How hybrid cloud communications helps you achieve the balance you're looking for

Keep your on-premises system and gain cloud benefits with a hybrid UC deployment

Your office is not the same as it was a decade ago. Remote and hybrid work has become a given for many organizations. In a **2024 survey by Reworked Insights** for Zoom, 95% of leaders say they've made their workplace more flexible in just the past two years, and 82% say they plan to make it more flexible in the next two years.
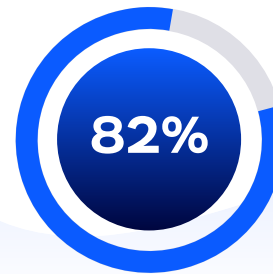
As enterprises grapple with meeting the unique demands of a distributed workforce, IT leaders need to strike a balance between flexibility and security, reliability and control. Cloud-based unified communications (UC) provide employees with access to the collaboration tools they need, like voice, video, and chat, even when they're not in the office. Over the last several years, many of the organizations who rely on on-premises systems want to take advantage of the benefits of the cloud while leveraging their existing investments.

If your organization is in the on-premises camp, but you want to bring greater flexibility, better collaboration tools, and innovative AI features to your employees, a hybrid UC deployment model could help you do that.

Leaders who have made their workplace more flexible in the last 2 years

95%

Leaders who plan to make their workplace more flexible in the next 2 years

82%

The state of on-premises systems — and why you need more

Even with the rise of UCaaS, on-premises systems are still an important part of enterprise business communications. This is especially true for industries where physical infrastructure may be needed due to regulations or heightened security requirements.

- 3 out of 10 organizations **(31.8%)** say on-premises is the primary architecture for their enterprise phone system[1]
- **43.6%** have no plans to move away from their on-premises solution[1]
- About **half** of UC systems installed globally are on-premises PBXs[2]

While fully on-premises solutions have their strengths, they also come with distinct challenges:

Reasons for sticking with on-premises	Challenges that arise
Maximizing ROI. Organizations that have made significant hardware investments may prefer to maximize the return on their investment over its lifespan before exploring new solutions.	**Implementing AI effectively.** If you want to introduce AI-first collaboration tools, you may struggle with finding a solution that works seamlessly with your existing investments and communications infrastructure.
Direct control. Infrastructure is kept and maintained on-site instead of hosted by third-party providers. For those who want complete control over their communications system, this minimizes risk exposure while offering the flexibility to meet diverse user needs.	**Vendor complexity.** As you introduce additional communication and collaboration tools, managing disparate solutions becomes complicated for IT admins.
No migration plan. IT teams may lack the resources or budget to manage a full cloud migration at this time.	**Disjointed experience.** Adopting cloud-based solutions for chat, video conferencing, and more allows you to maintain direct control on your core on-premises solution, but can cause a disjointed experience for employees.

[1] Metrigy Workplace Collaboration MetriCast 2024.
[2] The Eastern Management Group, Unified Communications Market Analysis - Strategic Marketing and Distribution Strategies for 2024–2028.

A hybrid deployment leverages the flexibility and scalability of the cloud and the strengths of your on-premises solutions. This creates a balanced approach that minimizes challenges and maximizes value.

Top 3 benefits of hybrid unified communications

1 Keep your existing investments AND see cost savings

A hybrid UC solution allows you to leverage your existing on-premises system while integrating with a UCaaS platform for the standard communications. With this approach, you have greater flexibility to scale as you add new users and regular software updates are maintained by the provider. Rather than worry about adding new equipment or replacing technology to keep pace with innovation, you'll be able to access the latest features and security measures with regular cloud updates as part of your contract.

2 Control mission-critical functionality on-site AND gain the benefits of cloud redundancy

By combining the control of on-premises solutions with the flexibility of the cloud, you can improve business continuity and better plan for outages and disasters. Keeping critical infrastructure on-site allows you to stay connected if internet connections are down, while cloud capabilities enable you to get back to "business as usual" more quickly if on-premises servers are damaged or inaccessible. If your workforce needs to work remotely or relocate, they can access their UCaaS tools on mobile devices and laptops, making it easier to pivot in the face of unforeseen circumstances.

3 Take steps to move to the cloud AND reduce complexity with an integrated approach

A hybrid UC deployment allows you to create an integrated communication experience by providing one platform for voice, video, chat, and other collaboration tools, versus having several disjointed solutions that don't work together. For instance, while employees will still be able to use their desk phones, they can also make and receive calls using their business number on a mobile app or desktop softphone. They can also elevate a phone call to a video meeting with a few simple clicks, and chat with colleagues and external contacts on the same platform.

This approach isn't just easier for employees, it also simplifies management for IT admins. A hybrid UC solution allows you to provision users and manage updates from a single pane of glass. And as your existing infrastructure reaches the end of its lifespan, you can evaluate a move to the cloud in stages without the stress of managing a large-scale deployment all at once.

Is hybrid right for you?

Hybrid UC brings a best-of-both-worlds approach to organizations, but there are two reasons why it might be the right choice for your business:

You want to future-proof your communications strategy
A hybrid deployment represents a natural stepping stone to cloud communications. It gives you the flexibility to keep your on-premises system while introducing the cloud capabilities you'll need for long-term growth and scalability.

You need the benefits of both on-prem and cloud
Many industries and regions rely on their on-premises system for the control, sovereignty, and stability it offers. In the areas where UCaaS fits, a hybrid cloud approach can complement your UC strategy.

Mitel customers can now access a unique hybrid cloud solution with Zoom Workplace and AI Companion.

Discover how this integrated approach works seamlessly with your Mitel investments to improve your workday and bring AI-first collaboration to employees.

→ **How Zoom and Mitel improve your workday**