RingCentral

How the combination of message, video, and phone will reshape the future of work



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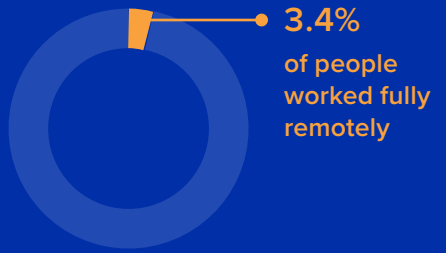
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Introduction

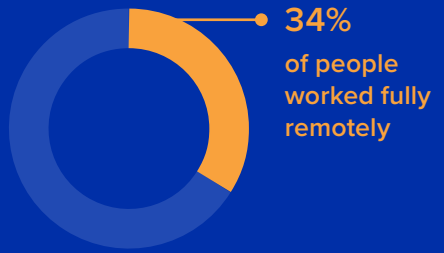
When Marissa Mayer, ex-Google wunderkind and computer science graduate from Stanford University, took the helm as president and CEO at Yahoo in 2012, she immediately made one sweeping change: recall all of Yahoo's remote workers. Employees at Yahoo were given three months to either show up at the office or find another job.

Her rationale was that remote work simply wasn't productive—that working remotely didn't spur the teamwork and innovation that naturally occur when employees work together in the office. The memo sent out to the company's remote workers read, "Some of the best decisions and insights come from hallway and cafeteria discussions, meeting new people, and impromptu team meetings."

Before COVID-19



During COVID-19



Despite all the attention Mayer's action received (other organizations such as IBM, Aetna, and Bank of America recalled their remote employees too)—it's clear that, eight years later, remote work is not only still around, but it's thriving. In fact, between 2015 and 2020, remote work grew by a whopping 44%. Eventually, even Yahoo reversed its decision, embracing remote work as one of its most valuable employee benefits.

According to FlexJobs, 3.4% of the working population were fully remote at the beginning of 2020, up from 2.5% in 2015. A Gallup poll also found that 43% of employees worked remotely at least one day a week. If those trends had continued, 5% of people would have been fully remote by the end of 2020, and 50% would work from home at least some of the time.

Of course, COVID-19 changed that trajectory. The pandemic completely upended "business as usual," causing millions of organizations to implement emergency remote work. Almost overnight, working from home transformed from a generous employee perk into a business necessity. At the height of the COVID-19 lockdowns, 34% of employees who previously commuted to work were working from home full time.

Work From Home 1.0: The COVID-19 Era

ONLY 12%

of businesses felt completely prepared for remote work when COVID-19 struck

Before COVID-19, organizations dabbled in remote and flexible work arrangements for many years without any particular urgency. After all, they didn't have any reason to rush adoption. It was still very much experimental for many, and leaders wanted to take things slow.

In the wake of COVID-19, however, the slow-and-steady approach turned upside down. Businesses suddenly had to accelerate their remote work plans and get employees completely equipped to work from home. According to Gartner, only 12% of businesses felt completely prepared at the time.

The rush was on to identify the right solutions **immediately**, especially in the world of communications and collaboration.

As video conferencing takes off, security questions arise.



The problem

In the haste to adopt video conferencing solutions, many organizations didn't properly evaluate security, resulting in wide-scale privacy issues.



The solution

Security isn't an option in workplace communications; it's a requirement. Solutions such as browser-based video conferencing solutions use WebRTC, an open standard that provides the highest level of security.

What was the result? Companies made hasty decisions and bought technologies and services at the eleventh hour—solutions that may not have been perfect for employees, IT teams, customers, or the larger organization. For example, companies were forced to cobble together solutions that worked flawlessly for some teams but were virtually unusable for others. Naturally, those teams sought out their own solutions, leading to shadow IT, employee silos, and security challenges.

Whether organizations adopted redundant, unmanageable, or simply ineffective technologies for their business needs, the reality is that leaders implemented these short-term solutions **largely for the sole purpose of survival**. And in many cases, it was a success. Remote work kept operations moving along despite upending office life.

WFH 1.0 era technologies helped keep businesses afloat, but they might not meet long-term business continuity needs.

Moving forward, however, is another story. WFH 1.0 era technologies helped keep businesses afloat, but they might not meet long-term business continuity needs. As leaders begin planning and executing on long-term strategies, organizations will need solutions that prepare them for the years ahead. Here's why.



