



# Introduction

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## Cisco Unity Features

Cisco Unity is a Windows 2000-based communications solution that brings you voice mail and unified messaging, and integrates them with the desktop applications you use every day. Cisco Unity works with Exchange to deliver and store all messages—voice, fax, and e-mail—giving you the ability to access all of your messages by using your desktop PC, a touchtone phone, or the Internet.

Cisco Unity is the unified messaging component within the Cisco family of AVVID (Architecture for Voice, Video and Integrated Data) offerings, and it integrates with Cisco CallManager, the call-processing component of Cisco AVVID. Although designed for a Voice over IP environment, Cisco Unity also integrates with several traditional, circuit-switched phone systems. When you are ready to transition to Voice over IP, Cisco Unity allows you to do so in stages, by setting up a dual phone system integration with both the circuit-switched phone system and Cisco CallManager.

Cisco Unity features include the following. (Your system may not include all of these features.)

### **Intelligent voice mail**

The Cisco Unity voice messaging capabilities allow subscribers to listen to their messages, send voice messages to other subscribers, and customize settings such as personal greetings. With Cisco Unity you can set up an automated attendant, which serves as an electronic receptionist that answers and routes incoming calls.

### **Cisco Unity Administrator**

The Web administrator allows you access to the Cisco Unity server via an intranet and remotely. Use the Cisco Unity Administrator to create or modify subscriber accounts, configure messaging options, assign classes of service, record greetings, and run reports.

### **Cisco Personal Communications Assistant**

The Cisco Personal Communications Assistant (PCA) is a website that subscribers use to access the Cisco Unity Assistant and the Cisco Unity Inbox.

### **Cisco Unity Assistant**

The Cisco Unity Assistant is a website that gives subscribers the ability to customize personal settings—including recorded greetings or message delivery options—on their computers. (Note that in version 3.1 and earlier, the Cisco Unity Assistant was known as the ActiveAssistant, or AA.)

### ViewMail for Outlook

ViewMail for Microsoft Outlook lets subscribers listen to voice messages from their Outlook Inboxes by using VCR-style controls. A list of the supported software on client workstations that you can use with Cisco Unity can be found in *Compatibility Matrix: Cisco Unity and the Software on Subscriber Workstations*, available on Cisco.com at

[http://www.cisco.com/en/US/products/sw/voicesw/ps2237/prod\\_pre\\_installation\\_guides\\_list.html](http://www.cisco.com/en/US/products/sw/voicesw/ps2237/prod_pre_installation_guides_list.html).

### Cisco Unity Inbox

The Cisco Unity Inbox website lets subscribers listen to, compose, reply to, forward, and delete voice messages. (Note that in version 3.1 and earlier, the Cisco Unity Inbox was known as the Visual Messaging Interface, or VMI.)

### Multiple languages

With multiple languages installed, you can change the language in which Cisco Unity plays system prompts to subscribers and callers. You can also choose one or more languages with which to display the Cisco Unity Administrator pages and the Help files.

### Text-to-speech

This feature allows you to listen to your e-mail over the phone. Cisco Unity reads the text portion of e-mail messages and provides additional information such as the name of the sender (if the sender is a subscriber), and the time and date that the message was sent.

### Third-party fax

Cisco Unity supports fax servers that have dedicated fax lines set up to the fax ports on the fax server. When a third-party fax server is used with Cisco Unity, the administration of the fax server is controlled by the fax server software.

A list of officially supported fax servers that you can use with Cisco Unity can be found in *Cisco Unity System Requirements, and Supported Hardware and Software*, available on Cisco.com at

[http://www.cisco.com/en/US/products/sw/voicesw/ps2237/prod\\_pre\\_installation\\_guides\\_list.html](http://www.cisco.com/en/US/products/sw/voicesw/ps2237/prod_pre_installation_guides_list.html).

### Digital Networking

This feature enables subscribers to send and receive voice messages between Cisco Unity servers at different locations, between a Cisco Unity server and the Internet, and between a Cisco Unity server and another messaging system.

### AMIS support

Cisco Unity supports the Audio Messaging Interchange Specification (AMIS) protocol, which provides an analog mechanism for transferring voice messages between different voice messaging systems.

A list of voice messaging systems that Cisco Unity can exchange AMIS voice messages with can be found in *Cisco Unity System Requirements, and Supported Hardware and Software*, available on Cisco.com at

[http://www.cisco.com/en/US/products/sw/voicesw/ps2237/prod\\_pre\\_installation\\_guides\\_list.html](http://www.cisco.com/en/US/products/sw/voicesw/ps2237/prod_pre_installation_guides_list.html).

### Cisco Unity Bridge

The Cisco Unity Bridge acts as a networking gateway between Cisco Unity and an Octel system on an Octel analog network. With the Cisco Unity Bridge, subscribers can send messages to and receive messages from Octel users.

**Enhanced failover**

Failover is a feature that provides a simple redundancy, allowing voice messaging functions to continue if the Cisco Unity server fails or when you need to perform maintenance. To set up failover, you install and configure Cisco Unity on two servers, a primary server and a secondary server. If the primary server fails or if the Cisco Unity service on the primary server stops, the secondary Cisco Unity server automatically starts performing standard Cisco Unity operations.

