

# Voice Report

News and guidance for getting the best rates, services and equipment

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### *VoIP Service Tries to Woo Business Sector*

## Malware Raises Concern About Skype in Enterprise

Hooking up Skype for six of the 15 employees at Allied Home Mortgage Capital Corp.'s Warrenton, Va., branch has reduced the enterprise's \$1,200 monthly spend on LD, caller ID, conference calling, voicemail and PBX lease to \$20 or \$30, reports Eric Taylor, who handles telecom and network administration responsibilities for the office as part of his branch manager position.

But Chuck Taylor, telecom manager for the Chicago-based Tribune Company, is having none of that. The IT administrators at the Tribune Company installed Symantec firewall proxies that block traffic his enterprise deems inappropriate – including Skype calls.

What position should your telecom department take on Skype?

Better have an answer. You'll likely confront this question soon following the revelation in December that malware spread through Skype infected an unknown number of computers.

## Skype Says 30% of Subscribers are Business Users

Skype works by establishing peer-to-peer voice connections over the Internet, though Skype users also can make calls to and answer calls from standard PSTN connections. Skype-to-Skype calls over the Internet are free.

It's a hit. Skype Technologies reports to have 136 million subscribers. It generated \$4.2 billion in net revenue during the first nine months of 2006 – a 32% increase over the first nine months of 2005 – before it was bought by eBay for \$2.6 billion in October 2005.

You'll hear more about Skype in the enterprise soon. On Dec. 20, the vendor released its 3.0 for Windows Business Version, which includes Windows Installer (or Microsoft Installer, a.k.a. MSI), a service that manages software installation/removal and allows the software to be installed without granting access to every feature. Rather than physically loading Skype on every computer, MSI enables the installation of the program on an entire network of PCs.

The VoIP provider has the enterprise market in its sights and takes a "never-say-never" attitude toward competing with telecom giants like Cisco and Avaya, says Michael Jackson, Skype's VP of paid services. Skype Technologies supports its 500 employees with its own service, he reports.

### I-TEM Takes Flight with 7 Initial Member Firms

Yet another telecom expense management association is born. The Independent Telecommunication Expense Management Association (I-TEM) announced its inaugural membership drive and the launch of its Web site ([www.i-temassociation.org](http://www.i-temassociation.org)) on Tuesday. Founding members include: ICOMM Consulting, Visicom, Teligistics, TSG Enterprises, Telytics, Dietrich Lockard Group and TnT Partners. ☎

### ACLU Wants to Know if AT&T Gave NSA Records

The American Civil Liberties Union is backing a group of AT&T shareholders pressuring the company to disclose information about whether it shared phone records with the National Security Agency.

*USA Today* reported in May how the NSA has accumulated a database of phone calls made by tens of millions of Americans that it built of records from AT&T, Verizon and BellSouth [VR 5/15/06]. Neither AT&T, which has since acquired BellSouth, nor Verizon have been willing to address the allegations, citing security laws.

“As You Sow,” an investor activist group ([www.asyousow.org](http://www.asyousow.org)), has appealed to both Verizon and AT&T to disclose their actions. ☎

Roughly 30% of Skype’s subscribers are business users, adds spokesman Chaim Haas, though anecdotally he concedes that most are likely SMBs, not large enterprises.

### Bringing Skype to Work Meant New Features & Long Pauses

After using Skype at home for six months, Allied Home Mortgage’s Taylor brought it with him to work when his branch moved to a new location two months ago. Skype-to-Skype calls are free, and Skype’s new pricing system has Taylor’s branch paying just \$14.95 a year for unlimited calling to the U.S. and Canada for each of his branch’s six Skype accounts.

The branch manager says Skype is a vast improvement over the ShoreTel PBX in place at his old office. He says he was drawn to Skype features like being able to take calls at home on his business number, transfer files to other Skype users, instant message other Skype users and show other Skype users what’s on his computer screen using Unyte Application Sharing.

