

# Future-Proof Your Workplace with Cloud Calling

6 Reasons to Move Your On-Premises Phone  
Systems to Cloud Calling

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# Digital Transformation Accelerates

The last three years accelerated digital transformation strategies across nearly every organization. In some cases, a decade's worth of transformation was achieved in just 12 months.

Technologies, programs, and processes created in the 1990s have been digitally transformed and cloud-enabled to improve speed, quality, experience, and security. And nearly every organization is better for it.

Transformation was taking place in fits and starts before the pandemic, but now digital initiatives are accelerating rapidly. IBM research found that "60% of organizations sped up their investments in digital technologies due to COVID-19 and more than half (55%) permanently course-corrected their organizational strategies."<sup>1</sup>

When implemented properly within an organization, these transformations dramatically improve workforce experience and workflow integration. Externally, benefits can include an acceleration in customer engagement and an improvement in overall customer experience.

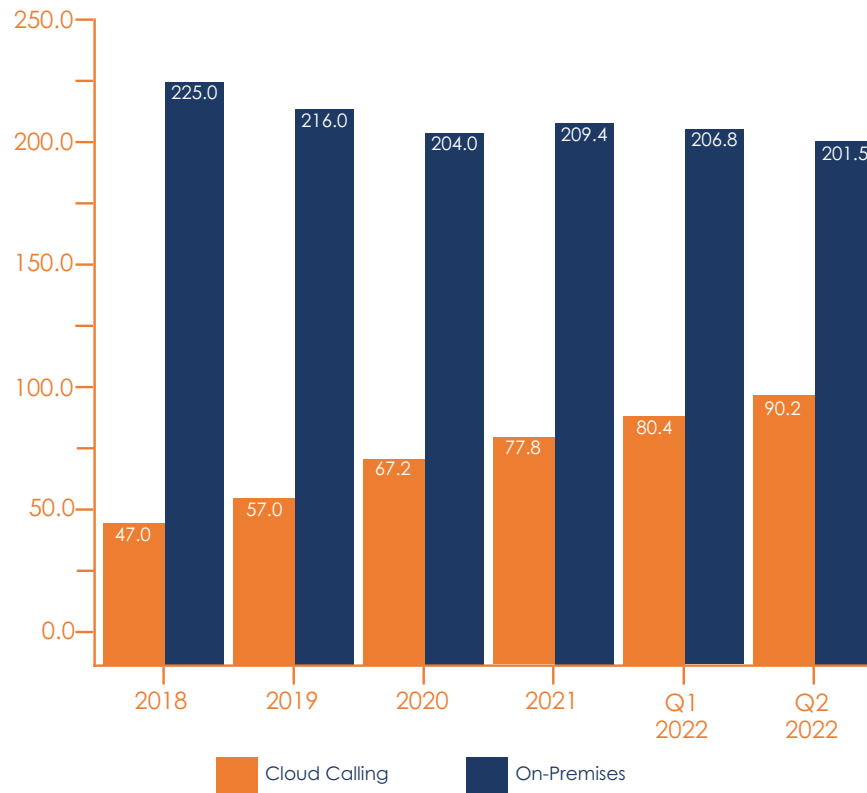
**Yet for all the digital advances, one foundational enterprise service lags behind in a complete workplace transformation: Calling.**

<sup>1</sup>5 Trends for 2022 and beyond, IBM Institute for Business Value, December 2021, <https://www.ibm.com/downloads/cas/QWX10DZN>



Since the 1970s, when semiconductors enabled the electronic automation of private branch exchanges (PBX), calling has mostly been deployed on-premises. And though the 1980s and 1990s brought further digitization (TDM & IP PBX), not much really changed for the user.

The reason not much has changed for the user is that two-thirds of deployed and active calling licenses remain on-premises today.



Cloud calling licenses: 201M; on-premises licenses: 90M – as of Q2 2022. Source: Wainhouse

Most on-premises calling systems have no integration with the users workflow, for example presence and availability, desktop-to-mobile-to-desktop transition, nor do they provide the flexibility and adaptability required by today's hybrid worker.

And even scarier is the limited visibility to escalating security threats, complicated and ever-changing compliance requirements, constrained disaster readiness, vendors ending support for their phone system hardware, and a multi-generational workforce that has dramatically shifted in how they use and engage with enterprise communications.

**Today's modern workforce demands and deserves a modern calling service. Likewise, today's digitally transformed enterprise requires it.**





# Calling Options Defined

Before addressing the reasons to consider moving calling to the cloud, let us clarify how on-premises, hosted, and cloud systems are different.

