad.

Cautions

- Because Cisco has multiple pricing configurations for WebEx, organizations sometimes find it rather complex and would like this simplified.
- Enterprises lack clarification about the intersection of MeetingPlace (the on-premises offering) and WebEx Connect (the SaaS offering) Web-conferencing road maps, which impacts their decisions about on-premises infrastructure investments and potential cloud investments.

Citrix Online

Citrix Online, a division of Citrix Systems, was positioned as a Leader in last year's Magic Quadrant for the first time as a result of its strong marketing and sales execution. Although its offerings are not as feature-rich as some of the other major players (such as Cisco/WebEx and Adobe Connect), Citrix does all the basics well and has gained strong traction in the SMB space. The addition of advanced features such as audio conferencing has enabled Citrix to compete well. However, Citrix still lacks video functionality and its audio-conferencing service does not support international toll-free calls. Outside the U.S., international callers have to use VoIP and local toll numbers. However, Citrix has announced HDFaces video conferencing and support for international toll-free calls, which should be available in 2011. Also, Citrix now offers support in French and German.

Deployment model supported: SaaS.

Strengths

- Citrix has displayed strong marketing execution, resulting in greater market traction in SMBs and departmental purchases.
- Citrix positions itself effectively to budget-conscious SMBs as the "go to" Web-conferencing provider that provides all the basic features they need.
- The company is adding functionality to supplement its audio-conferencing offering, such as a new learning-focused product and support for high-definition video (due in early 2011).

Cautions

- Citrix's toll-free audio-conferencing bridge service lacks support for international toll-free calls. Users are recommended to use VoIP, which, depending on available bandwidth, may not be the optimal approach for some meeting participants.

Dialcom

Dialcom is based in Madrid, Spain but looking to penetrate the larger market for Web conferencing and gain a stronger presence in the U.S. and the rest of the world. With its Spontania product, Dialcom has a strong video story to tell in relation to bandwidth management, success in learning scenarios and ability to support unique on-premises connectivity requirements such as satellite communications using very small aperture terminal (VSAT) technology.

Deployment models supported: on-premises and SaaS.

Strengths

- Dialcom offers multidevice interoperability and supports integration with multiple PBX vendors, including Cisco and Avaya.
- There is integration with Microsoft OCS and Lotus Sametime environments.
- An adaptive bandwidth management feature is available to optimize video quality – software automatically tests end-user connections and, if necessary, adjusts video bandwidth settings for users experiencing network problems.

Cautions

- Dialcom does not have a strong market presence outside Europe, so the reach of its direct sales force is limited in other regions, including North America.

Dimdim

New to the Magic Quadrant is Dimdim, an open-source Web-conferencing provider that is challenging the market leaders with its low-cost solution. Dimdim recently partnered with Novell, which is reselling its conferencing services under the Novell Conferencing brand name. This is a prime example of a low-cost alternative helping to put downward pricing pressure on the Web-conferencing market leaders. The browser-based offering requires no download, which is a welcome feature in locked-down desktop environments.

Deployment model supported: SaaS.

Strengths

- Dimdim's "freemium" offering supports up to 20 attendees and appeals to small organizations and individuals who need a free or low-cost tool for small Web conferences.
- The offering is customizable via application programming interfaces, so developers can extend its functionality.

Cautions

- Dimdim's offering lacks integration with external audio-conferencing bridges, so there are no dial-back capabilities to a phone line from within a Web conference.
- There is no integration with Microsoft and IBM UCC clients and platforms, which many enterprises use.

Elluminate

Elluminate, along with Wimba, agreed in July 2010 to be acquired by Blackboard, which aims to gain an even stronger share in the higher education and K-12 space. Blackboard promises there will be no changes to the Elluminate offering for the foreseeable future, but customers would do well to demand a clearer road map and details of the impact on their individual investments. With features from Elluminate and Wimba overlapping, there is potential for a merged offering, which could affect future support for current Elluminate customers. Blackboard has posted an FAQ on its website to clarify its road map. The new Blackboard Collaborate division will retain staff from Elluminate and Wimba and continue to sell their Web-conferencing services. In the education sector, Elluminate's offering has good capabilities for virtual-classroom use cases. However, clients have raised concerns that not all webcams work with the product if there is a need for video.

Deployment models supported: on-premises and SaaS.

Strengths

- Elluminate has proven cross-platform support for Windows, Macintosh, Linux and Unix.
- Its core strength is in the field of learning and training, with good rich-media support for VoIP, live video and Flash playback.

Cautions

- Elluminate has limited webcam support, so, for video, not all webcams work with its software.
- The future impact of the acquisition by Blackboard remains in question, but there will be some integration challenges.

iLinc

iLinc has a well-integrated set of solutions for desktop Web and video conferencing. The primary use case for iLinc has traditionally been in training and virtual classroom scenarios. A partnership with salesforce.com has been positive, giving it traction in that company's user base. iLinc needs to focus on integration with IM and UCC clients, such as those of Microsoft and IBM, for "click to" conferencing capabilities.

