News & Views on Real-Time Unified Communications

Lotusphere 2012: It’s all about Social Business … oh, and Cloud … and Mobile.

—Andy Nilssen, andyn@wainhouse.com

Thousands of the IBM faithful made the pilgrimage to Orlando last week for the annual update on all things about Lotus collaboration. IBM did not disappoint— the conference was first class as always, the execs and supporting troops made IBM’s strategy clear, and the direction was backed by offering announcements from IBM and partners. So let’s begin – and we’ll do our best to make four days of discourse brief.

Social Business. If there was a central theme, it was a focus on the offerings and associated value that enterprise social networking can enable when applied to businesses—or “Social Business” in Lotus-speak. IBM believes that Social Business can enable organizations to harvest the “collective intelligence” of their employees, partners and customers by discovering and sharing ideas, finding and augmenting skill sets, accessing and analyzing information, and collaborating on documents.

IBM made two major announcements at Lotusphere. The first, the announcement of the next-generation release of IBM Connections, directly reflects IBM’s laser focus on Social Business. IBM Connections (formerly Lotus Connections —more on branding shifts later) includes sophisticated analytics capabilities, real-time data monitoring, and faster collaborative networks both inside and outside the organization. The offering features a revamped user interface, where the now-typical Facebook-like news feed / activity stream is augmented with embedded applications that, when clicked on, appear to the right of the stream—so the user never has to leave his activity stream to get work done. The embedded apps use an open API and thus can be provided by IBM and third parties. Also new: calendar and email (from either an IBM Lotus Notes / Domino or Microsoft Exchange server) can be accessed via drop-down windows, again to retain focus on the Connections page. This is significant: With these additions, Connections not only rivals Notes as IBM’s “go to” work page, but puts muscle behind the IBM battle cry to “outlast Outlook.”

Connections displays on-line presence, and Sametime-based, real-time “rich communication” sessions can be started, for example, by clicking on someone’s profile or their business card. Sametime provides a comprehensive set of communications capabilities including VoIP and PBX-based audio, browser and native client-based web conferencing, and active-speaker HD multipoint videoconferencing. Sametime provides API’s for third parties to add extended features; in the Lotusphere opening keynote a Polycom-enhanced Sametime session displayed “Hollywood Squares” (3 x 3) video capabilities (see photo). IBM believes videoconferencing is becoming “strategic” in importance.

Cloud. The second major announcement at Lotusphere was the re-branding and expansion of LotusLive to the “IBM SmartCloud for Social Business.” The offering will augment the core LotusLive services to include IBM and third-party service offerings in commerce, analytics, and
industry-specific solutions like Smarter Cities—with an emphasis on ensuring the services are enterprise grade (security, manageability, compliance), and can co-exist with on-premises installations for hybrid deployments. A cloud-based productivity suite is in development that will enable users to co-edit documents in real time and assign sections to author or review to others, and includes author presence (one-up Google Docs?).

**Mobile.** IBM’s message on mobile is simple—mobile devices are quickly becoming the new design center for collaborative offerings. Mobile devices have created the opportunity to re-visit and simplify the user experience, with each device having its own UI personality and thus requiring its own client. For example, participants in Lotus Sametime meetings can join using a Blackberry native client or browser clients that are optimized for iOS (iPad / iPhone) and Android devices. The opening keynote also featured a short Sametime videoconference originating from an iPad (see photo).

**What Andy Thinks** — In many ways this Lotusphere indicated that IBM’s plan for the trifecta of Social Business / Cloud / Mobility is beyond vision and well into implementation—and delivering results. The conference featured several top-name customer testimonials on the value delivered (such as the TD Bank Group). Note also that, while UC is no longer center stage (as it was 4-5 years ago), UC has become an essential component—and relegated to the better position of being a supporting “feature” that is integrated into the Social Business offering. We also note the “reining in” of Lotus solutions—and the Lotus brand. What were once unproven, leading edge technologies from Lotus now play an essential role as mainstream IBM offerings and are being branded as such. One has to wonder how long this event will be called Lotusphere.
SMART Projects Something New
—Alan Greenberg, agreenberg@wainhouse.com