**On-premises:** The IT department provides hardware, network, calling plans, PBX licenses, maintenance, and assumes all the responsibility for uptime, security, and reliability for one organization.

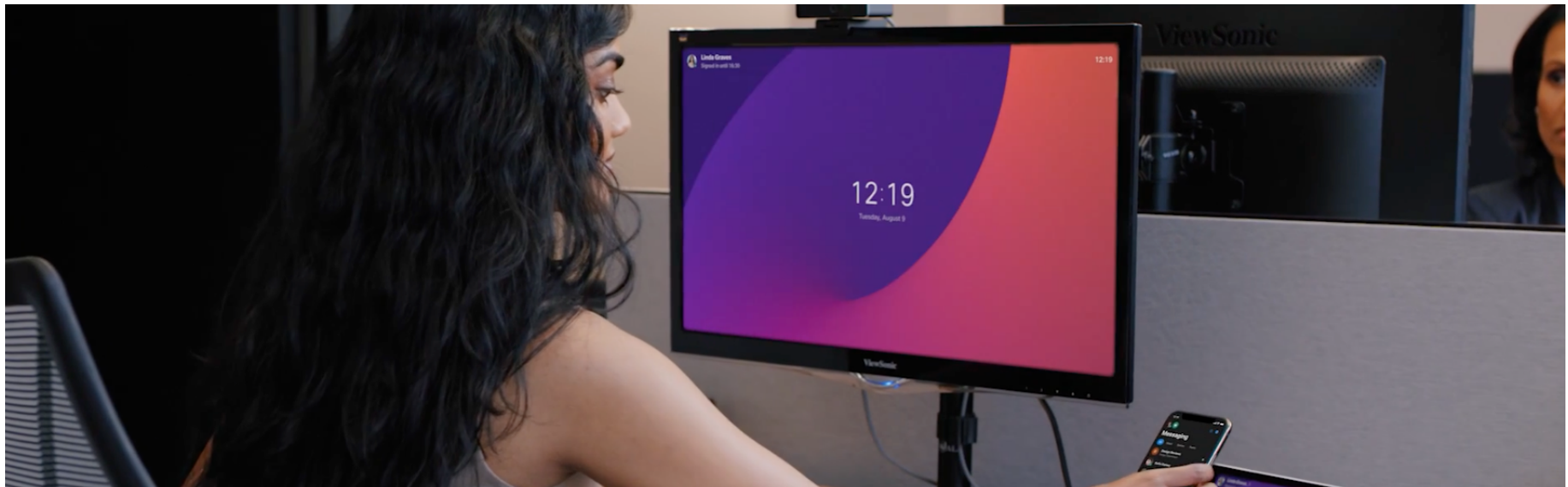
**Hosted:** A third-party provider owns, maintains, and manages physical servers off the client premises. A calling service is virtualized for a single client across those servers (single tenant).

**Cloud:** Services are multi-tenant, meaning clients gain economies of scale for cost, security, and business continuity — and eliminate the

risks of hardware vendor end-of-life support.

With both on-premises and hosted, the benefits are often more customizable services based on the client's needs and control over security protocols — usually associated with industry-specific (or business-unit-specific) regulatory requirements. However, both often lack redundancy for disaster recovery, assurance of uptime or continual deployment of modern workforce features.

**Cloud services provide easier provisioning, simpler user management, continuously improving features, a higher degree of security, and guaranteed uptime and service continuity with multiple redundant server sites. Cloud calling also offers organizations a logical path to greater collaboration.**



# Cloud Calling and the Modern Workforce

Why should business leaders and IT decision makers consider a transition to cloud calling now?

**The most compelling reasons to migrate to cloud calling include technical, cultural, and business drivers as well as a need to meet evolving end-user needs.**

Enterprise organizations today are faced with the biggest transition in the employee-employer relationship since the industrial revolution. Innovation is accelerating at an unimaginable pace, and external threats to internal data and communications daily outnumber the ability of any group of humans to track and contain them.

To determine if cloud calling would improve connectivity, communications, and collaboration within your organization, first consider if the following initiatives are also critical to your business:



## ALIGNING WITH AN EVOLVING WORKPLACE

Organizations are looking to redefine workplaces or create new work cultures that fully embrace hybrid work as a driving and unifying connection across the workforce. **Without this, employees are either leaving for organizations that support flexible work models, or “quietly quitting” a workplace environment that doesn’t.**

At the same time, there is a desire among some employees to return to the office, but one in three have expressed concern about their ability to collaborate with remote colleagues.<sup>3</sup>

If organizations are looking to create inclusive experiences for in-office and remote workers, to deliver

equivalency between work at home and work in the office — and everywhere in between — then cloud calling offers the site-neutral model to benefit all parties. From a workplace culture point of view, cloud calling enables the flexibility workers demand and is optimized to promote an inclusive, productive environment that will nurture and inspire future success for the organization.