Beyond WFH 1.0: Remote Work and the Recovery Phase

The road to pre-crisis levels of operations won't be an easy one. Businesses want to reopen offices, but with no clarity on a vaccine yet, employees likely won't feel completely comfortable going back. At the same time, leaders are challenged with containing costs and ensuring continued innovation throughout the pandemic.

A tall order, for sure, but businesses already have an answer. If the pandemic has taught us anything, **it's that remote work is critical to surviving major disruptions**.

Instead of returning to offices, a significant number of people will shift to permanent remote work in the future. Business leaders are planning to embrace remote work on a wide scale, as seen below.

Gartner

A survey by Gartner on 317 CFOs revealed that 74% of companies plan to permanently shift to more remote work post-COVID-19. Nearly a quarter of those plan to move 20% of their on-site employees to permanent remote positions.

PwC

A similar survey by PwC on 330 finance leaders found that 54% plan to make remote work a permanent option. At the same time, only 26% of leaders are now concerned about remote employee productivity—down from 63% in an earlier survey.

When it comes to remote employee productivity:



63%
of leaders were concerned in March



26%
of leaders were concerned by June

Why remote work is so important in the post-COVID-19 period of recovery:

1.

Employee safety

Organizations can ensure employee safety by simply allowing employees to work from home.

2.

Cost containment

Fewer employees in the office mean lower maintenance and operating costs.

3.

Productivity

Remote employees can work up to 22% more productively than office employees.

4.

Business continuity

With a readily available remote workforce, businesses are prepared to survive future disruptions.

5.

Talent attraction

More employers are embracing remote work in the post-COVID-19 era. In order to attract the best talent—especially Millennials and Gen Zers—employers need to offer remote or flexible work options.

6.

