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# Spontania: Anywhere, Anytime Unified

An Ogren Group Special Report

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Distributed organizations are taking advantage of the wide availability of reliable high performance communications over the Internet along with high fidelity low cost endpoint devices to improve business operations. Unified Communications and Collaboration is the technology that allows employees working remotely or in branch offices to gain the interactive benefits of colleagues situated in corporate headquarters. UCC combines voice, video, instant messaging, and data to present a common shared experience for all parties involved in the electronic Internet-based meeting. The inclusion of data presentation and whiteboarding features provides for productive interactive working sessions. All it takes for a user to participate is a telephone, laptop computer, or PDA. A typical example of UCC in action would be a sales meeting where each regional sales manager can view the sales team on screen while revising the forecast spreadsheet in real-time. The key benefit is that employees can rapidly have quality Internet-based meetings to resolve business issues with other employees, customers, and business partners. Timeliness of decision making improves, and the extended attendance made possible by UCC ensures that key individuals can be included to help reach the best decisions.

Unified Communications and Collaboration is the technology that simultaneously delivers voice, video, and data to all attendees, no matter where on the Internet those attendees are. UCC allows end-users to connect anywhere, anytime to collaborate on work tasks or to simply have higher quality communications over the Internet. The technology links various types of user devices, such as telephones, laptops, and PDAs over traditional communications networks, as shown in Exhibit 1.

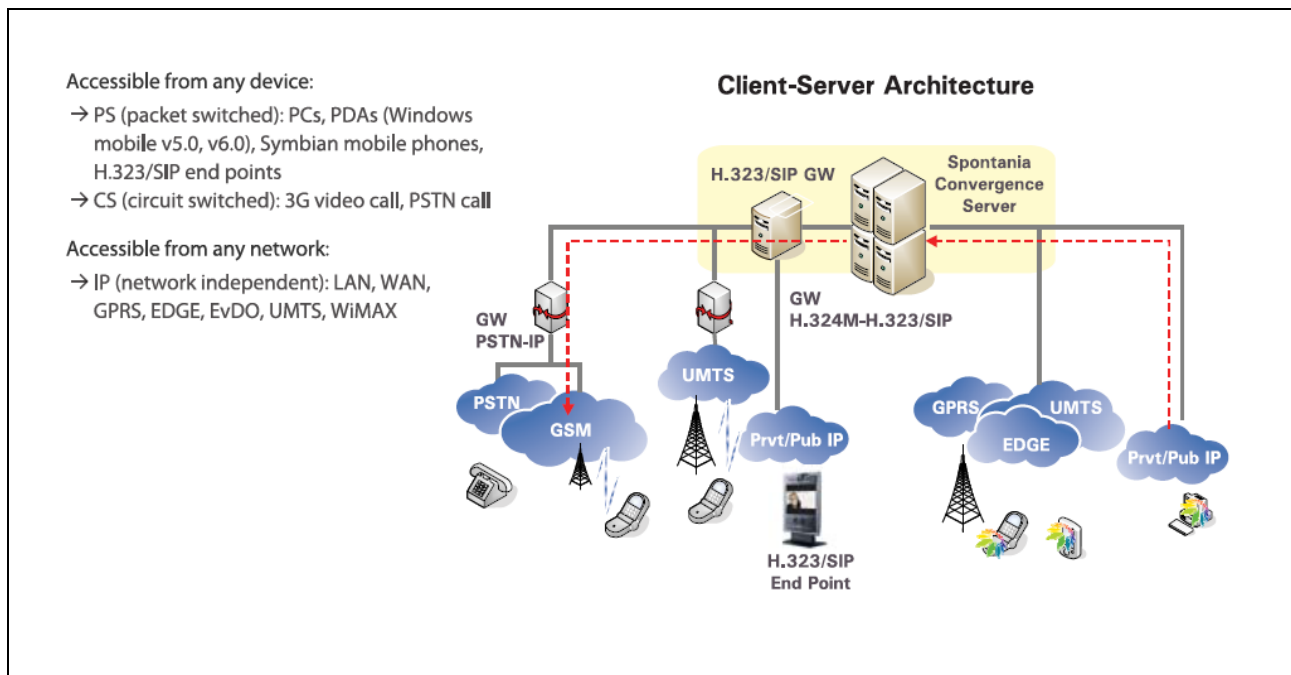


Exhibit 1

Unified Communications and Collaboration links users over existing infrastructure