**Recent studies show that 77% of employees will embrace a flexible work style, and 57% of workers expect to be in the office 10 days or less per month.<sup>2</sup> That means employers need to equip employees with technologies and tools to support a hybrid work model. The good news is that hybrid work innovators can save up to 40% of the cost of traditional work models.**

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.webex.com/hybrid-work.html>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.webex.com/solutions/return-to-office.html>



### KEEPING PACE WITH INNOVATION

Fear of service disruption and resource constraints frequently leads companies to wait years between on-premises PBX upgrades. As businesses and workers define new working models, software vendors are innovating at a fever pitch to properly support the modern workforce. IT teams managing on-premises calling systems can become overwhelmed by upgrade demands required to provide their workers with the latest capabilities.

The drive for innovation in the enterprise calling market is intense. Cloud calling vendors are shifting investments to adapt their products to hybrid working models that require high-quality, inclusive communications that are deeply integrated into the user's workflow. This keeps workers engaged and more productive by removing friction from their workstreams. **Companies taking full advantage of these enhancements and leading-edge technologies find themselves at a competitive advantage in hiring, employee retention, and productivity.**



### ADOPTING A FLEXIBLE MIGRATION PATH

The migration to a cloud platform can be a daunting task for any IT team. The risks can seem overwhelming, and, in many cases, the choice is made to forego the benefits of cloud calling due to a lack of a clear, efficient plan that will provide employees with the resources they need and will not disrupt business as usual.



**It's likely the current work and resources used to maintain the on-premises estate can easily manage its migration to the cloud.** Moving to the cloud can be done in phases defined by the business, and adding — or removing — users from a cloud calling system is far less cumbersome than making changes to on-premises systems.

Cloud calling provides an agility to move various parts of your business to the cloud, on a flexible timeline that matches your business strategy and level of readiness, without disrupting performance. With today's automation tools, what was once resource- and time-intensive is now worlds faster and easier.





## MODERNIZING SECURITY

On-premises security often fails not because of a lack of security, but because of a lack of a comprehensive security program that holistically accounts for all the sophisticated methods and points of entry for a breach. Modern cloud calling providers deploy a cybersecurity governance plan and program that cover network, endpoints, data center, and cloud services.

**Cloud service providers can deploy and manage security on a scale that no single enterprise can match.** Because cloud providers typically have millions of active licenses paid for by thousands of customers, they gain an economy of scale (and an ability to spend millions of dollars) that allows them to fund a security team with vast resources that are significantly more comprehensive than any single enterprise could provide.



## CONTROLLING COSTS, SIMPLIFYING MANAGEMENT

The costs associated with on-premises systems hide in plain sight for many organizations, as they are considered simply the costs of doing business. These costs include the purchase and maintenance of hardware, application maintenance, network and network devices, and staff and management.

However, losses are not as easy to see, and are often measured in dollars, poor customer experience (measured in loss of customer dollars), and hours — and sometimes days — of lost productivity across hundreds or thousands of employees. Taken together, these hard and soft costs create a competitive disadvantage in a marketplace that demands agility and precise allocation of resources.

Cloud calling lessens direct costs of service delivery through simplified management, by reducing staff costs required to implement and maintain hardware, software, and network services, and by eliminating the purchase of hardware, hardware upgrade costs, and annual vendor maintenance fees.

Indirect costs saved include gains in workforce and organizational productivity through communication services that are more tightly integrated with workflows. More savings are achieved by mitigating the risks of downtime associated with service interruption due to hardware failure or a security breach.

**Cloud calling enables companies to focus more of their dollars and resources on the organization's core mission,** rather than spending cycles on patching software, digging their way through data privacy regulations, or thinking of every way a calling system could fail in order to build systems that can recover from it.



## ENSURING BUSINESS RESILIENCY

Today, business leaders are facing a level of uncertainty not experienced in the last 75 years. A global pandemic, climate change, and war in Europe are all top of mind for organizations that demand highly available systems for internal and customer-facing operations. The constraint on IT talent and budgets in many organizations means that on-premises calling systems may have largely untested security, redundancy, and failover to properly support the business in the event of a disaster.

Calling systems hosted in the cloud are designed to failover gracefully from one data center to another and to automatically scale based on the demands of the moment. **Properly implemented cloud deployment models ensure that no system, primary or redundant, is untested or non-functional in the event of a disaster.** These systems are constructed to ensure the highest degree of uptime possible for employees and customers.



