



## Collaboration Reimagined: *Enterprise-grade Conferencing without Breaking the Bank*

A Frost & Sullivan White Paper

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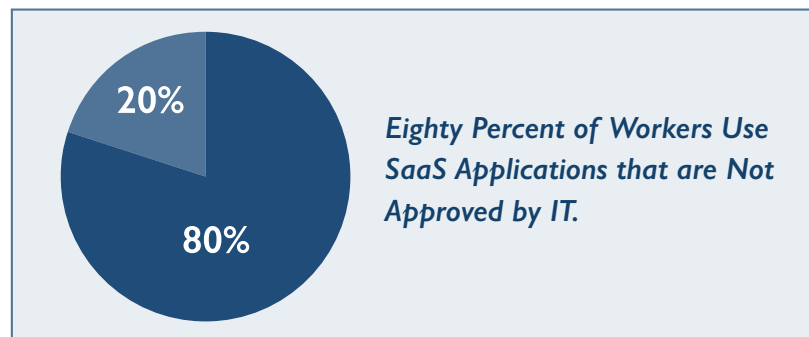
## INTRODUCTION

Business users are moving in droves to purchase productivity services that help them work faster and better. Among the influx of user-driven applications, a new generation of audio and video conferencing services is changing how users communicate and collaborate. However, IT decision makers in many large enterprises remain tied to high-cost legacy conferencing services with limited or even unused functionalities. Business decision makers must evaluate new options that are not only easier to use, reliable and secure, but are also much more cost effective than the legacy solutions that have been in place for several years.

Shadow IT, a result of IT's misalignment with user needs, enables users to access the latest communication technologies on demand without the constraints of formal IT purchase procedures. This paper discusses how many Fortune 500 users have initiated grassroots adoption of conferencing and collaboration services that are easy to use and offer high-quality products and services for extremely low prices. The onus is now on IT and business leaders to use these trends to their advantage.

## REALITIES OF CONSUMERIZATION AND USER-DRIVEN IT

Budget constraints and the workload burden on IT staffs often prevent companies from implementing technologies that can significantly accelerate the way they conduct business. Despite these challenges, IT must equip employees with the tools they prefer and require. When employees are not provided with the communication applications they need, they are often compelled to circumvent IT-mandated processes and bring their choice of applications into the workplace. In validation of the Bring-Your-Own-Application (BYOA) trend, a recent Frost & Sullivan survey of 300 IT employees and 300 line-of-business managers found that 80% of the respondents use software-as-a-service (SaaS) applications that are not approved by IT. The rapid infiltration of user-driven applications illustrates the huge shift in how communication applications are often being utilized and the impact this has on the enterprise of the future.



In audio, video and web conferencing services, these emerging technology trends continue to reshape the market. BYOA is leading to a proliferation of non-sanctioned applications, forcing IT to evaluate user-led solutions in its decision-making process. Underpinned by the impact of consumerization, the conferencing services market remains a hotbed of activity that is experiencing a significant shift in technology as well as user adoption. IT and line-of-business leaders need to be proactive in dealing with these shifts; they must identify and source services that offer the capabilities users want, as well as the reliability, cost efficiencies, security, control and scale that their businesses need.

## IT'S TIME TO REEVALUATE YOUR CONFERENCING SERVICES

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Employees are bringing their own apps into the workplace, but the BYOA approach may not be in line with technology purchasing guidelines of many companies. BYOA may also not be the best fit for the broader organization's users and use cases, which leads to pockets of users on different platforms.

Enterprise-quality audio conferencing services remain a foundation for all meeting types. It is arguably the most important element of any virtual meeting. However, standalone audio does not always address the modern information workers' requirements for more flexibility and richness in how they communicate. Combining audio conferencing with the next-generation video and web collaboration into a single solution provides those workers with several productivity and cost benefits.