The benefits came with significant hassles, though. Taylor reports that he still needed to buy a call management system in order for his business to have a main line that would route calls to extensions. His first attempt, a \$29 software app called Tumara PBX, featured greetings read in such a robotic voice that Taylor commissioned voice-recorded greetings. Then he learned that voice recordings couldn’t be used with the software because it only translates text to speech.

So Taylor replaced Tumara with CallButler, also priced around \$30. But callers to Taylor’s branch sit through a seconds-long stretch of silence as their calls are connected, so he had to record a message to ask them not to hang up. Occasionally, callers will press # to dial an extension, only to have the system not respond, Taylor says. He surmises the problem stems from Skype misreading some touchtone sounds.

Taylor is pleased with CallButler’s customer service, however. He says the company expects to deliver an upgraded version of the software that features a woman’s voice instructing callers to stay on the line while the call is transferred.

Taylor also reports that Skype call quality degrades as available bandwidth dwindles, so having lots of applications running or spotty Internet connectivity could mean sub-par calls.

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## Warning: Employees Don't Need Help Installing Skype

Don't be surprised to get an e-mail from end users at your enterprise that begins, "There's this great software called Skype which I think would be a good idea for us to start using at work." Skype has an e-mail template on its Web site encouraging end users to make such a pitch to managers and IT departments. ([www.skype.com/business/convinceboss/](http://www.skype.com/business/convinceboss/))

And don't think your enterprise has nothing to do with Skype just because you didn't install it. Telecom managers report incidents of employees installing Skype on their work computers themselves. They can get around your attempts to block access to Skype.com by installing the .exe file on a USB drive. SanDisk's Cruzer Micro USB drives, now for sale at Circuit City and CompUSA for as low as \$34, come pre-loaded with Skype. Any U3-compatible USB drive can run an application, so an employee could plug one into a corporate computer and Skype his or her heart out without installing the application on the computer.

Robert LaFata, telecom specialist for Glen Raven (N.C.) Inc., a textile manufacturer, tells of an employee in his enterprise's transportation division who downloaded Skype a few years ago and slowed down the corporate network every time he started the application. After following orders to take the program off his computer, the employee later took it upon himself to reinstall an upgraded version that didn't slow down the network. The incident was one reason Glen Raven revoked end users' administrative privileges on their PCs, preventing them from downloading anything, LaFata recalls.

## W32.Chatosky Spread Through Skype's Text Chat

Network degradation aside, other telecom pros might cast a leery eye toward Skype after news broke in December of malware spreading through the application.

Classified a "worm" by Symantec, "W32.Chatosky" spread through the text chat application. First, a user would see a pop-up box that read "Allow this program in skype!" then a warning box initiated by Skype that read, "Another program is trying to access Skype. This can be a potential security risk. What would you like to do?"

One option offered was to download sp.exe. However, the users who followed that instruction had passwords and other personal information stolen from their computers. The malware also connected to remote servers to download additional code, CNET.com reports. It searched Skype for other users every three minutes and sent the malware to them.

None of the anti-virus Web sites following W32.Chatosky could conclude the number of people affected, though most state

## Fight Skype With Traffic Blockers – For Now

Despite all of the concerns about Skype opening the door to hackers, Eric Taylor, manager of Allied Home Mortgage's Warrenton, Va., branch, is determined to keep using Skype. "There are easier ways to steal people's Social Security numbers than through my system," he reasons.

But the Toronto Catholic District School Board isn't buying it.

A group of staffers at the Canadian enterprise lobbied for Skype because there are no phones in classrooms, Imelda Kearney, manager of technical services for the board, relays to *Voice Report*. The district decided not to use Skype after the security network analyst voiced concerns, she says.

