

Cisco Collaboration Optimization Services: Tune-Up for Peak Performance



What You Will Learn

More than 200,000 enterprises around the world have deployed Cisco® Collaboration Solutions. If you are one of these organizations, your communications have likely become more mobile, social, visual, and virtual. It is also likely that since your initial deployment:

- New technologies or applications have been added to your environment
- New business demands have shifted the use of collaboration across the enterprise
- New use models for video and mobile collaboration have become business critical

Are these changes compromising the performance of your collaboration environment and putting your organization at risk? Take our test to see if you are in need of a tune-up.

Challenges

Your business is dynamic. It changes every day. Technology-enhanced collaboration helps you keep up. Collaboration has arguably become the single most important technology investment that an organization can make. And like every great business tool, it can continue to fuel productivity or, if not properly maintained, can become a drain on efficiency.

This tune-up test begins with an evaluation of your current environment.

Tune-Up Test (Part 1)

Collaboration Status Report

Check all that apply:

- My collaboration infrastructure was installed three or more years ago.
- Our use of video and virtual meetings has increased since we deployed our collaboration solutions.
- We have more mobile workers now than when we initially deployed collaboration.
- We have introduced new applications and technologies into our collaboration environment.
- We have one or more major collaboration projects planned.
- We have had one or more acquisitions in our organization.
- The call volume in our contact center has increased.

Add a point for each checked item.

Total part 1 = _____ points.

Don't Let Problems Languish; *Do Deal with Issues Decisively*

Changes in your business and your use of collaboration applications can negatively affect the performance of your collaboration infrastructure, creating issues with:

- **Availability:** One of our financial services customer's availability was "pretty poor," with 15 or 16 severity 1 issues that affected the business during a critical time. An architecture design review revealed several serious configuration issues. After these issues were addressed, severity 1 incidents dropped by more than 80 percent during critical tax season the following year.
- **Reliability:** Another financial services organization was suffering from daily customer-facing incidents that affected business operations. A software review revealed code issues. Code recommendations from our experts for various collaboration architecture components made the environment more stable, and customer-facing incidents are now rare occurrences.
- **Stability:** One of our customers was having stability issues with its collaboration architecture. Instead of going through a cumbersome escalation process, the customer went straight to the top with a system stability audit and quickly resolved the problem. We always recommend that you deal with stability issues decisively.
- **Capacity:** Another customer was experiencing issues with capacity upgrades for Cisco Unity® Connection—in one case, the delay lasted at least four months. By bringing in Collaboration Optimization Services, the organization was able to immediately address the issues and begin benefitting from the new functionality. One engineer observed that, with this complex upgrade, "I doubt we could have done it on our own."
- **Scalability:** We worked with one organization extensively for scalability testing. The organization engaged with us because it felt that it did not have the tools or the environment to build the lab required to test its complicated unified communications development system on its own. The organization was pushing unified communications technology to its limits, and the head of the organization's engineering architecture group wanted access to experts who already knew how to get the best results.

Part 2 of our tune-up test identifies some of the warning signs that can signal underlying problems in your collaboration environment.

Tune-Up Test (Part 2)

Warning Signs

Check all that apply:

- Call center phones keep resetting and logging out.
- Technical support escalation requests are increasing.
- Call quality has degraded.
- Interoperability problems have been reported.
- Toll fraud and telephony denial of service incidents have occurred.
- Peripheral gateways are displaying erratic operating behavior.
- Severity 1 issues are on the rise.
- Mobile workers complain about video quality.
- Application launch time has slowed.

Add a point for each checked item.

Total part 2 = _____ points.

Don't Work in a Silo; Do Benefit from Global Best Practices

If you only rely on internal resources when deploying complex solutions, you are not benefitting from:

- Global best practices based on the experience gleaned from engagements with companies all over the world
- A database of validated designs based on internal Cisco resources and expertise
- Improved staff training on new products and new technology
- Knowledge transfer through on-the-job interactions with Cisco experts
- Better optimization of Cisco Collaboration Solutions

One of our customers says it best: "We tried just doing it internally. We have engineers and architectural staff. What we found is that you are just one organization with no insight into what the rest of the world is doing."

When another customer with a very large unified communications environment embarked on several unified communications projects worldwide, its goal was to reduce operational costs by increasing adoption of the new unified communications technology. With such a complex implementation, which spanned multiple global locations, the firm brought in Collaboration Optimization Services. The head of the engineering architecture group from the firm said, "We would not have gotten ROI and benefits as quickly without them." He felt that it would have been a more painful process if the firm had tried to do it unassisted. At the end of the engagement, he said, "The project took a year. Without Collaboration Optimization Services, it would have taken a year and a half *more*."

Part 3 of our tune-up test will help you quantify the pain level in your IT organization.

Tune-Up Test (Part 3)

Rate Your Pain

Check all that apply:

- You spend more time putting out fires than proactively planning for the future.
- You have availability concerns.
- The last time you did a bug scrub was last year.
- You are seriously behind on patching.
- Video use is restricted in your organization because of bandwidth issues.
- You are not confident you have enough ports to support requirements during peak periods.
- New project implementations are languishing.
- You desperately want to avoid increasing engineer headcount.

Add a point for each checked item.

Total part 3 = _____ points.

