

Simplify Business Communications with Fortinet

Executive Summary

Managing voice communications has become increasingly challenging as corporate offices have become more geographically distributed, employees have begun working remotely or using mobile devices, and more and more businesses have adopted a bring-your-own-device policy. Legacy communications technologies supported by onsite network engineering and operations staff have difficulty supporting these environments. Many are also left unprotected against fraudsters and intruders. That is why Fortinet offers a scalable, comprehensive voice communications solution.

Fortinet Unified Communications secures office communications and streamlines centralized management of widely dispersed phones and Softclients. The solution's pricing is all-inclusive for every voice and conferencing feature, which enables organizations to cost-effectively optimize the user experience. By combining industry-leading security and efficiency, Fortinet Unified Communications provides a better option for managing the complex voice communications that have become common in many organizations.

Remedy for Disparate Communications

From educational institutions to government agencies to private-sector businesses, many organizations around the world still run on aging communications infrastructures. These legacy systems are both expensive to upgrade and very resource-intensive to maintain. They are neither scalable nor flexible to support business growth and expansion. Moreover, they are often missing effective security features. As a result, these communications systems are exposed to potential call interception and phone fraud, scenarios that could impact the organization's reputation and lead to lost revenue.

The remedy for all these challenges lies in a single-provider system that combines the assortment of devices and features organizations require with a business communications system backbone. This streamlines the deployment and ongoing management of system components. Even greater business continuity is possible when all the necessary security is already built in.

That is why network engineering and operations leaders are increasingly turning to the Fortinet Unified Communications solution. As a top cybersecurity provider, Fortinet includes business-critical security technologies in its Unified Communications solutions, which encompass FortiVoice, FortiFone, and FortiCall. In addition to boosting end-user productivity through secure, high-quality collaboration capabilities, Fortinet Unified Communications is easier for administrators to manage than a traditional communications infrastructure, thus consuming far less staff time and reducing costs.

FortiVoice: All-inclusive Communications Solution

The cornerstone of Fortinet Unified Communications, FortiVoice provides integrated high-definition (HD) voice, conferencing, and fax communications. The solution comes with a rich set of calling capabilities, including auto attendant, dial-by-name directory, music on hold, high availability, remote extensions, and much more. All calling and conferencing features are included in every FortiVoice unit without additional licensing or hardware. The solution is available for deployment on-premises, in a virtual environment, or via the public cloud or a private cloud. Thus, organizations can select whichever form factor best meets their business communications and budget requirements.

86% of executives and employees at U.S. companies indicate that poor communications affect their business's productivity and bottom line.¹

Fortinet Unified Communications supports any size of business in both centralized and distributed offices.

Because it is all-inclusive and affordable, FortiVoice makes it easy to demonstrate return on investment (ROI) throughout the decision and implementation process. In addition to the included features, FortiVoice comes with an intuitive web-based console that gives network engineers visibility into system performance and centralizes management across all the organization's offices and remote users. This reduces redundancy in IT staff and expenses, and further enables the team to manage the FortiVoice system more efficiently anywhere, anytime. Finally, because there are no recurring per-user subscription costs for FortiVoice services, organizations can save more than 50% over a five-year period compared with alternative solutions.

FortiVoice safeguards business communications with advanced security features, such as call encryption, user privilege, policy management, proactive monitoring and reporting, and more. By increasing the protections on both internal and external communications, FortiVoice makes it much more difficult for hackers to intercept or eavesdrop on calls and gain unauthorized access to business phone and fax systems. This reduces the risk of an incident that might undermine stakeholder trust in the organization—or worse, expose confidential data.

In conjunction with the protection of Fortinet Security Fabric solutions, FortiVoice gives network engineering and operations staff peace of mind that a single trusted vendor is protecting their network against session initiation protocol (SIP) attacks and possible business downtime.

FortiFone: A Plethora of Communications Choices

In addition to FortiVoice, Fortinet offers a versatile selection of FortiFone IP phones. From standard desk phones to advanced video phones, from receptionist phones to hotel phones to cordless phones, and even conference phones, FortiFone offerings are available to meet every organizational need.

Fortinet Unified Communications is also designed to support employees who are traveling or want to use their own devices. Its FortiFone Softclients for mobile and desktops help users stay connected anywhere, anytime. They can make and receive calls through a single business identity on multiple devices, and they can use the Softclient interface to access voicemail, check their call history, and search the organization's directory. Support for third-party devices includes iOS, Android, macOS, Windows, and Linux operating systems.