## Cloud Calling for Hybrid Workplaces

Today's modern workplaces are looking to redefine where and how work gets done and to create new work cultures that fully embrace hybrid work as a driving and unifying force across employees.

Like the pandemic was an accelerant for digital transformation, today's hybrid workforce is an accelerant for cloud communications. Where the pandemic pushed remote workers to be ferocious meeting consumers, the new workplace (office/mobile and remote/home) has pushed organizations to adopt integrated cloud communications platforms. However, to get there, calling must move to the cloud.

Each organization has its own needs and priorities for communications. However, today, nearly every organization recognizes that a) workforce requirements have dramatically changed and, b) this drives a need for a platform in which calling, meetings, messaging, apps, events, and devices all work in concert — whether in-office, remote and mobile, or in a home office.

**Moving to cloud calling enables advanced collaboration, increased productivity, and improved inclusivity for the workforce.** Cloud creates the environment for organizations to integrate their workflows and stay connected to their peers easily, securely, and cost-effectively.



# Why Choose Webex for Cloud Calling?

Webex Calling goes beyond standalone solutions, bringing together calling, meetings, messaging, devices, webinars, events, polling, contact center, and more. Tight integration of these collaboration services into critical workflows dramatically changes the dynamics of enterprise communications and reduces friction when employees move between the corporate office, in-transit (mobile and remote), and the home office.



## HYBRID WORK PIONEER

A hybrid work model is an ecosystem of employees productively working from home, in co-working spaces, and the office — while also feeling fully connected and collaborative.

Webex creates collaboration software and tools focused on ease-of-use for the user and flexibility in allowing teams to collaborate remotely from anywhere with web access. Webex places emphasis on inclusivity; more specifically, the idea that every user can be seen and heard, and be able to fully participate in remote collaboration. With Webex Suite features such as enterprise-grade security and AI-powered, integrated management tools, Webex offers purpose-built solutions for hybrid work.



## CONTINUAL INNOVATION

Webex is committed to continuous innovation, and all Webex customers receive upgrades without disruption of service or placing demands on limited customer IT resources. For instance, Webex introduced new features

such as Audio Intelligence noise removal, Webex Go, and Dedicated Instance in the past year alone. Webex is also now available in more than 120 countries around the world, with support for new calling devices like the Cisco Video Phone 8875 and award-winning Webex Room and Desk devices.

And the pace of innovation is accelerating. Other Cisco portfolio companies, like Meraki and ThousandEyes, further expand the possible vectors for innovation and build on the promise that Webex Calling is uniquely equipped to support your digital transformation.



## EASE OF TRANSITION

Cisco has been a leader in both on-premises and cloud-based calling systems for more than 20 years and has used its experience and insight to ensure a highly flexible set of options and capabilities to help customers get to the cloud.

The Webex Calling platform supports hybrid implementations through the Webex Edge for Calling. Cisco UCM or third-party PBX systems can be connected to the Webex platform for a unified user experience and integrated administrative capabilities like management of enterprise dial plans, least-cost routing, user profiles, and third-party application integrations.

Additionally, for organizations with an existing carrier relationship, Webex Calling supports a Bring Your Own Carrier (BYOC) option through either a local PSTN (Public Switched Telephone Network) gateway or through a direct connection to the Webex cloud. Webex Edge and Control Hub provide centralized management of dial plans and features across premises and cloud systems.



**Webex leverages Cisco's Security and Trust Organization monitoring daily, up to 47 TB of network data...**



**...in 170 countries<sup>4</sup> with a repeatable and measurable process designed to increase resiliency and trust.**



**This includes Incident Command (inflow, investigation, and reporting of security issues) and Cisco Talos — one of the largest commercial threat intelligence teams in the world, with more than 300 researchers.**



