

Enhancing Teams with enterprise-grade telephony

Avaya Cloud Office PBX for Microsoft Teams

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Executive summary

Today's businesses depend on a robust communications experience to drive innovation, and voice services are still a critical part of that experience.

However, it's not just about picking up the phone and dialing a number. Today's workers and customers connect with each other using a variety of modes, including team messaging, meetings, video, emails, chats, and more.

With the rapid growth in remote working seen over the past year, businesses have turned to a variety of solutions, including Microsoft Teams.

While Teams provides messaging and video capabilities, a recent survey found that 85% of Teams users adopted telephony solutions from providers other than Microsoft.

Avaya Cloud Office by RingCentral provides a fully featured, robust and reliable telephony platform that can be fully integrated into Microsoft Teams through the Direct Routing option.

This overview will discuss what to look for in a direct routing solution and how Avaya Cloud Office can support your Teams environment.

More workers are going remote

10% of companies had a 100% remote workforce in 2019, this jumped up to 19% in 2020.*



Only 4% of large businesses, with 250 employees or more, will have no remote workers in 2021, down from 12% in 2019.*



*Cavell Group Enterprise Insight Survey 2020



77% of businesses provide some of their users with a fixed telephony number for use at work; 20% of businesses provide all of their users with a fixed telephony number.”

—Cavell Group, Enterprise Insight Survey 2020

Microsoft Teams

When COVID-19 upended office life, many businesses had no choice but to send employees to work from home. That also meant rethinking communication strategies fast. After all, how do employees collaborate without being together in the office?

For some, the availability of the free Microsoft Teams licenses, bundled with their other Microsoft solutions, became the collaboration app of choice.

Unfortunately, Microsoft Teams lacks a mission-critical feature: enterprise-grade telephony. Its built-in telephony isn't included in most Teams packages, and even when purchased as a separate add-on, it comes with a number of limitations in geographic coverage, resiliency and PBX features.

When it comes to business communications, calling is still a critical, and every business needs highly reliable and feature rich voice solutions - for both internal and external communications.

Evaluating voice services for Microsoft Teams

Organizations can add telephony into Microsoft Teams by choosing between two options: Microsoft Calling Plans or Direct Routing.

Microsoft Calling Plans

Organizations can choose to use Microsoft as their telephony carrier by purchasing Microsoft Phone System licenses (included with E5 licenses) along with Calling Plans, which includes a phone number and a bundle of domestic or international minutes. This route adds simple telephony functions into Microsoft Teams, with Microsoft providing the entire service end to end.

While Calling Plans offers basic telephony functions, it's important to remember that Microsoft is a very new player in the cloud telephony world. Essential details such as uptime SLAs, global availability, and IT user experience might not be up to enterprise standards. According to the Cavell Group, only about 15% of Teams users utilize Microsoft Calling Plans.

Direct Routing

Organizations can connect Teams to a third-party telephony provider for an enterprise-grade, high-performance solution that connects your Teams and Microsoft 365 deployment to the PSTN networks, allowing users to make and receive external phone calls from anywhere on any device running natively in the Teams application.

With Direct Routing, businesses can bring their own services directly into Teams. This means being able to take advantage of cheaper call rates, greater flexibility, and better support compared to working directly with Microsoft.



More than 85% of Microsoft Teams users, with the telephony capability enabled, use Direct Routing through third-parties instead of Microsoft's own Calling Plans.”

—**Cavell Group**, Enterprise Insight Survey 2020

Note as well that, normally, Direct Routing is enabled via a Microsoft certified Session Border Controller (SBC), which could require significant technical resources to install and manage. However, **Avaya Cloud Office PBX for Microsoft Teams** saves you time and money by taking care of this for you.

