

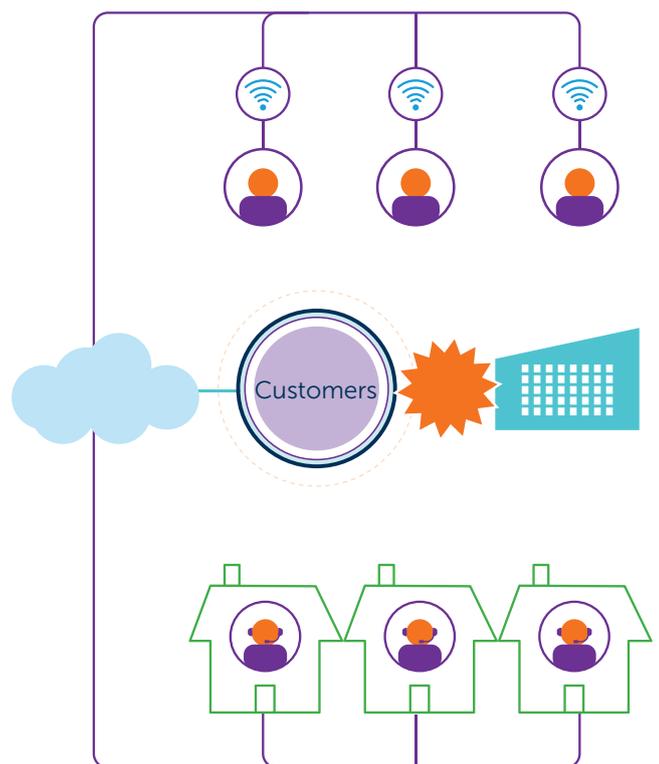


Five ways to improve business continuity

Mitel Mobility

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Most organisations are familiar with the principle of distributing IT systems to minimise IT service failures. Fewer organisations give adequate thought to maximising the availability of their most valuable asset, human resource! By distributing both, organisations can eliminate single points of failure and survive a wide variety of threats. Here are 5 ways you can improve business continuity by relocating or distributing your workforce.



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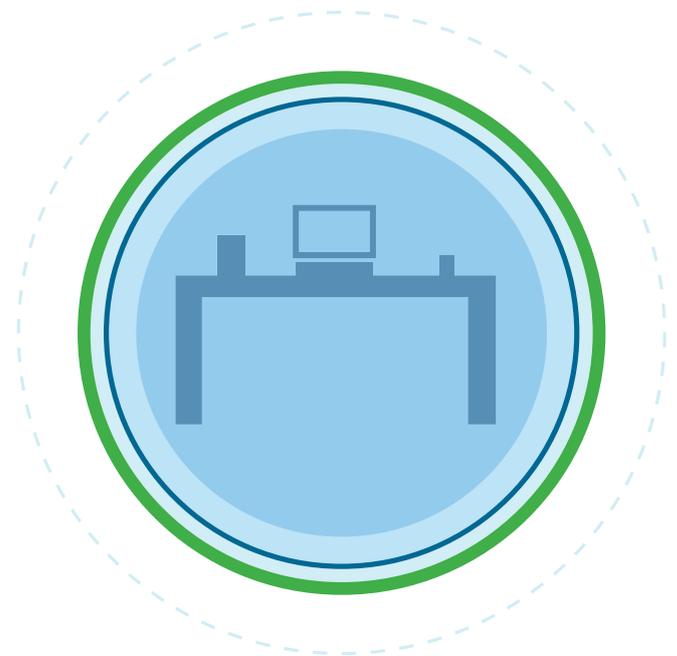
Relocate your employees to an alternative office location

Empty desks are a sign that work is changing.

How often do you look across your office and see half the desks are empty? On any given day, individuals may be working at another office, working at home or meeting with customers and suppliers. Work has changed forever. We no longer rely on tangible objects such as paper diaries or filing cabinets, anything and everything is accessible online.

In a Frost & Sullivan survey¹ fifty-nine per cent of companies said that they see Unified Communications and Collaboration technologies helping them to enhance virtual team collaboration and seventy-one per cent said that the ability to reach remote and mobile employees was important.

With the right technology in place, organisations can survive denial of access at any one location without significant business impact. Hot desking enables an individual to pick a desk at another office, login and replicate their work environment. Some take this principle one step further through a shared services agreement with another organisation.



Use homeworking as part of your plan

Imagine if your organisation had an office for every employee.