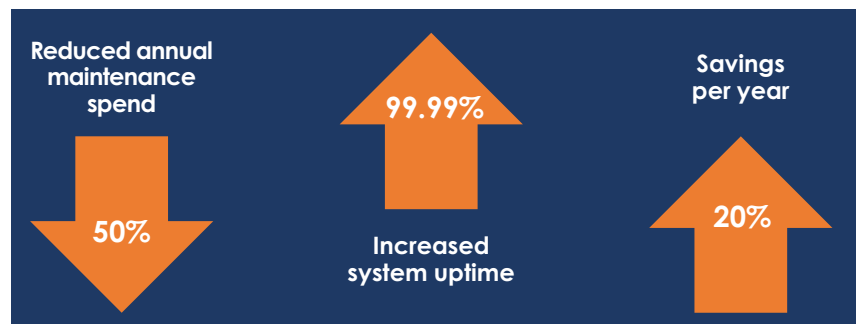
### PROVEN SECURITY

Cisco maintains compliance with GDPR, HIPAA, FERPA, COPPA, and CCPA in addition to being SOC II Type 2 and 3, ISO 27001/27017/27018, ISO 9001, Cloud Computing Compliance Controls Catalog, HITRUST, and FedRAMP certified. The Cisco team is constantly evaluating changes in the regulatory landscape to ensure that your organization remains on the right side of the law. And Webex benefits directly from Cisco's industry-leading security platform.



### LOWER COSTS AND SIMPLIFIED MANAGEMENT

Webex Calling enables IT teams to focus more of their time and money on the core missions of their business by managing and maintaining the calling system hardware for them.



Migrating to Webex Calling will reduce your hardware and maintenance spend by 50% or more annually and increase your system uptime to 99.99%. On average, Webex Calling saves customers 20% per year over similar on-premises-based systems, and these dollars could be reallocated to support your organization's digital transformation and evolution to hybrid work.

And Control Hub provides administrators a central point of access for all Webex provisioning services, resulting in a one-stop shop for provisioning, managing, and monitoring your unified communications estate. Additionally, Control Hub provides access for the detailed configuration of calling features and services, including the migration from an on-premises system. Administrators can provision and configure one user, or an entire office, from anywhere in the world.

<sup>4</sup> [www.cisco.com/c/dam/en\\_us/about/doing\\_business/trust-center/docs/cisco-security-and-trust.pdf](https://www.cisco.com/c/dam/en_us/about/doing_business/trust-center/docs/cisco-security-and-trust.pdf)



## BUSINESS CONTINUITY

Webex Calling is hosted in 15 carrier-grade data centers around the world, with an N+1 server configuration, global failover capabilities, and internal and geographically dispersed automatic data replication. The Webex Calling Disaster Recovery Plan outlines redundancy in software design and network/services elements to ensure that disaster preparedness is built into all systems, and that Webex Calling maintains its customer-guaranteed 99.99% uptime.

Finally, Webex cloud calling solutions create an open and supportive environment for workflow integration and

partnerships that create an ecosystem of support unrivaled by any on-premises environment.

To learn more about Webex Calling and why now is the right time to adopt cloud calling for your organization, please consider these additional resources:

- [Webex: Competitive Position and Differentiation](#)
- [Six Strategies to Effectively Move Your Phone System to Cloud Collaboration](#)
- [Cloud-Based PBX Buyers' Guide](#)



# Next Steps

You can't know where you need to go until you know where you are. Wainhouse Research encourages you to consider the following next steps:



## 1. Assess Current Estate

to determine what you have today. Obtain an accounting of your current communications and calling estate; don't neglect rogue use of personal mobile and consumer VoIP (Voice over Internet Protocol) services (especially from your international employees).



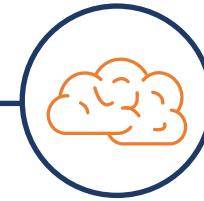
## 2. Determine Requirements

of your current user needs for not just calling, but more broadly, communications. Project forward a few years and develop an understanding of how those needs will evolve. Additionally, define a concise view of your organization's business continuity, security, and compliance requirements.



## 3. Estimate Current Costs

to gain an understanding of where you are and where you're headed. Develop an estimated annual cost to get your on-premises system to support your vision of the future. Make sure to account for hardware, network, and management/maintenance costs for your primary and backup systems. Also, estimate the daily cost of an unplanned system outage, the cost of a failure in the security of your system, and the cost of failure to comply with relevant regulations. Next, compare this to the cost of replacing your on-premises system with a comparable, compliant cloud service.



## 4. Consider an Innovative Approach

new thinking around use, control, and ownership has allowed many organizations to transform the quality of services offered to their workforce, and focus a larger percentage of time and resources on their core mission. Consider how moving to cloud calling can both protect and better enable your workforce and workplace.

## About Wainhouse Research

Wainhouse provides in-depth research and analysis that helps you gain a clear perspective on the market, technology, and services for workplace communications and collaboration. Wainhouse analysts are industry experts in enterprise voice, video, team collaboration, and streaming applications, services, and devices. Our expertise is backed by one of the most comprehensive data sets and models in the world. Content and additional detail is available at <https://insight.wainhouse.com/> and [www.wainhouse.com/intro](http://www.wainhouse.com/intro)

## About the Researchers



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