UCC has to use existing communications capabilities and existing user devices without infrastructure upgrades to be cost effective; UCC must be simple to use with high performance to have effective user participation.. The result is an impressively interactive capability that is changing the way business is conducted.

- **Enhance productivity.** UCC allows individuals to collaborate quickly to reach quality decisions faster than traditional means. Participants all view the same information, interactively discuss the business topic, and come to collaborative conclusions.
- **Reduce travel expenses.** UCC allows businesses to communicate directly between employees, customers, and suppliers without incurring the high costs of business travel. UCC allows face-to-face discussions over the Internet using the existing network infrastructure.

Dialcom's Spontania product line opens the door for the enterprise to take advantage of unified communications and collaboration without disrupting the business infrastructure. IT simply deploys Spontania servers in the network with a brief amount of configuration setup for connectivity. IT is then in total control of the solution for offering UCC services to business users within the organization. The critical UCC requirements that Spontania meets are:

- **Leverage existing infrastructure.** Your organization should be able to leverage existing communications and telephony equipment while receiving the full benefits of UCC capability. Keep the unified communications and collaboration capability easy to deploy and cost effective.
- **Manage bandwidth.** The key to successfully applying UCC to your business process is to ensure that end-users perceive high quality communications performance. The solution needs to use available bandwidth, but also have the intelligence to react to network delays without degradation of perceived performance.
- **Administer with ease.** Once the system UCC system is in place, users should be able to intuitively administer the collaborative session to add participants, or manually adjust connectivity settings based on the user's device or network performance.

It is easy to evaluate the architecture of a UCC product – it is always measured by the user experience. Performance degradation, end-user device support issues, administrative fumbling are all reflected in an unacceptable user experience. The Spontania architecture, including its patent pending Adaptive Bandwidth Management technology, is evaluated every day by its growing customer base. If you

have not discovered Unified Communications and Collaboration, the Ogren Group recommends that you join the UCC wave now and start realizing its business benefits.

This special report, commissioned by Dialcom, presents the critical architectural elements of a Unified Communications and Collaboration capability with recommended actions for enterprise IT. Information in this report derives from Ogren Group research and interviews with global organizations.

## **The Spontania Difference**

Unified Communications and Collaboration systems link employees, customers and business partners from around the world, in ways that were not previously possible. Collaborative sessions can be scheduled ahead of time to account for such items as time zone differences, or users can take advantage of presence protocols and IM to conduct ad hoc collaborative sessions when participants advertise online availability. The architecture of the solution has to deliver extreme quality of communications to all participants, with an ease of administration that allows an end-user to control the session. Any deficiencies in the architecture will be readily apparent to end-users and will inhibit realizing the full business benefits.

Spontania addresses enterprise requirements with a scalable architecture that can be self-managed. The architecture is proven in installations around the world, with demand for UCC capacity steadily increasing as Spontania customers find more innovative ways to improve the business. The primary architectural concepts are:

### **Leverage existing infrastructure**

Spontania is deployed as standard server on the corporate network and leverages existing communications infrastructures. Customers should not have to go through the expense and uncertainty of reconfiguring switches, routers, and firewalls to deploy UCC.

- **Embrace standards to support existing communications infrastructure.** Spontania supports the leading standard networking protocols to ensure easy participation of users in collaborative meetings. For instance, the standard Instant Messaging protocols are supported to allow users to be notified that a UCC session is commencing.
- **Embrace standards to support existing equipment infrastructure.** Spontania supports the market leading devices, including those from Tandberg and Polycom, to ensure easy participation of users in collaborative meetings. Dialcom's architecture utilizes the investments that organizations already have made in conference phones, smart phones, personal computers, and PDAs.