Denial of access at any one location would only affect one employee. Homeworking embraces this principle by securely extending an individual's desktop over a broadband network into their home. Individuals have access to communications, business applications and data just as they would in the office.

More than half of companies see communications technologies as being important tools to help their employees to work from home in a Frost & Sullivan survey¹.

Home working can also help your organisation deal with challenges that cannot be addressed by relocating staff to another office, for example, if there were a pandemic threat you may not want your employees using public transport or sharing office space. Home working also offers benefits such as reducing the impact of transport disruption, sickness and other personal challenges. A day lost may become a day where an individual is able to do a full day's work or at least deal with 'in the moment' issues from home.



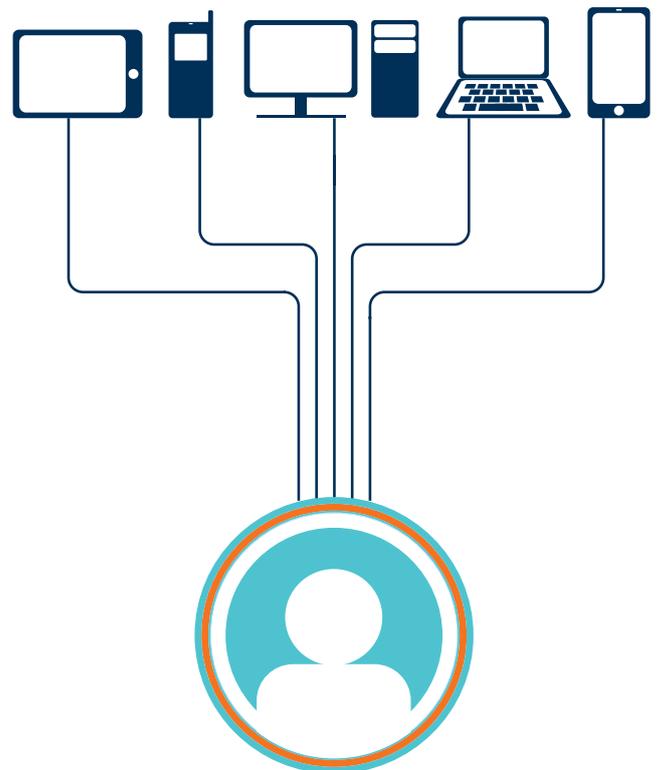
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Consider how mobile devices can be used to improve availability

[Integrate mobile devices into your enterprise communications.](#)

Unified Communications enables mobile devices to be integrated into an enterprise communication solution. 'Single Number Reach' allows individuals to be contacted via a single enterprise directory number on any device that can be directly dialled. When disaster strikes, individuals can choose to answer their calls on their smartphone or tablet.

On the face of it, this approach provides a flexible solution that leverages devices and applications already in use. However, metropolitan disasters can swamp a public mobile network and lead to denial of service. Fortunately, there are alternatives. When connected to a trusted WiFi network, a smartphone or tablet can become an extension of the office telephone system. This could be an office WiFi infrastructure, an employees home network or a public hotspot. Where good communication is critical at times of crisis, organisations are rolling out private mobile networks to combine the power of mobile devices with a managed network that can be relied on.



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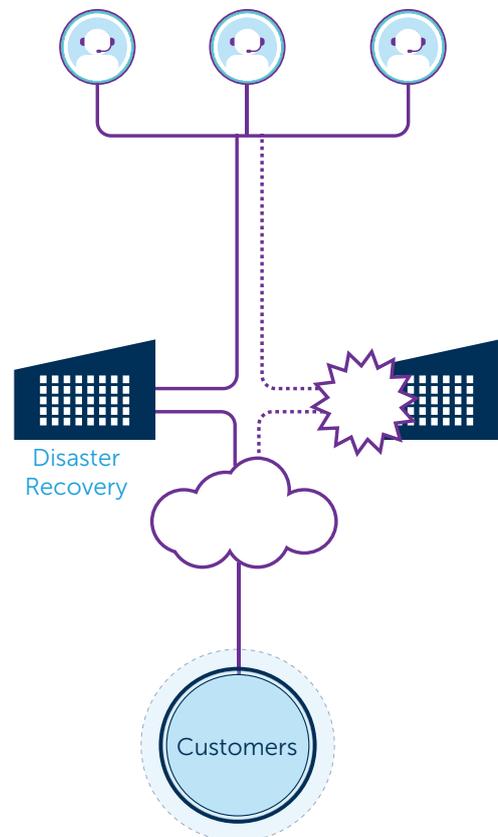
Create a disaster recovery site

In the event of denial of access to a building or metropolitan area, your key workers can relocate to a disaster recovery site.