Deployment models supported: on-premises and SaaS.

Strengths

- The iLinc offering supports a customizable interface that enterprises can configure so that certain features and toolsets appear to certain types of user.
- There is strategic integration with salesforce.com, so users can launch sales demos and webinars from within that company's CRM software.
- The iLinc Green Meter helps show the return on investment and potential cost savings from using Web-conferencing services.

Cautions

- iLinc's offering still lacks integration with Lotus Notes.
- iLinc's offering also lacks integration with enterprise IM and other UCC clients.

IBM

IBM has two Web-conferencing offerings: the Lotus Sametime on-premises product and the LotusLive Meetings SaaS offering. Improvements to Sametime 8.5 Meetings' ease of use and integration with IBM's overall UC portfolio have made this offering more attractive to the Lotus customer base and to enterprises in general. LotusLive Meetings can be sold on a stand-alone basis or as part of a LotusLive SaaS bundle. IBM has many configurations of this bundle, and it needs to simplify this to increase customers' understanding of the offering.

Deployment models supported: on-premises (Sametime) and SaaS (LotusLive Meetings).

Strengths

- The latest version of Sametime has a new user interface and improved Web-conferencing features such as drag-and-drop capabilities from the Sametime Connect client in order to immediately launch ad hoc meetings and invite participants.
- IBM has on-premises and SaaS-based Web-conferencing options in Sametime and LotusLive Meetings respectively.
- The zero-download, browser-based Web-conferencing option in both Web-conferencing offerings has become a requirement in some enterprise environments that want to control what users download to their desktops.

Cautions

- For potential buyers of IBM conferencing assets, LotusLive Meetings and the Web-conferencing features of Sametime represent two different code bases, support different use cases and provisioning models, and require separate purchasing decisions.

InterCall

InterCall's Unified Meeting is the Web-conferencing service it gained with the acquisition of Genesys. InterCall is a service provider that resells other providers' conferencing services as well as selling its own bundled Web-, audio- and video-conferencing offering. InterCall also offers webcasting services for larger events. The advantages of using this type of service provider are the bundled nature of the offering, plus a single invoice for Web, audio and video conferencing. Typically, customers consider InterCall when their primary need is audio conferencing.

Deployment model supported: SaaS.

Strengths

- The Unified Meeting interface is completely configurable, so customers can customize it with their own company brand or logo.
- No software download is needed for participants, which helps to limit issues arising from attendees working in environments where desktops are locked down.

Cautions

- Web conferences cannot be initiated from a Mac, and support is participant-only.

Microsoft

With BPOS, Microsoft is commoditizing individual collaboration technologies such as Web conferencing and providing them as part of a cloud collaboration suite. The whole suite can be purchased for about \$10 per user per month. The individual Web-conferencing component costs \$4.50 per user per month. This is changing the market's dynamics and putting pricing pressure on other market leaders, such as Cisco. By capitalizing on its position as the leading e-mail provider for enterprises, Microsoft is positioning Web-conferencing as part of a complete strategic UCC investment.

Announcements by Microsoft about the next version of OCS – Microsoft Lync 2010 – state that the upgraded desktop client will support audio, video and Web conferencing. The current Live Meeting client will be supported by Lync Online.

Deployment models supported: on-premises (OCS 2007 R2) and SaaS (Live Meeting).

Strengths

- Microsoft has integration across its whole portfolio of collaboration products.
- The Web-conferencing clients for OCS and Live Meeting have the same code base.
- The Live Meeting Web-conferencing offering can be purchased as part of the BPOS cloud-based service at a discount.

Cautions

- Customer feedback states that presentations with rich graphics consistently load slowly.
- Although listed as having per-month pricing, the Live Meeting subscription service requires a 12-month commitment.

Netviewer

Netviewer, a German company, still focuses on the European market, where it competes well. Outside North America, Netviewer's Web-conferencing business is experiencing double-digit year-over-year growth. Netviewer competes well but needs to improve its support for external audio-conferencing bridges. A majority of Web conferences still use an external bridge for audio. Netviewer's primary use case is one-to-one conferencing and remote support. Partners such as Swisscom use Netviewer technology for external remote customer support.

Deployment models supported: on-premises and SaaS.

Strengths

- A major strength is Netviewer's obvious traction in the European market.
- Netviewer has an extensive list of partners that integrate its technology for remote support.

Cautions

- The company still lacks support for external audio-conference bridges, which is becoming a requirement for enterprises.
- Netviewer has limited customer experience outside Europe and has made no moves to remedy this lack.

Premiere Global Services

Premiere has added flexibility to its licensing options with the addition of named host licensing. An updated offering called PGi Web Meeting 5.0 will be released in late 2010 with a new design of user interface. The new offering promises to support more users – the maximum of the current product, which has good traction in the SMB sector, is 300 concurrent participants. Premiere competes closely with InterCall, the focus of both service providers being audio conferencing.

Deployment model supported: SaaS.