Spontania gateway devices provide translation services between types of phones and communications devices.

- **Offer a server that IT can control.** IT can place the Spontania server and gateways in the network core or at the network edge –according to network policy for on-premise equipment and administration. Spontania’s unified collaboration software gives IT complete flexibility to configure the solution for optimal network performance.

The critical success of UCC is the ability to utilize the existing infrastructure in bringing the next generation of interpersonal communications capability to corporate users.

### **Manage bandwidth**

The heart of the Spontania architecture is its tiered approach to bandwidth management. Human eyes and ears will instantly detect dropped packets or delays in transmission; Spontania uses IT defined controls, user specified adjustments, and real-time Adaptive Bandwidth Management to shield the user from variations in network performance.

- IT defines global UCC administration policy to control the impact on bandwidth. This is often expressed in combinations of such factors as number of unified collaboration sessions, number of users per session, frames per second for video, or total network traffic. IT defines the maximum operating parameters for all UCC sessions.
- Adaptive Bandwidth Management is the patent [ending technology that shields users from effects of network latencies by sensing changes in network and device performance, adjusting compression and cache algorithms in real-time for optimal performance, and managing flow control according to individual response requirements. ABM constantly monitors communications latency for each user, making adjustments as required within the parameters established by IT.
- Users have the flexibility to make individual adjustments for voice, video, and data according to the unique circumstances of the UCC session. Spontania’s session control interface allows users to override Adaptive Bandwidth Management to manually tune voice, video, and data characteristics for individual users.

