



5 Keys to Cross-Agency Collaboration in 2024

The start of the new year is a great opportunity to make sure that your agency’s software and systems are up to date. Agencies that don’t implement the latest and greatest technology run the risk of falling short of customer and employee expectations and of collecting technical debt. One area where this could happen is collaborative technology.

The COVID-19 pandemic may be behind us, but the way it digitally transformed the workplace remains. More than two-thirds of federal employees still work remotely to some degree, according to a November 2023 Office of Personnel Management survey. This means workers continue to rely on ways to get their work done beyond a traditional desk and computer.

To make sure employees are best equipped to communicate and collaborate, agencies need four collaboration elements in place.

UNIFIED COMMUNICATIONS

[Gartner defines unified communications](#) (UC) as the products that “provide and combine multiple enterprise communications channels.” Examples of tools that fuel UC include IP telephony for voice calling, web and videoconferencing, voicemail, content sharing, and instant messaging. UC solutions are available as on-premises software, partner-hosted solutions or as a service from cloud providers.

An effective UC provides:



Greater productivity



Lower costs



Stronger performance



Enhanced user experience

CONFERENCING

Remember when conferencing meant meeting face-to-face in a room dominated by a long table with a phone sitting in the middle of it and a whiteboard on a wall? Today, it means most of those things — just in digital form. The confluence of mobile, video and cloud technologies means that now workers can meet securely with integrated, instantaneous content sharing and smart features such as speech enhancement and live transcripts.

There are many benefits of conferencing, including:

- ✓ Greater participant engagement
- ✓ More flexibility with scheduling
- ✓ Better collaboration

COMPLIANCE

Collaboration tools are no different than other digital assets agencies may use in that they must meet security requirements. It's especially important for agencies to be up to date with the latest releases, updates and patches. One easy way to ensure compliance is to use solutions with authorization by the Federal Risk and Authorization Management Program (FedRAMP).

FedRAMP certification helps instill trust, so agencies can be assured of the safety of FedRAMP-backed solutions.

Advantages of approved tools include:

- ✓ Tested and proven security
- ✓ Faster time to market
- ✓ Continuous monitoring



COLLABORATION ENDPOINTS

The General Services Administration leases about [8,600 buildings in 2,200 communities](#) nationwide, not to mention numerous global sites under the United States' purview, which is all to say that the government's workforce stretches far and wide. As a result, it is imperative that employees have an all-in-one ecosystem for communication and productivity that lets teams work together wherever they are and however they need to. Endpoints include IP-enabled phones, headsets, desk devices and peripherals such as microphones and cameras.

Collaboration endpoints provide opportunities for:



Custom setups that work seamlessly with other tools



Better participant engagement



Whiteboards, videoconferencing and audio using one tool

CISCO SYSTEMS AND PRESIDIO FEDERAL CAN HELP

Cisco Systems and Presidio Federal have [joined forces](#) to provide modern collaboration solutions that keep agency workers connected. Presidio Federal develops and delivers advanced technologies, such as the cloud-based [Cisco Unified Communications Manager \(UCM\)](#) for Government, which enables session and call control for video, voice, messaging, mobility, instant messaging and presence, allowing workers to communicate and collaborate anytime, anywhere and on any device.

Additionally, Presidio Federal and Cisco's UCM solution makes it easy for agencies to keep up with the latest communication and collaboration features.

No one can predict the future, but what's certain is that agencies need a foundation of up-to-date, secure collaboration tools today to support whatever comes tomorrow.