If you're looking to keep Skype out of your enterprise, you have other options beyond blocking access to Skype.com. VoIP security expert Dan York points to Leipzig, Germany-based Ipoque, which makes traffic managers to filter out P2P traffic, and SkypeKiller ([www.skypekiller.com](http://www.skypekiller.com)), a freeware download that remotely uninstalls Skype from computers on your network. Traffic managers can block Skype traffic running off USB drives, too, because they scan traffic at the firewall level, York suggests.

But you may not be able to rely on these programs for long. York says Skype traffic is tough to detect because it masquerades as Web traffic and gets around firewalls "beautifully." Plus, each new version of Skype is tweaked to avoid the detection programs in an ongoing "arms race," he says.

Michael Jackson, Skype's VP of paid services, denies a purposeful effort to work around blocking software, however. "It's more of an aftereffect of improving the product to find available connections," he says.



### Sprint Plans 4,800 More Cell Sites in '06, Debuts CDMA/iDEN Phones

Sprint Nextel added more than 3,400 cell sites to improve network performance in 2006, while announcing in the fourth quarter that it became the first U.S. carrier to deploy CDMA EVDO Rev A, a higher data speed service. It plans to add about 4,800 new cell sites in 2007.

Also, the carrier expects to complete conversion of its entire customer base to a unified billing platform in 2007.

Those were a few of the details released recently by the Overland Park, Kan.-based wireless carrier in advance of its annual report.

Sprint expects to finish 2006 with adjusted operating income before depreciation and amortization of more than \$12.6 billion on revenue of \$41 billion. By comparison, the company reported an operating income of \$3.8 billion on \$34.7 billion in revenue in 2005.

In other news, Sprint has at least partly answered the question about how it will continue to support both its CDMA 1X network and the iDEN network it acquired along with Nextel. Sprint debuted its first dual-mode phones Jan. 16. The Motorola Buzz ic502 and Blend ic402, the first of Sprint's new "PowerSource" handsets, are capable of using both networks, giving their users access to Sprint's voice calling, text messaging, GPS and other advanced applications while also taking advantage of Nextel's massively popular walkie-talkie service. Customers will get one bill for both services, Sprint says. 📞

"there is no massive outbreak." Skype officials dismiss the worm allegations, characterizing W.32 Chatosky as a less-damaging Trojan horse instead of a worm.

"It was identical to similar Trojan horse attacks distributed via e-mail, where the recipient is invited to visit a Web page," explains Kurt Sauer, Skype's chief security officer, in a message relayed to *Voice Report*. "The Web sites hosting the malware were subsequently shut down, ending the threat from this Trojan horse attack."

The malware that hit Skype in December doesn't prove any vulnerabilities in the program, asserts industry analyst Irwin Lazar, director of collaboration and convergence research for Nemertes Research. He says such a Trojan horse is just as likely to target click-happy users of any other application.

But Lazar continues to stand behind his comments in a February 2006 research paper that Skype is a "black box," meaning its internal workings aren't open to public review. "The potential that some flaw will be discovered that would enable an attacker to either gain control of or disrupt a Skype users' computer or mobile device is real, as it is for any application (or even any operating system) that is exposed to the Internet," Lazar wrote.

### Supernode Worries Unfounded, Security Expert Contends

But it's not the fear of malware that keeps Tribune Company's Taylor and other communications technology professionals from embracing Skype. Rather, it's the fear that Skype relies on some computers – dubbed "supernodes" – to route peer-to-peer calls to other destinations, giving hackers a potential entry to the corporate network.

Skype's Network Administrator Guide explains that it takes a high-performance computer and a strong Internet connection for a PC to become a supernode. "When a Skype peer node comes alive as a supernode, it dynamically creates a local cluster in a star-like pattern of up to several hundred peer nodes to leverage all the available resources on the Skype P2P network," the guide says.

But computers protected by corporate firewalls cannot become supernodes, asserts Dan York, a VoIP security expert and best-practices chairman for the VoIP Security Alliance. In a typical firewall setup, Network Address Translation (NAT) boxes remove your computer's IP address and instead assign your entire corporate network a single IP address that's visible to outside computers, explains York, who himself employs Skype at work.