Organizations of all types and sizes, as well as numerous departments and groups within them, stand to benefit from the robust functionality of modern services that bring together rich voice, web and video conferencing. At the same time businesses need a feature set that is well aligned with their users' needs. As such, enterprises should not be paying for capabilities that go unused. Companies should be empowered to design custom conferencing services that address the various needs across their organizations. This approach drives efficiencies in user experiences and usage, while substantially reducing costs for the organization.

The advantages of replacing expensive, functionally limited audio-only and one-size-fits-all multimedia conferencing with flexible next-generation unified conferencing services are multifaceted.

- **Better Technology Alignment:** Customized conferencing services eliminate unnecessary features and disjointed user experiences. A pragmatic and unified service with seamless audio, video and web integration creates uncluttered intuitive experiences that lead to widespread employee adoption.
- **Reduced Costs:** A key benefit is the ability to consolidate providers and subscription services for ease of use, lower costs, simplified controls, one-stop support and streamlined user training. The savings can then be used to support other initiatives that are crucial to the organization.
- **Agile Communications:** Users gain access to a single platform for all meeting types; they do not need to predetermine their platform for different meetings. A unified conferencing service allows users to intuitively activate audio, video and web collaboration as needed on the fly. For example, audio conferences can be seamlessly escalated to web and video meetings, or multimedia calls can be de-escalated to voice only when required—all while meetings are in session and without disruption.
- **Easy Meeting Entry:** Web browser access for participants in just a few clicks, access via mobile devices and desktops, email and Google Hangouts™ plugins, PSTN/IP phones and PC VoIP enable any user, anywhere, to join meetings over telephone, Wi-Fi, Internet and even LTE networks. This flexibility and ease of access allows conferencing to become more ingrained in workflows for enhanced decision-making and problem resolution.
- **Toll-free Telephone Access Obsolescence:** Modern, flexible conferencing services make toll-free phone access to conferences obsolete. Flat-rate originating access from pervasive end-point connections such as Internet, mobile plans and fixed-cost IP PBX systems obviate additional cost of once-necessary toll-free lines.

The accelerating adoption of unified conferencing has led to an influx of new services in the market. However, there are significant differences in costs, functionality, reliability, security and support. Business decision makers must identify proven, reliable and robust yet easy-to-use solutions that their employees demand and that reduce costs.

## AFFORDABLE, RELIABLE AND SECURE UNIFIED MEETINGS



The difference between consumer-grade or free applications and business applications is often manifested in quality, reliability, security, service support and control. The consumer-grade or free applications have historically lacked key attributes that professional organizations require; enterprise-grade conferencing services, however, often apply steep fees for delivering all key aspects that businesses need.

It's now time to question why certain conferencing services charge a high premium for those attributes. Given the technology evolution, it makes sense that businesses no longer have to choose between critical features and lower costs. In today's dynamic and competitive conferencing market, enterprises have many options available to them that don't require a sacrifice in service.

*“The landscape is changing for mid-sized and large companies that are looking for high-quality, affordable alternatives to their existing conferencing services. There are now options available at very low costs that don't ask organizations to compromise on necessary user experience, security, reliability or other business requirements.”*

## SOLUTION SPOTLIGHT: FREECONFERENCECALL.COM FOR BUSINESS™



Equipped with leading-edge collaboration capabilities such as high-definition audio and video, content sharing and easy-to-use web conferencing, services from FreeConferenceCall.com For Business are changing the way businesses collaborate at unprecedented low costs.

FreeConferenceCall.com For Business recognizes that high-quality audio communication is the foundation for meetings of all types. The company's value proposition contends that people should have enhanced meeting experiences and meet when, where and how they want, without enduring exorbitant costs or poor voice quality. The conferencing service provider is executing on its value proposition in the following ways:

- ✓ Unlimited VoIP and toll calls with the FreeConferenceCall.com service are provided free of charge.
- ✓ Toll-free calls, when required, are less than half the cost of alternatives.
- ✓ HD audio and video conference calls are available with enterprise-grade quality at low bandwidths.
- ✓ Rich feature set includes: desktop and mobile screen sharing, customized corporate branding with personalized audio greeting, hold music, messaging and PBX integration, live rewind, radio streaming and broadcast, voting, chat, active speaker display, cloud-based recording/playback, VoIP calling, zero download access and calendar integrations with integrations to other relevant business apps forthcoming.