FortiCall: Achieving Telecom Connectivity

The third leg of Fortinet Unified Communications is the FortiCall service, which offers a wide range of numbers available for selection and affordable calling plans.² With FortiCall, organizations can establish a local business presence where needed without a physical office. The service also offers toll-free numbers so that customers located anywhere can contact the organization free of charge.

For a flat monthly cost, FortiCall calling plans allow unlimited inbound and outbound calls anywhere within the continental United States and Canada. FortiCall also offers calls to more than 180 countries at affordable international rates, so businesses can expand globally with ease.

Communications Are Better When Unified

Fortinet delivers enterprise-grade communications with voice, conferencing, and fax under an integrated platform that enables users to manage their preferences through an intuitive web-based interface. The user portal makes it easy to access voicemail, manage call routing, and quickly perform other extension-specific tasks.

At the same time, network engineering and operations teams can leverage the solution's web-based management console to streamline communications infrastructure workflows across all the organization's offices. Staff can manage extensions and devices—including phones, trunks, and gateways—through the web interface anywhere. Additionally, the comprehensive monitoring system and dashboard provide centralized visibility of real-time system usage and performance to prevent system failure and network misuse. Call logs and reports provide extensive data to help teams analyze the network activities for troubleshooting and performance optimization.

Because security is built into Fortinet Unified Communications, network engineering and operations staff interface with a single vendor—a recognized leader in the security industry—for both networking and security needs. Consolidating foundational technologies with one solution provider can dramatically improve efficiency. For example, organizations that shift to software-defined wide-area networking (SD-WAN) can deploy Fortinet Secure SD-WAN in conjunction with Fortinet Unified Communications.

“Fortinet is a major player in the technology sector known for their security products. The FortiVoice solution just adds to their arsenal of being a complete solution company.”

– Paul Bobak, Network Operations Manager, Alamance County

FortiFone Softclient enables employees to communicate and collaborate efficiently from any location.

Additionally, the consistency of user interfaces across the Fortinet solutions streamlines device management and updates, and network engineering and operations staff can leverage one support services entity—FortiCare—for both SD-WAN and voice communications, leading to faster, better coordination of problem resolution. This leads to significant savings on operational expenditures (OpEx) and helps them to focus on managing more critical network activities.

Finally, the ability to remotely manage Fortinet Unified Communications technologies means that network engineering and operations staff have the flexibility to configure extensions; enable or disable features on each phone, fax, or conference device; and perform firmware updates, as needed, without leaving their centralized location.

Most legacy telecommunications systems require network engineering and operations teams to maintain a regular physical presence in every remote office. Such a distributed network engineering and operations team is no longer necessary when the communications infrastructure offers simplified, centralized control. With Fortinet Unified Communications, in contrast, staff onsite in a remote office need only to plug in a cable and a power cord; thereafter, the network engineering and operations team at headquarters can quickly connect a new phone to the organization's communications solution. This deployment approach dramatically reduces staff resources and recaptures valuable time whenever a new extension must be added.

Conclusion

Fortinet Unified Communications provides excellent value for organizational investment. All-inclusive pricing for hardware and software, coupled with flat-rate calling plans, leads to significant cost savings. Flexibility in the solution's form factor enables organizations to deploy in the most cost-effective manner possible. Finally, the biggest impact on ROI is the potential to improve efficiency.

Fortinet is a recognized leader in networking and cybersecurity technologies. Following this tradition, Fortinet Unified Communications bolsters an organization's ability to protect voice communications against prospective intrusions and attacks. The fact that it also reduces ROI for the communications infrastructure makes Fortinet Unified Communications an easy choice for organizations' voice communications infrastructure.

“Fortinet has really stepped up in helping provide a scalable, easy-to-use solution when other vendors were unable to—at a price we can justify.”

**– Adam Harkey, System Engineer,
Cabarrus County Schools**

“Unified communications as a service [UCaaS] vendors don't always provide the lowest costs, especially in larger organizations that are maintaining fully depreciated on-premises phone systems.”³

¹ [“Communication Barriers in the Modern Workplace,”](#) Lucidchart, March 2018.

² FortiCall services are available for organizations in North America for unlimited U.S. and Canada calling, with the exception of Alaska and Northwest Territories.

³ Irwin Lazar, [“The hidden costs of unified communications in the cloud,”](#) TechTarget, August 29, 2018.