Other computers can't connect to these private IP addresses, which likely start with 10. or 192.168., meaning your computer needs to find a supernode in order to talk to others. "There is a legitimate concern if your PC were to turn into a supernode, but it doesn't appear somebody could become a supernode behind a firewall or a NAT device," York says.

York, a specialist in VoIP security for five years and network security for 15 years, talks about Skype security issues regularly on his weekly Blue Box Podcast ([www.blueboxpodcast.com](http://www.blueboxpodcast.com)).

Skype 3.0 also addressed enterprise concerns by building in a feature that allows network administrators to control whether or not a computer can become a supernode, even though most are behind corporate firewalls, Jackson adds. "We thought that was a nice thing to keep people happy," he says. See the full Network Administrator's Guide at [www.skype.com/security/guide-for-network-admins-30beta.pdf](http://www.skype.com/security/guide-for-network-admins-30beta.pdf). ☎

2007 PBX Special Report, Part 2

**77% of Enterprises Plan to Have UM by 2010**

A virtual mailbox without a desk phone isn't cutting it for the adjunct or traveling faculty of Kirkwood Community College. Additionally, due to recent growth, the Cedar Rapids, Iowa, school needs more voicemail capacity than currently available from its refurbished, two-year-old Mitel Centigram.

But Mark Zuber, Kirkwood's telecom specialist, gives another, more personal motivation for moving his enterprise to unified messaging (UM) in March. After performing a job in which he is known for little more than maintaining the status quo, he says he's looking forward to being associated with a dramatic change in technology. "To actually see a cool feature come up, I definitely want to take advantage of the praise," Zuber says.

Your enterprise will be practically a relic if it doesn't make the move to UM within the next three years, reveal the results of *Voice Report's 2006-2007 National PBX Survey*. Of the 165 who responded and answered our question about their timeline for adopting UM, a full 77% say they will have it within three years. As many as 29% say they already have it, and another 21% say they will have it within one year.

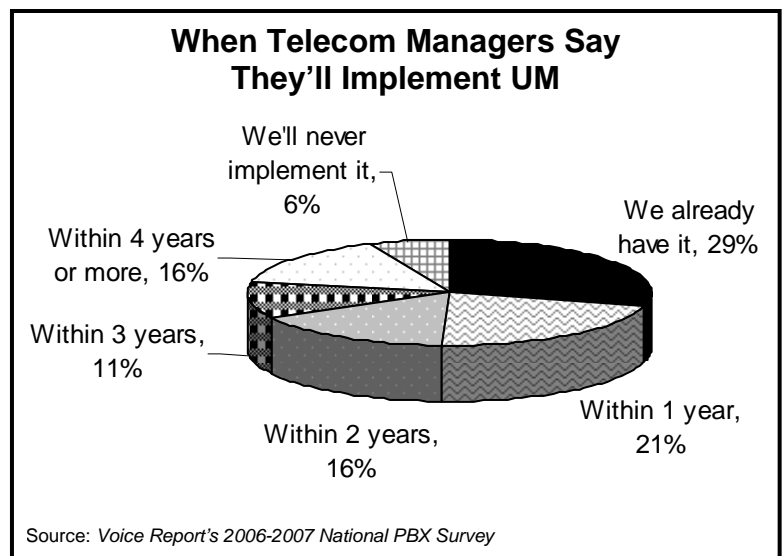
The winds of change are blowing even faster than was predicted by the 67-page research paper released by Santa Rosa, Calif.-based research analyst Blair Pleasant in November. [VR 11/13/06] Though Pleasant, who collected projections from vendors, resellers and other research, didn't predict the percentage of enterprises that would have UM by 2010, she projected a doubling of end-user sales from 2005 to 2010.

The 77% figure sounds high to Pleasant, the president and principal analyst for COMMfusion LLC. She suggests respondents may have been basing their answers on adoption of UM *features*, like find-me-follow-me or faxes in Outlook, that can be independent of a full-out UM system, rather than their timeframe for purchasing UM systems. Either way, the enthusiasm for UM is notable.