Strengths

- Although the company's focus is audio conferencing, Premiere supports a tight bundle of audio, Web and video capabilities.
- The product has reporting capabilities for meeting analytics.
- A software download is not required for the Web-conferencing service.

Cautions

- Multilanguage support is currently limited, but expanded language support is planned for late 2010 in the updated offering.

Saba

Saba has focused on innovation, merging its talent management, e-learning and collaboration assets into a broader, integrated enterprise social software platform. Web conferencing in Saba Centra is fully integrated into Saba's overall portfolio. Saba tends to have large deployments with established customers and has mainly supported training and learning use cases. With recent innovations tying Web conferencing and real-time collaboration to social software, Saba needs to execute with a strong go-to-market strategy in order to increase its share in the larger Web-conferencing market.

Deployment models supported: on-premises and SaaS.

Strengths

- Saba has traditional expertise to support remote learning and training use cases in most industries.
- Saba shows innovation in bridging real-time collaboration and enterprise social computing in a single platform in the current release of Saba Centra.
- Saba Centra supports in-context Web conferencing tied to people and talent management features, which is advantageous for organizations with existing investments in Saba's portfolio.

Cautions

- Saba's offering still lacks click-to-conference integration with major enterprise IM and UC clients such as those of Microsoft and IBM, but this feature is in pre-production beta at the time of writing.
- Customers have traditionally considered Saba Centra only for training and learning use cases. There is an opportunity for Saba to communicate its broader offering and use cases to the market as a whole.

Vendors Added or Dropped

We review and adjust our inclusion criteria for Magic Quadrants and MarketScopes as markets change. As a result of these adjustments, the mix of vendors in any Magic Quadrant or MarketScope may change over time. A vendor's appearance in a Magic Quadrant or MarketScope one year and not the next does not necessarily indicate that we have changed our opinion of that vendor. It may reflect a change in the market and, therefore, changed evaluation criteria, or a change of focus by the vendor.

Evaluation Criteria Definitions

Ability to Execute

Product/Service: Core goods and services offered by the vendor that compete in/serve the defined market. This includes current product/service capabilities, quality, feature sets, skills, etc., whether offered natively or through OEM agreements/partnerships as defined in the market definition and detailed in the subcriteria.

Overall Viability (Business Unit, Financial, Strategy, Organization): Viability includes an assessment of the overall organization's financial health, the financial and practical success of the business unit, and the likelihood of the individual business unit to continue investing in the product, to continue offering the product and to advance the state of the art within the organization's portfolio of products.

Sales Execution/Pricing: The vendor's capabilities in all pre-sales activities and the structure that supports them. This includes deal management, pricing and negotiation, pre-sales support and the overall effectiveness of the sales channel.

Market Responsiveness and Track Record: Ability to respond, change direction, be flexible and achieve competitive success as opportunities develop, competitors act, customer needs evolve and market dynamics change. This criterion also considers the vendor's history of responsiveness.

Marketing Execution: The clarity, quality, creativity and efficacy of programs designed to deliver the organization's message in order to influence the market, promote the brand and business, increase awareness of the products, and establish a positive identification with the product/brand and organization in the minds of buyers. This "mind share" can be driven by a combination of publicity, promotional, thought leadership, word-of-mouth and sales activities.

Customer Experience: Relationships, products and services/programs that enable clients to be successful with the products evaluated. Specifically, this includes the ways customers receive technical support or account support. This can also include ancillary tools, customer support programs (and the quality thereof), availability of user groups, service-level agreements, etc.

Operations: The ability of the organization to meet its goals and commitments. Factors include the quality of the organizational structure including skills, experiences, programs, systems and other vehicles that enable the organization to operate effectively and efficiently on an ongoing basis.

Completeness of Vision

Market Understanding: Ability of the vendor to understand buyers' wants and needs and to translate those into products and services. Vendors that show the highest degree of vision listen and understand buyers' wants and needs, and can shape or enhance those with their added vision.

Marketing Strategy: A clear, differentiated set of messages consistently communicated throughout the organization and externalized through the website, advertising, customer programs and positioning statements.

Sales Strategy: The strategy for selling product that uses the appropriate network of direct and indirect sales, marketing, service and communication affiliates that extend the scope and depth of market reach, skills, expertise, technologies, services and the customer base.

Offering (Product) Strategy: The vendor's approach to product development and delivery that emphasizes differentiation, functionality, methodology and feature set as they map to current and future requirements.

Business Model: The soundness and logic of the vendor's underlying business proposition.

Vertical/Industry Strategy: The vendor's strategy to direct resources, skills and offerings to meet the specific needs of individual market segments, including verticals.

Innovation: Direct, related, complementary and synergistic layouts of resources, expertise or capital for investment, consolidation, defensive or pre-emptive purposes.

Geographic Strategy: The vendor's strategy to direct resources, skills and offerings to meet the specific needs of geographies outside the "home" or native geography, either directly or through partners, channels and subsidiaries as appropriate for that geography and market.