Key questions to consider when selecting a Direct Routing solution:

1. What are the key telephony features your users need?
2. How secure and reliable is your provider's platform? What standards do they support? What SAL guarantees do they provide?
3. What analytics does your provider offer and how easy is it to access them? Do they provide the insights your business requires?
4. What integrations does your provider offer to the other key applications your people use everyday?
5. How easy is it to expand and scale your solution? What coverage is provided in new areas or new countries?
6. Does your provider offer professional services to support your implementation needs?
7. What reputation does your provider have? How long have they been in the business?
8. Do you understand the full costs of implementing Direct Routing with your chosen provider, including any requirements for an SBC?

Avaya Cloud Office PBX for Microsoft Teams: Best of both worlds

Why choose Avaya Cloud Office PBX for Microsoft Teams over the Microsoft Calling Plans?

Advanced PBX features

Add essential enterprise-grade cloud phone system features like Directed Call Pick-up, Queue overflow to extension, Call Recording and Park and Page.

Improved resilience and business continuity

Microsoft offers a 99.9% uptime SLA across Teams. This equates to nearly nine hours of downtime per user every year. If Microsoft has an outage, you're able to rely on voice communications from Avaya Cloud Office, which offers the industry's highest standard uptime SLA of 99.999%, in the meantime.



47% of large enterprises—those with 1,000 users or more—chose their telecom’s solutions because it integrates with other key cloud applications.”

—Cavell Group, Enterprise Insight Survey 2020

Expansive global footprint

Avaya Cloud Office is available in over 40 countries and in 15 languages, providing coverage in your geographies and reducing the overhead of managing multiple bills and contracts.

Drive productivity with integrations

Embed calling into more than just your Microsoft apps. Avaya Cloud Office’s robust integration platform includes out-of-the-box integrations with Salesforce, Zendesk, ServiceNow, and 180+ other apps, plus thousands of open APIs to build custom integrations.

Robust analytics

Avaya Cloud Office’s analytics portal provides complete visibility into all your voice communications in Teams so you can identify key trends, set automated alerts, and more.

Security

Avaya Cloud Office offers best-in-class security via enterprise grade protection with seven layers of security, giving IT peace of mind.

Cloud telephony expertise

Avaya Cloud Office is based on the RingCentral platform that has been in development for 20+ years. Platform accolades include being recognized as a leader in the Gartner UCaaS Magic Quadrant for 6 years running.

End-to-end migration support

We work with you from start to finish to ensure a smooth and worry-free migration. With a deep understanding of your business, our experts develop a sound migration strategy that minimizes disruption to your operations.

Native user experience

Building your phone capabilities natively into Teams is a great way to offer users a single, unified communication experience and gives users seamless access to the best-in-class telephony services they need.

AVAYA CLOUD OFFICE
UPTIME SLA


99.999%

which equates to less than six minutes of downtime a year.

MICROSOFT’S
UPTIME SLA

99.9%

uptime equates to more than a business day of downtime a year.



Your business will enjoy the benefits of a highly resilient solution while also allowing users to take advantage of the Microsoft Teams app.

Conclusion

Avaya Cloud Office PBX for Microsoft Teams provides a feature rich, secure, and scalable platform to support Direct Routing on Teams. Your business will enjoy the benefits of a highly resilient solution while also allowing users to take advantage of the Microsoft Teams app. To learn more about Avaya Cloud Office visit us at: www.avaya.com/en/products/ucaas/cloud-office.

Methodology and approach

Cavell Group commissioned its Enterprise 2020 Insight research covering businesses of varying sizes in the US and Europe to provide unique insight into how businesses have changed their work practices and the impact on the requirements for communication and collaboration services.



About Avaya

Businesses are built by the experiences they provide, and every day millions of those experiences are delivered by Avaya Holdings Corp. (NYSE: AVYA). Avaya is shaping what's next for the future of work, with innovation and partnerships that deliver game-changing business benefits. Our cloud communications solutions and multi-cloud application ecosystem power personalized, intelligent, and effortless customer and employee experiences to help achieve strategic ambitions and desired outcomes. Together, we are committed to help grow your business by delivering Experiences that Matter. Learn more at www.avaya.com.



Experiences
That Matter