Signs pointing to a price drop for UM systems could speed adoption, Pleasant says. A November announcement by Microsoft that its UM product will sell for \$25 a seat will lower UM prices across the market, she says.

**45% Plan to Replace Voicemail Systems in Next 3 Years**

UM's hot streak dovetails with a widespread trend in replacing legacy voicemail systems. Thirty-one percent of *Voice Report's* PBX survey respondents say they have re-



placed their voicemail in the last three years, with another 45% due to replace their voicemail in the next three years.

The most compelling reason to switch? Nearly half of respondents (48%) reported “end of manufacturer support” as one of the motivating factors for replacement, while UM features tempted 40%. Note: Survey respondents were permitted to give more than one reason for replacing their voicemail systems.

Though PBX compatibility is one of the reasons Zuber gives for his voicemail system change, he doesn't plan to unload his Fujitsu switch for another five years and his new voicemail product won't be from a PBX manufacturer. Rather, his enterprise is all set to install CallXpress from Foothill Ranch, Calif.-based Applied Voice & Speech Technologies Inc. AVST boasts that its voicemail system comes with unlimited mailboxes and the option to retrieve e-mail over the phone [VR 11/13/06].

This makes Kirkwood's telecom manager somewhat of a maverick, *Voice Report* has determined in its research of voicemail RFPs. Many enterprises are addressing their voicemail needs on the back pages of RFPs written primarily for PBXs, our findings show. [VR 12/11/06]

But Pleasant says it is common for enterprises to purchase their voicemail from a separate vendor. In just 40% of the PBX purchases made from Avaya, for example, enterprises also are buying an Avaya voicemail system, she says she found in her research.

And AVST is still managing to make its case, says Tom Minifie, the voicemail developer's VP of product management. AVST sold 40% more unified messaging mailboxes in 2006 than it did in 2005, he reports. In cases

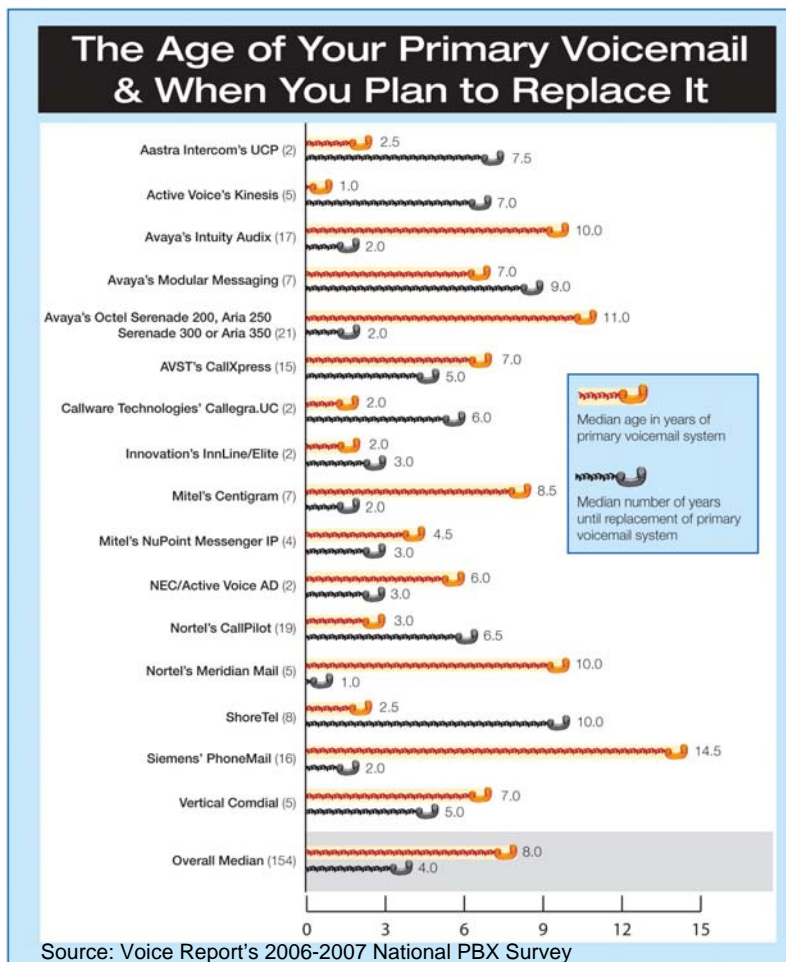
where enterprises are contemplating voicemail replacements, Minifie confirms that the decision usually comes down to buying a similar legacy system or upgrading. “UM is the something better,” he says.