Don't Just Increase Headcount; *Do* Augment Resources with Professional Services

One of the things we frequently hear from the organizations with which we work is a desire to avoid hiring additional IT resources. With average, fully loaded compensation for an engineer estimated at \$175,000 per year, cost avoidance is certainly a primary consideration when deciding whether or not to bring on new hires. If instead you augment your staff with professional services, you can eliminate the annual compensation of additional headcount.

Another benefit of bringing in Cisco experts is that this gives your collaboration architecture team access to new skills and knowledge of Cisco best practices. When using our optimization services engineers for essentials such as bug scrubs, monthly reviews of software patches, joint certification, testing efforts, dial plan development, and more, in-house staff can better concentrate on their primary duties.

Customers frequently say, "We have *Network Optimization Services*. Doesn't that cover us?" The answer is an emphatic "no." *Network optimization* doesn't cover the specific requirements of video, unified communications, Cisco WebEx®, or contact center. *Collaboration Optimization Services* provide the expertise and skills required to address those pain points unique to collaboration. Services such as scripting reviews, stability audits, support for remote software upgrade support, and a Cisco TelePresence Management Suite configuration review for business video are not available under *Network Optimization Services*.

Part 4 of our tune-up test asks you to honestly evaluate your modus operandi.

Tune-Up Test (Part 4)

Is This You?

Check all that apply:

- You are two or more releases behind on your collaboration software updates.
- Your scripters use the same scripts they did five or more years ago.
- You cannot say for certain that your application-level scripting is benefitting from global best practices.
- You have added collaboration capabilities without making sure the infrastructure can handle them.
- You have optimized your network infrastructure but not your collaboration infrastructure.
- You have no planned growth model for new collaborative capabilities.
- You have no change management processes in place for new collaboration capabilities.
- You cannot provide management with operational, productivity, and strategic ROI for your collaboration solutions.
- You react to problems instead of proactively *preventing* them.

Add a point for each checked item.

Total part 4 = _____ points.

Don't Wait and React; *Do Proactively Use Audits to Prevent Problems*

Most of the organizations with which we work start by using our Collaboration Optimization Services in a reactive capacity to address collaboration architecture availability and stability issues. We quickly help them resolve their issues and restore service. One of our customers stated that, since the start of its contract with Collaboration Optimization Services, time spent on reactive tasks has declined from 100 percent to 40 percent.

Typically, these reactive engagements transition to more proactive engagements, with increased use of audits and assessments to prevent problems. Audits and assessments are designed to keep Cisco Collaboration infrastructure running at peak performance and identify ways to achieve desired uptime performance levels. Audits and assessments provide in-depth reviews of infrastructure, business operations, and business management processes.

Regular quarterly audits conducted by Collaboration Optimization Services identified a capacity issue that the customer would not have been able to catch on its own. Recommendations from the audit resulted in three-week time to resolution versus the three months it would have taken.

“There was no real pain point that triggered the decision to work with Cisco Collaboration Optimization Services. We saw growth down the road and needed upgrades in our environments.”

—Cisco Collaboration Optimization Services Customer

Audits and assessment reports detail findings that help identify gaps, risks, and recommendations. Service offerings include:

- Proactive software recommendation review
- System stability audit
- Software security alert
- Security assessment
- Collaboration edge security audit
- Application strategy
- Business alignment
- Architecture design review
- Software risk analysis
- Collaboration change management services
- Use case enablement
- Capacity planning

Part 5 of our tune-up test is designed to identify what you feel would be most beneficial to your organization as you fine tune or upgrade your collaboration environment.

Tune-Up Test (Part 5)

Why Engage

Check all that are important to you:

- Access to industry expertise and best practices
- Database of validated designs
- Long-term planning strategy
- Faster adoption of new technology
- Capacity for future business benefit
- Lower implementation and effect risk

Add a point for each checked item.

Total part 5 = _____ points.

Now that you have filled out all five segments, add up the points from each part to determine your total. (Lower is better.)

- If your total is from **31 through 39**, pick up the phone and call Collaboration Optimization Services today.
- If your total is from **21 through 30**, consider regular preventive audits with Collaboration Optimization Services.
- If your total is from **11 through 20**, consider engaging proactively with Collaboration Optimization Services for complex projects.
- If your total is from **0 through 10**, give yourselves a pat on the back and give us a call anyway. We can help you further maximize your Cisco Collaboration Solution.

“We frequently have customers who say they’ll perform their own System Audit. From our perspective, this is like a patient telling their doctor that they have already checked their own vital signs themselves, and all is good.”

—Peter Galvin, Manager, Advanced Services, Cisco Collaboration Services

Why Cisco Services

Cisco Collaboration Solutions create new levels of innovation and business productivity by connecting people immediately in a way that builds trust, accelerates decision making, and unlocks innovative thinking. Realize the full business value of your collaboration investments with smart, personalized services from Cisco and our partners.

Backed by deep networking expertise and a broad ecosystem of partners, Cisco Services enable you to successfully plan, build, and manage your network as a powerful business platform. Whether you are looking to quickly seize new opportunities to meet rising customer expectations, improve operational efficiency to lower costs, mitigate risk, or accelerate growth, we have a service that can help you.

Are you at risk for compromised collaboration performance? Connect with the Cisco Collaboration Optimization Services experts to learn more.



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