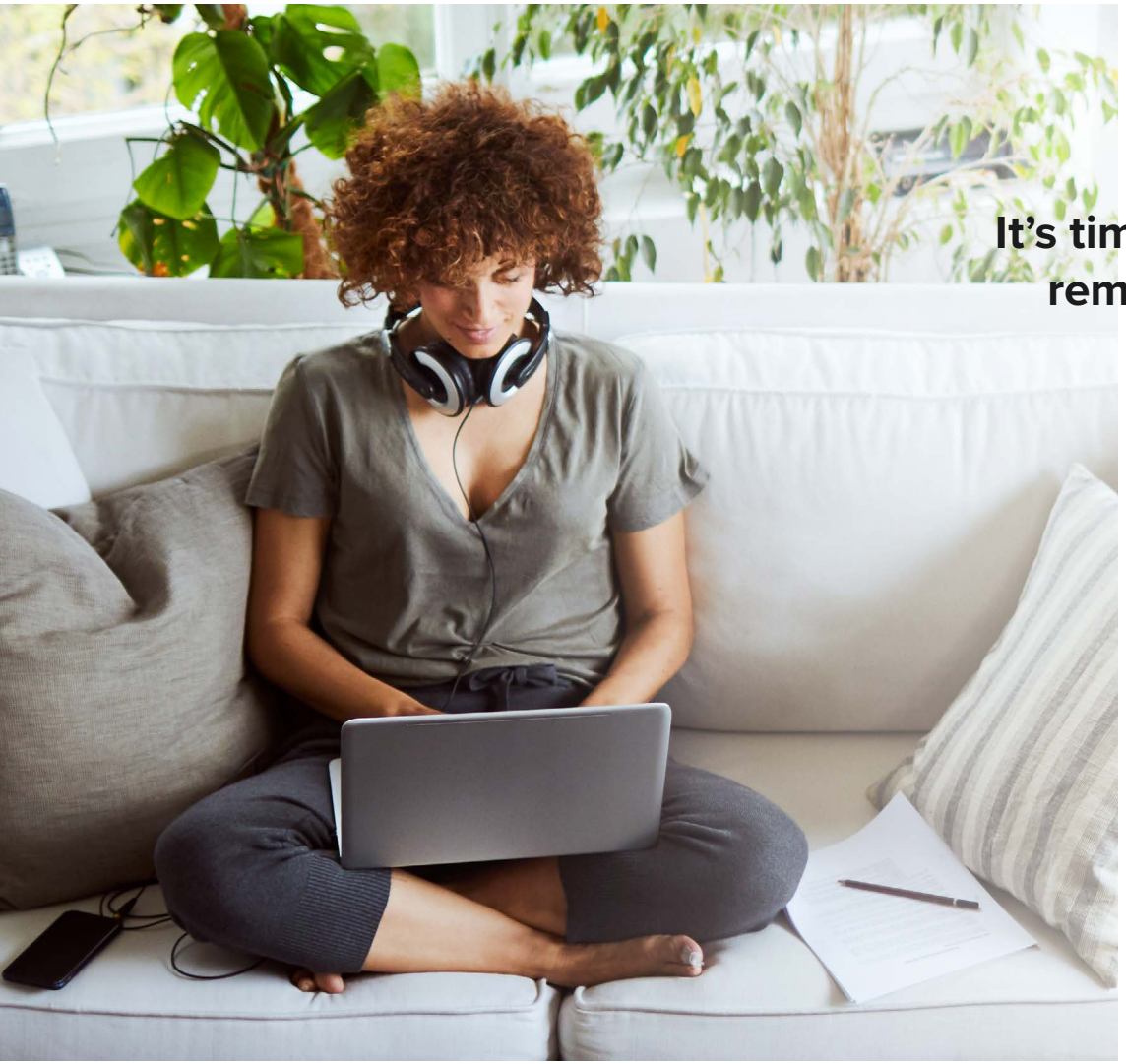
Employee engagement

50.9% of remote employees are engaged at work, compared to 40.4% of office employees. Highly engaged business units result in 21% greater profitability.

7.

Corporate social responsibility

Remote work drastically reduces an organization's carbon footprint, which impacts both talent attraction and customer engagement.



As business leaders plan to support more remote work in the immediate and distant future, equipping remote workers with the right technologies is mission-critical.

It’s time to move into the next phase of remote work and explore permanent collaboration solutions.

The last-minute remote work tools businesses purchased at the start of the pandemic might not necessarily align with long-term strategies, and moving forward with those tools will hinder productivity in the long run. It’s time to move into the next phase of remote work and explore permanent collaboration solutions.

What Is Work From Home 2.0?

WFH 2.0 is about implementing future-proof, secure, and reliable solutions that work cohesively to address the challenges of WFH 1.0, or the challenges of hastily adopted remote-work technologies.

For example, during the lockdown, many teams inexperienced with remote work failed to consistently communicate, leading to employee silos, misaligned goals, duplicate work, and missed opportunities for deeper collaboration.

Other lessons learned from WFH 1.0:

- **Isolation leads to employee silos**
- **A variety of communications tools are necessary to collaborate**
- **The wrong tools lead to shadow IT**
- **It's easy to lose track of projects**
- **Communication doesn't happen without encouragement**
- **Remote employees work on different schedules**

Not addressing these challenges today will only hinder organizations that choose to embrace remote work in the coming years.



—Trevor Schulze,
Chief Information Officer at RingCentral

"Many organizations quickly adopted point solutions to their network with the intent of 'getting through' the COVID-19 shelter-in-place orders. But we now know that COVID-19 isn't a temporary situation. It's one of undetermined length."

"No matter when or how we go back to the office, we'll need to work differently going forward. The patchwork solutions created as a quick fix are likely to slow teams down and hinder organizations in the long term. Employees need to be able to communicate naturally, from any place, using any device, and at any time."

"Message, video, and phone communications must be integrated and look seamless in employees' everyday workflows. With a unified platform, organizations ensure that employees have everything they need to collaborate efficiently and effectively and future-proof their communications needs."

WFH 2.0: The Core Components

WFH 2.0 is made up of two essential components that streamline communications and address the needs of organizations embracing remote work.

1. Communications in the cloud



Businesses that entered the pandemic with predominantly on-premises solutions likely struggled to adapt their workflows to remote work. That's because on-premises solutions lack the agility, scalability, and security businesses need to allow employees to work off-site.

Instead, cloud-first organizations emerged from the pandemic with their heads above water, as their flexible operations models allowed them to easily send employees home—many even announced remote work weeks before shelter-in-place orders.

In WFH 2.0, cloud communications are essential for remote work. On a basic level, cloud communications offer rich PBX and collaboration features that allow employees to reach colleagues from any location, on any device. Employees can connect whether they work in the office, at home, or on the road—even with a smartphone cellular broadband connection.

It's not just about location and devices, however. Cloud technologies offer more scalability and features to grow with organizations' changing needs.

Scalability is especially important during periods of recovery. For example, at the height of COVID-19, many businesses underwent staff reductions as part of their cost-containment survival strategy. Businesses with cloud-based tools simply reduced their services to match their headcount. As those businesses recover and hire more staff in the coming months, they'll need to scale up their cloud services to meet growing demands.