- ✓ Cloud-based, on-premises or hybrid deployment options of the FreeConferenceCall.com For Business services allow organizations to adhere to IT's personality, control and implementation choices.
- ✓ 24/7/365 support along with world-class, SLA-backed service delivery.

“With over 1 billion calls served, 5 million registered customers and 300 million users per year, FreeConferenceCall.com and its newly launched FreeConferenceCall.com For Business services have earned reputations globally for being easy to use, affordable and reliable. FreeConferenceCall.com estimates that more than 80% of Fortune 500 companies have users and groups within their organizations that have adopted FreeConferenceCall.com meeting services.”



## CUSTOMER CASE STUDY: JACARUSO ENTERPRISES

**Company Background:** Jacaruso Enterprises provides sales and marketing training for the hospitality industry. The company helps hotels open new locations smoothly and enables the properties to hit their revenue targets quickly. Jacaruso's client roster includes global hotel chains such as Hilton Worldwide, Hyatt Place, Starwood Hotels & Resorts and Sheraton Hotels & Resorts, among others.



**Requirements:** Jacaruso teams often work remotely from client sites to manage new property openings, set up on-going marketing campaigns, and train in-house hotel sales staff. The company needed a cost-effective, high-quality, client-facing solution for employees to stay in touch while working from clients' sites or from their remote offices.

**Selection:** After evaluating several options, including more expensive alternatives, Jacaruso selected FreeConferenceCall.com as its conferencing service provider.

**Usage Highlights:** Jacaruso sales leaders frequently use the service to conduct internal team conference calls with up to 15 participants, which enables them to update their entire team at once. Call detail reports are utilized to track attendance, and that call detail data facilitates more effective follow-up to save valuable time. Sales leaders also employ the service to connect regularly with teams at client sites to coordinate schedules and details for the 10-12 property openings they typically manage at any given time. The email invitation feature is used to quickly and easily create and update invites that are sent to everyone at once, while eliminating the need for participants to chase down conference login information.

**Results:** Jacaruso reports that FreeConferenceCall.com has helped increase the productivity of its teams and has kept overhead costs down. The Jacaruso teams have assisted with more than 300 new hotel openings since 2010 with a proven track record of hitting revenue targets at each property within four months or less. That success has created growth opportunities, and the company has recently added new employees.

“FreeConferenceCall.com is an incredible and reliable tool for me to stay connected to my team and manage my employees. Our clients are really happy with the service, and it has really helped our teams increase productivity while keeping our overhead costs down.  
– Dina Coventry, Senior Regional Director of Sales, Jacaruso Enterprises”

## CONCLUSION

Business conferencing and collaboration must align closely with user choices and needs. Therefore, enterprise technology decision makers should seek robust and flexible conferencing services that best fit the workstyles and workloads of their users. The status quo and unnecessary expense of one-size-fits-all conferencing services should not be accepted.

Enterprises stuck with yesteryear's audio conferencing and ancillary multi-point meeting services, that offer limited functionality and break the bank in monthly bills, must re-evaluate their options. It is because of the high quality and ease of use at low costs that so many individual users inside large enterprises are already using FreeConferenceCall.com services. This movement is opening up new avenues for IT to roll out FreeConferenceCall.com For Business meeting services that offer a high-quality, reliable and secure meeting experience, while lowering the overall spend by as much as 80% over other providers. Those who embrace these practical and useful conferencing services will satisfy diverse user needs without compromising on the reliability, security and quality of meetings that their organizations require.

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