**Microsoft is Feeding UM Fire, Too**

It's become a natural step for enterprises to incorporate the purchase of UM with a new voicemail system or PBX, reports Beth Meisel, customer development rep for Minneapolis-based systems integrator Avtex Inc. With the exception of a few branch offices, Meisel says every voicemail system she has sold in the last three years has had a component of UM. Interactive Intelligence Inc.'s Communité is Avtex's biggest seller, she reports.

Meisel sees Microsoft's announcement that Exchange 2007 will have UM capabilities as igniting the excitement.

Technological advancements in SIP and IP telephony also are driving UM forward, says Indu Kodukula, VP of Oracle's service delivery platform. While Kodukula



reports Redwood Shores, Calif.-based Oracle’s sales are in line with *Voice Report’s* projected adoption timeline for UM, he says voicemail replacement is a secondary driver. Instead, he says, enterprises realize the value of integrated communications.

But most enterprises that get UM deploy it slowly across the enterprise, reports Hardy Myers, CEO of AVST. The first segments of the workforce to get UM are likely to be mobile workers and remote workers, he says. “High-contact” workers – who receive 10 voicemails and 100 e-mails a day – are good candidates for early adoption, too, Minifie says. ☎

### Microsoft & Nortel CEOs Reveal UC Timeline

Nevermind the analysts; Microsoft’s and Nortel’s joint development of unified communications solutions is not “marketecture” or “chartware,” assert Nortel CEO Mike Zafirovski and Microsoft CEO Steve Ballmer. It’s for real, moving forward and high on Microsoft’s priority list.

To prove their point the two CEOs delivered a 90-minute status report with some details Wednesday at Rockefeller Center Studio 8H, in New York City, the same location where *Saturday Night Live* is filmed.

Though Nortel estimates it will net more than \$1 billion in revenue from the four-year collaborative effort first announced in July, Microsoft’s interest likely will wane as other opportunities become available for the software giant [VR 8/7/06], telecom analysts have privately speculated. That didn’t appear to be the case on Wednesday, however.

“Converged Office,” which was announced in February 2006, involves the joint branding and integration of Microsoft’s Live Communication Server 2005 and Nortel’s Communication Server

### Popular Voicemail Systems

Legacy voicemail platforms – including Octel, Intuity Audix, PhoneMail, Centigram and Meridian Mail – still make up almost half (43%) of the installed systems, according to the 154 respondents to identify their current voicemail system in our survey.

Avaya's Octel Serenade 200, Aria 250, Serenade 300 or Aria 350 (21 resp.)	14%
Nortel's CallPilot (19 resp.)	12%
Avaya Intuity Audix (17 resp.)	11%
Siemens' PhoneMail (16 resp.)	10%
AVST's CallXpress (15 resp.)	10%
ShoreTel (8 resp.)	5%
Avaya's Modular Messaging (7 resp.)	5%
Mitel's Centigram (7 resp.)	5%
Active Voice's Kinesis (5 resp.)	3%
Nortel's Meridian Mail (5 resp.)	3%
Vertical Comdial (5 resp.)	3%
Mitel's NuPoint Messenger IP (4 resp.)	3%
Aastra Intecom's UCP (2 resp.)	1%
Callware Technologies' Callegra.UC (2 resp.)	1%
Innovation's InnLine/Elite (2 resp.)	1%
NEC/Active Voice AD (2 resp.)	1%
Other (17 resp.)	11%
Source: <i>Voice Report's 2006-2007 National PBX Survey</i>	