Also, as remote work proliferates, keeping communications channels online will be mission critical. Cloud communications place the task of maintenance and security in providers' hands, meaning there are no maintenance contracts or hardware to maintain.

2. Message, video, and phone



As COVID-19 lockdowns took effect, interest in video meetings surged. Organizations honed in on video meetings as the de facto solution for remote work communications, emulating the face-to-face collaboration employees experience in the office. And in many cases, video meetings were a saving grace. Teams stayed connected, meetings continued, and operations flowed as they normally would.

Organizations soon discovered, though, that video meetings weren't the one-size-fits-all solution to remote work. For example, sitting in video meetings all day has shown to cause high mental exhaustion—a phenomenon now called "Zoom fatigue." Similarly, it's not always practical to initiate a video call, especially with colleagues working in different locations and time zones. At the end of the day, effective remote communications require more than just video.

Employees want options in how they communicate. Sometimes it's much easier—or more appropriate—to leave a message or a quick phone call than to jump straight into a video meeting. That's why today's workplace communications consist of three key options:

Message—Sending text-based messages to colleagues and groups in real time

Video—Live face-to-face communication using computers and mobile devices

Phone—Calling colleagues using voice over IP

All three options (message, video, phone) are essential to today's workplace, but they're even more important in the context of remote work. Remote workers don't have the luxury of walking to a colleague's desk or joining others in a meeting room to discuss projects. Instead, they rely upon messaging, video, and phone to work collaboratively.

The problem with separate communications apps

Most organizations approach messaging, video, and phone as separate point solutions—using a different solution for each. However, deploying multiple apps and using multiple vendors presents a major problem for employees and employers: too much workplace technology is killing productivity. Here's how:

EMPLOYEES WASTE

60

minutes each day navigating between apps

Loss of context

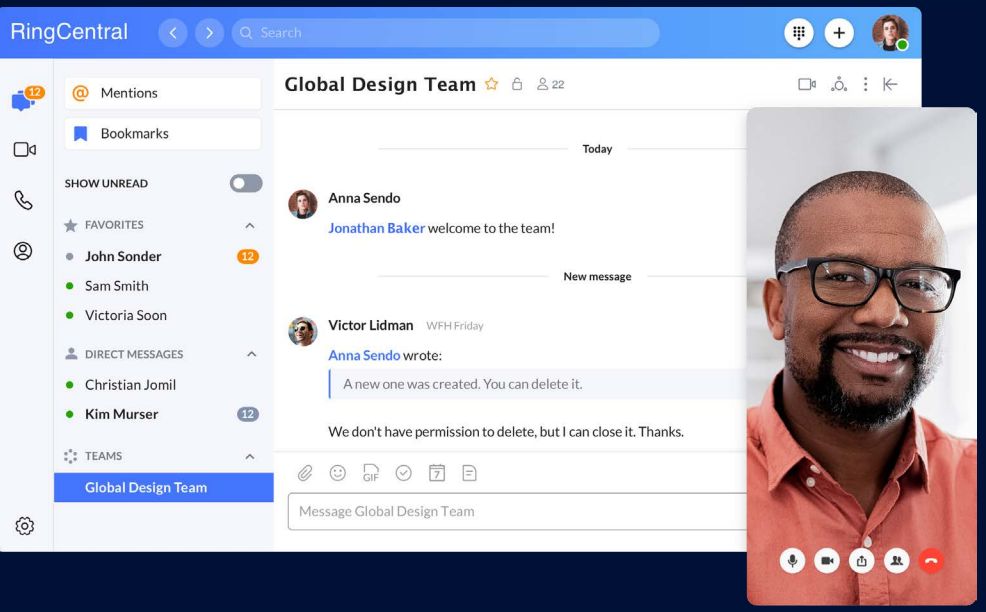
Context gets lost as employees move from one mode of communication to another. As conversations migrate from emails to messages to video calls—and more colleagues are added to them—it's common for conversations (and the information in them) to get lost between multiple communication apps. By the time you find the right context, you've already wasted several minutes searching.

App overload

In a typical workday, employees juggle chats, emails, project management tools, phone calls, meetings, and a million tabs in their browsers. While they want to work efficiently, the barrage of apps is pulling their attention spans apart. Workers today waste up to 60 minutes each day navigating between apps, with the majority of them toggling between 10 apps in a single hour.