Mission critical organisations commonly deployed disaster recovery sites in the 80's and 90's. These facilities were largely the domain of larger enterprises that placed a high priority on business continuity, for example government organisations and investment banks.

Sixty per cent of companies in a Frost & Sullivan survey¹ stated that Unified Communications and Collaboration technologies were important in achieving their aim of business continuity.

When required, redirection of public network traffic over fixed lines could be challenging. In addition, backup IT systems didn't always perform as expected. Fortunately, disaster recovery facilities can be established more cost effectively in today's IP connected world. Office space can be secured from a specialist partner and business critical applications accessed from the cloud. The advent of IP networking and SIP trunking has simplified relocation. Public network traffic can be redirected by the IT team using a simple application on a mobile device. Your employees can move to an alternative desk, logon as a hot desk user and continue to work as they did in their normal place of work.



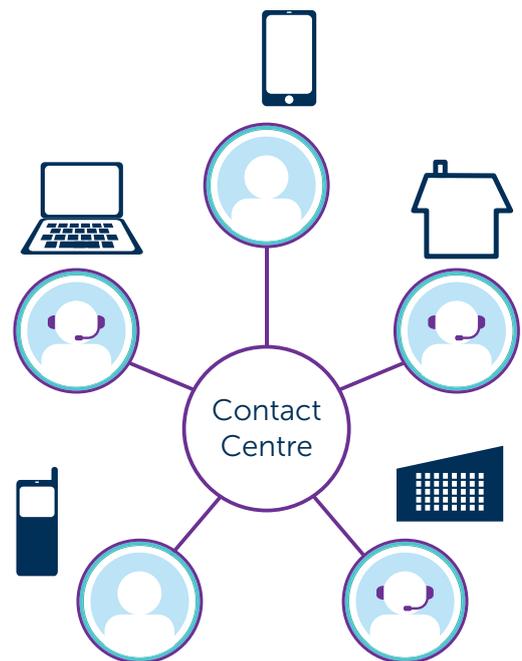
Distribute your contact centre

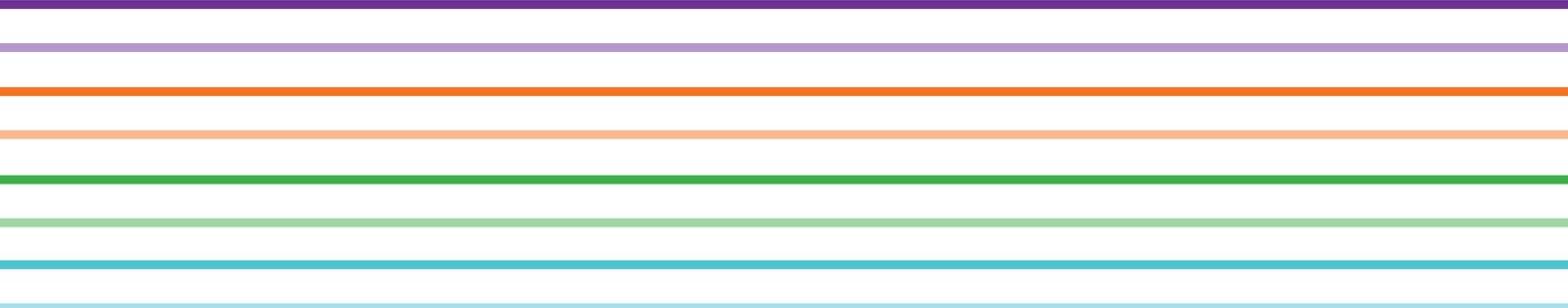
For many organisations, the contact centre will define success or failure in a crisis.

Until recently, most contact centres were single site solutions. Agents travelled to the contact centre, logged in and completed their days work in a fixed office location. Today, contact centre agents can work at another office, at home or even from a mobile device. And there is no impact on reporting either. Real time and historical reporting is centralised and available from 'anywhere'. Consequently, organisations can apply the same business continuity principles to a contact centre agent as any other key employee.

In some industries a crisis may mean more customer interaction. For example, exceptional weather may impact your customers in the same way you are being impacted. This is often the case with utility companies, insurance

companies, field service operations and local government services. Fortunately, the same technology can help you to draft in extra staff in other office locations or at home to ensure service levels are maintained.





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