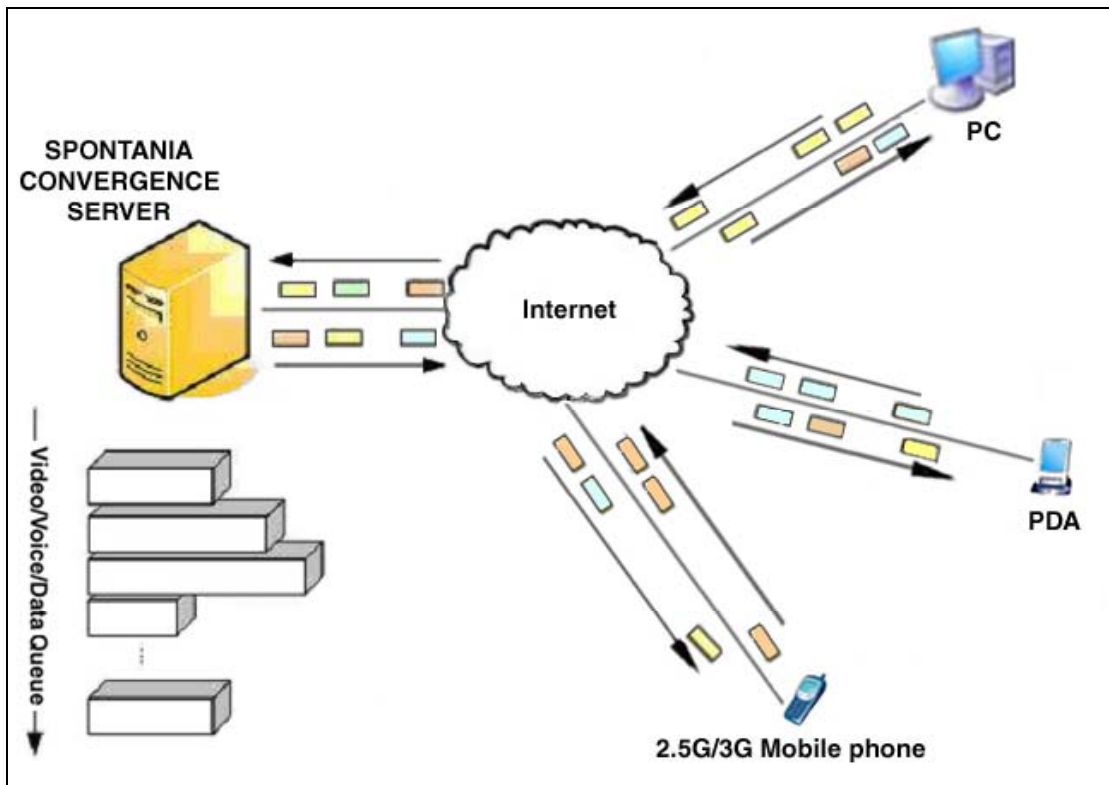


Exhibit 2  
Spontania Adaptive Bandwidth Management

Specific advantages of Spontania's bandwidth management include:

- **Personalize performance according to each user.** There will inevitably be variances in user device performance and communications bandwidth amongst participants in a UCC session. Spontania uses ABM to adjust collaborative flow according to the capabilities of each user. For instance, some users may receive 30 frames per second of video while others on slower circuits may only receive 8 frames per second.
- **Detect and adjust to network latencies.** Spontania is constantly monitoring UCC performance by actively measuring roundtrip times of informational packets. ABM allows Spontania to selectively alter compression and cache algorithms in response to network delays, or an increase in bandwidth availability.

Spontania dynamically adjusts to network conditions to give collaborative participants the best possible experience with the highest possible performance. This is enabled by Adaptive Bandwidth Management, a technology that is only offered by Dialcom.

### Administer with ease

Administration is the determining factor in a solution's ability to scale to enterprise levels. Products that require incremental headcount or generate additional help desk and support demands will not flourish in the corporate environment. Spontania keeps enterprise IT in complete control of the Spontania configuration and network bandwidth allowances. Spontania provides for ease of administration for IT as well as for users. Spontania's ease of administration allows IT to show instant results with the UCC deployment without adding support and training burdens.

Administration of the UCC solution needs to be performed by end-users with a minimum of training. IT

- **Control with intuitive interfaces.** The user interface is a simple display showing attendees and communications quality. Users can easily apply predefined profiles to individual users or use the point and click interface to adjust characteristics of the meeting.
- **Integrate with directories, email and IM address books.** Individuals initiating a UCC session can easily reach out to participants via pre-existing Active Directory or LDAP groups, or personal address books. Notifying users of an online collaborative meeting becomes a snap with an IM-based sensing of availability and contacting users for the meeting. There is no additional overhead of maintaining separate lists of users.
- **Record sessions for subsequent replay.** As powerful as Spontania's collaboration is, there will be occasions when portions of a session need to be replayed. This may be to record a customer service inquiry, to provide replay for a team member that could not join the UCC meeting, or to meet compliance requirements for regulations such as Sarbanes-Oxley that require archiving of sensitive online conversations. Spontania can record, archive, and replay sessions at the discretion of the moderator.

## Conclusions

Unified Communications and Collaboration is changing the way organizations conduct business. UCC is a fundamental capability to connect remote users into a session where people can see and hear each other, and also see and work from the same document images. The improvements in productivity with UCC solutions are considerable, as are the cost savings of conducting meetings without travel. Spontania meets the requirements of a unified communications and collaboration solution for organizations requiring more control and less expense that can be found with service-oriented approaches. Spontania's patent pending Adaptive Bandwidth Management technology allows IT to:

- **Leverage existing infrastructure.**
- **Manage bandwidth.**
- **Administer with ease.**

The Ogren Group believes that unified communications and collaboration can be a powerful business tool to interactively engage remote users. Furthermore, organizations can realize the benefits of unified collaboration without significant capital investments or upgrades to networking infrastructures. The technology is simple enough to deploy that organizations should start gaining experience with the capability. Start now and measure the results and improvements to the business.