Difficult to scale

Businesses are expected to regrow at a steady pace, and as they do, their needs will continuously change. With multiple communications providers, however, scaling several solutions to perfectly align together can be a roadblock.



Message, video, phone: better together

When it comes to remote work and business continuity, your WFH 2.0 solution should bring all of your workplace communications together into a single, all-in-one platform. We call this **unified communications**.

Unified communications solutions offer messaging, video, and phone to streamline collaboration and drive employee productivity across the board. With everything in a single platform, employees can switch between messaging and video calling, for example, with just a click. Unlike with separate apps, there's no need to toggle from one to another.

A single platform also provides one hub for all important collaboration information, including conversation histories, shared links, shared files, online statuses, and even project management—all easily searchable and accessible from anywhere on any device.

Employees don't need to stress over learning multiple apps. They can learn a single user interface from a single provider without worrying about managing, updating, and keeping up with different interfaces, allowing them to focus less on technology and more on excelling at their jobs.

How a unified platform addresses loss of context

When employees' conversations move from one mode to another, time gets wasted and information gets lost. In a single app, a team communicating through messaging can launch a video meeting and share screens in an instant, keeping all context under one roof so team members don't have to dig through other apps.

When team members need context, they know exactly where to find it.

How a unified platform addresses app overload

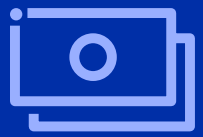
Toggling between apps is more than simply double-clicking another desktop icon. It's setting up login credentials and meeting IDs, keeping track of passwords, digging through conversations, writing down phone numbers, and manually finding the right colleagues to invite to a video meeting.

A unified app saves employees the distraction and headache from toggling between multiple apps.

How a unified platform addresses scalability

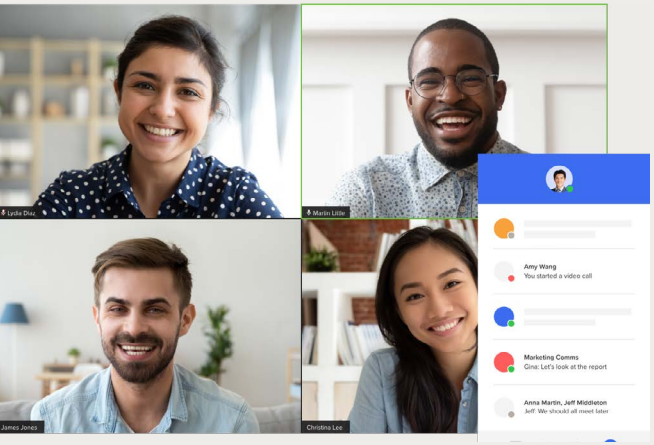
A single provider ensures that every channel of communication (messaging, video, phone) scales with rapidly changing business needs. Organizations can add and remove licenses as needed without having to go through multiple providers, each of which might have distinct policies and pricing plans.

The ultimate goal of unified communications is to improve operational efficiency as organizations increasingly embrace remote work. To encourage collaboration, you must remove the barriers holding communication back. That means reducing the amount of apps and vendors organizations work with.



RingCentral customers see 30-40% cost savings when switching from their on-premise PBX systems to the cloud.

What to look for in a unified message, video, and phone solution



Reliability

For most businesses, reliability isn't an option or a nice-to-have—it's a must-have. Remote teams need to communicate using any channel, from any location, on any device, and at all times. If communications go down, meetings are interrupted, focus is lost, and business is impacted.

Look for experienced providers with a trusted record of reliability. Providers should offer redundant infrastructure and processes to guarantee 99.999% uptime SLA, ensuring that service is always up and running.

Security and compliance

Keeping your data secure is essential, but with remote employees working in different network environments and ecosystems, company data is more vulnerable to malicious attacks.

Look for providers who publish their cloud security practices in detail and can answer explicit questions related to your unique use case. Also, make sure the provider understands your industry-specific security and compliance needs and is able to furnish internal and third-party audits and reports, such as SOC 2 Type II, SOC 3, HIPAA, and HITRUST.

Integrations

Unified communications reach a higher potential when they integrate with other key business apps.

For example, teams can integrate their unified communications app directly into their preferred customer relationship management (CRM) solution to make calls and schedule meetings within the CRM interface. They can also integrate with calendar and email apps to automatically import meeting information and skip tedious administrative work.