### End of Support is Most Oft-Cited Reason To Switch Voicemail

When asked to identify the most compelling reasons to upgrade a voicemail system, 72 of 150 respondents to *Voice Report's 2006-2007 National PBX Survey* listed “support ended by manufacturer.” Many respondents gave more than one answer.

Reason	# respondents listing it as one of the most compelling reasons to change voicemail systems	% of 150 respondents to list it as one of the most compelling reasons to change voicemail systems
Support ended by manufacturer	72	48%
Unified Messaging features	60	40%
Compatibility with a new PBX	56	37%
Parts availability	39	26%
It is broken beyond repair	24	16%
Want more features	10	7%
Manufacturer incentive/comes with new PBX	3	2%
Need more capacity	2	1%
No plans to replace	2	1%
Source: <i>Voice Report's 2006-2007 National PBX Survey</i>		

## Attack of the Apple iPhone

**Keith Shaw**, the editor of *Network World's* weekly *Cool Tools* feature, had scarcely a moment to drop his bags after returning to his Massachusetts home from the Consumer Electronics Show, in Las Vegas. That's how quickly *Voice Report* Publisher **Jason Huffman** and Cellution CEO **Chuck Serapilio** had Shaw talking about the Apple iPhone and other, more enterprise-related technology that made its debut at the CES event. Click on [www.telecomjunkies.com](http://www.telecomjunkies.com) now to get the scoop.



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1000 to provide instant messaging, presence as well as telephony apps. Already in use at Royal Dutch Shell Group, among other enterprises, the offering will be available with Nortel's CS 2100 and CS 2000 beginning in the second half of this year, Zafirovski said. Also coming within the year, according to the CEOs:

✓ The integration of Microsoft's Exchange 2007 UM and Nortel's CS 1000 for unified messaging capabilities. It's expected in the second quarter. Exchange UM replaces traditional voicemail systems, using one directory to handle e-mail and voice messages, explains Greg Saint James, senior director of the Nortel Alliance at Microsoft, in an exclusive interview with *Voice Report*.

✓ The integration of Nortel's Multimedia Conferencing and Microsoft's Office Communication Server 2007 to create a single client for IM, presence and voice/video conferencing. The solution employs the functions of Nortel's Multimedia Communication Server 5100 as software running on OCS. Both OCS and the Nortel conferencing integration are expected to be available by the fourth quarter.

✓ The UC Integrated Branch Gateway, which extends the capabilities of Converged Office at a main office to remote locations without needing an OCS and Nortel PBX at every location. Expected in the fourth quarter, the product connects to the PSTN to enable basic telephony functions, like 911, even if the Converged Office at the heart of the network goes down, Saint James says.

✓ UC Contact Center, which will translate Nortel's current contact center into software to run on the OCS, so the OCS can become the main client application for IM, presence, VoIP and conferencing for call center agents. The two CEOs were vaguer on this product's timeline, noting it will be released "in subsequent years." ☎

### Where You'll Be Able to Kick Microsoft/Nortel UC Tires

Interested in checking out some of these UC developments as they become available? Nortel CEO Mike Zafirovski says there will be two collaboration centers, one in Raleigh, N.C., and another in Maidenhead, U.K. Two more collaboration centers are due to open by the end of 2007.

Though specific addresses have not yet been identified, Greg Saint James, senior director of the Nortel Alliance at Microsoft, says they will be great places to test phones, dial plans or contact center apps in person. Less in-depth, hands-on testing will be available at 20 demonstration centers worldwide, and another 80 demo centers will be added by mid-2007, Zafirovski says. ☎