Look for unified communications solutions with open APIs to build custom integrations to your most important business apps. Additionally, it's worth looking at a provider's out-of-the-box integrations selection to see how much of your business needs are covered.

Preparing for the Future of WFH 2.0



As businesses approach WFH 2.0 and evaluate their business continuity strategies, there's no better time to think about how your business will support a growing remote and flexible work culture.

Remote work allows businesses to prepare for future disruptions and the accelerating work-from-home trend.

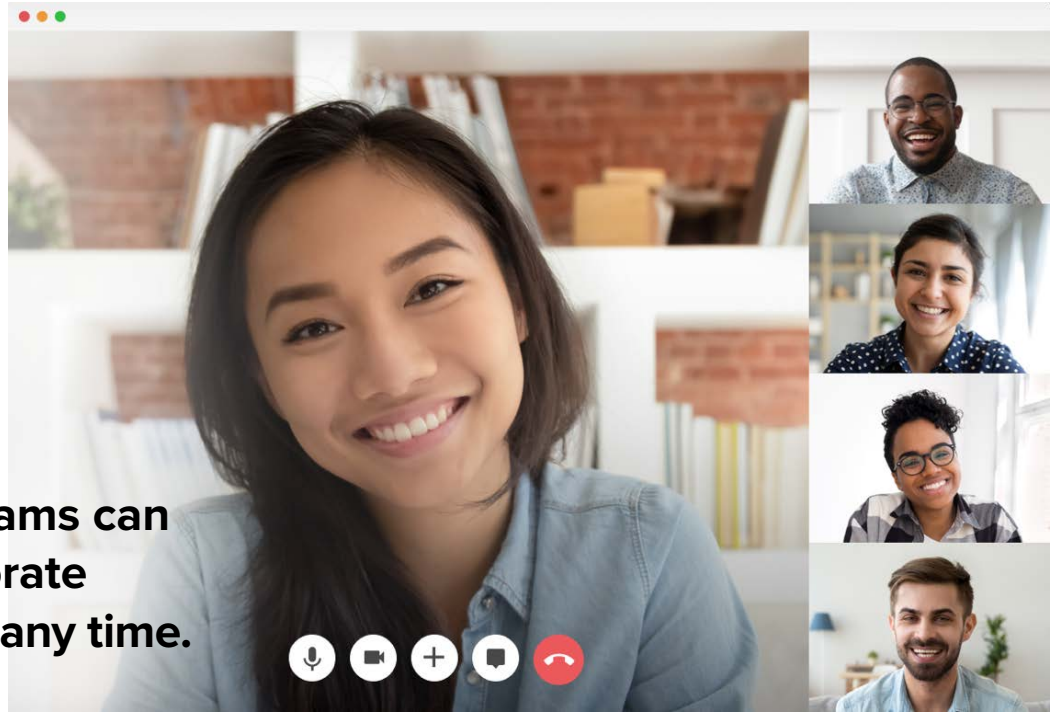
In the short term, businesses need remote work to keep employees safe as COVID-19 lingers. In the long term, more remote work allows businesses to prepare for future disruptions and the accelerating work-from-home trend.

By providing your employees with unified communications today, you not only ensure that your remote teams have everything they need to drive deeper collaboration and productivity, but also prepare your organization for a remote-first future of work.

RingCentral: Your Unified Message, Video, and Phone Partner

RingCentral is the industry's leading unified communications provider, offering a remote work collaboration solution that combines message, video, and phone features, in a single app.

With seven layers of security, 99.999% uptime SLA, and integrations with over 200 key business apps such as Salesforce, Microsoft, and Google, RingCentral ensures that your teams can always communicate and collaborate effectively from anywhere and at any time.



RingCentral ensures that your teams can always communicate and collaborate effectively from anywhere and at any time.

Learn more about how a unified platform for message, video, and phone can prepare your organization for the future of work at ringcentral.com/office/how-it-works.

Visit www.ringcentral.com/desktop-app to request a demo today.

About RingCentral

RingCentral, Inc. (NYSE: RNG) is a leading provider of unified communications (message, video, phone), customer engagement, and contact center solutions for businesses worldwide. More flexible and cost-effective than legacy on-premises PBX and video conferencing systems that it replaces, RingCentral empowers modern mobile and distributed workforces to communicate, collaborate, and connect via any mode, any device, and any location. RingCentral's open platform integrates with leading third-party business applications and enables customers to easily customize business workflows. RingCentral is headquartered in Belmont, California, and has offices around the world.

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