SMART Technologies has introduced its first interactive projector for education, the ultra-short throw **LightRaise 40wi model**. This is a pen-enabled, ultra-short-throw projector that allows for any surface to be turned into an interactive learning space. The LightRaise 40wi, which connects to a PC via USB or VGA cable, can produce screen sizes up to 100” (254 cm) in a widescreen format. Educators using the projector can access the SMART Exchange website, where they can share or download digital resources. In addition to a wall mount, the projector comes with a rechargeable interactive pen, pen holder, and necessary cables, and includes a 10-watt speaker and mic input as well as SMART Notebook software. This announcement occurred immediately after the announcement of SMART Notebook 11, which is included with all of SMART’s whiteboard technologies for the education market. Notebook, a tool for lesson creation and delivery (note well: 6 million licenses reportedly), now includes a new embedded web browser that allows educators to insert a live browser page directly into a SMART Notebook file. Users can then write, draw, and drag and drop content on the page. SMART Notebook 11 also features new gestures, supporting four-touch capability for the SMART Board 800 series interactive whiteboard and the SMART Board 8070i interactive display, and will be available as a free download to license holders or for purchase in spring 2012.

**What Alan Thinks:** The LightRaise 40wi is a bit of a shift in SMART’s offering mix, but a logical one. The history of this technology space has evolved from fixed whiteboards with projectors to kits that converted non-interactive whiteboards into interactive whiteboards, and now to solutions designed to create a collaboration

Coca-Cola Adding Fizz to the WR Collaboration Summit

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Just added to the **Amsterdam Summit** agenda, **Laurent Bonherbe**, Head of Telecom for Europe Group, Coca-Cola will share how the Coca-Cola Company meshes telepresence and visual communications within the organization. He will describe key success factors in implementation and how you measure the effectiveness in his perfectly titled talk, *It’s the Real Thing! How Telepresence and visual communications put the fizz into Coca-Cola.*

Laurent will join five WR analysts and consultants and a host of great vendor and end user speakers at the NH Barbizon Palace Hotel, 30-31 January. **Just some** of the other speakers include **Yorktel’s** Judd Cain on service strategies, Fred de Wit of **Securitas Services b.v.** on **TeleReceptionists**, **Dimension Data’s** Ian Heard on managed services, **Ecco Leather’s** Paul Oudenhooven on visual communications, Keith Woolley of **Montal** on HDFaces, Andreas Zenger of **Deutsche Telekom** on cloud conferencing, Julian Phillips of **Global Presence Alliance** on global standardization and universal adoption, Mike Valletutti of **AGT** on mobile visual communications, Rick O’Neill of **Maersk Line A/S** on adoption of UC&C, and **Videxio’s** Tom-Erik Lia on life in the cloud. Note other speakers by visiting the agenda—and see us in Amsterdam.

**SMART Projects Something New**

**Laurent Bonherbe**, Head of Telecom for Europe Group
environment anytime, anywhere. While the LightRaise 40wi isn’t exactly mobile, it certainly brings a versatile and lower-cost approach to installing whiteboards—one we’ve only begun to see in the past year or two from others. (It can be used with a traditional whiteboard or on any surface.) And it costs significantly less than standard interactive whiteboard / projector bundles. With Polycom’s introduction of the UC Board integrated with its group systems, and Luidia and Mimio delivering similar technologies sans short-throw projectors at slightly lower or similar price points, this appears to be a compelling combination designed to stem potential customer defections based on price.

Polycom Announces Cloud Strategy
— Ira Weinstein, imweinstein@wainhouse.com

On January 18th, Polycom announced the Polycom RealPresence Cloud—a new cloud strategy and offering designed to reduce the barriers associated with creating a Polycom-powered hosted collaboration service. In the past, service providers looking to offer a Polycom-powered service had to purchase, install, manage, and host a wide range of hardware and software infrastructure products on their network. The combined high up-front capital expense and ongoing operational expense (network costs, hosting fees, trained support resources, etc.) limited the playing field to medium and large providers and channel partners.

RealPresence Cloud is a turnkey service available as a white-labeled service via select Polycom partners. According to Polycom, key features of the RealPresence Cloud include video collaboration (a.k.a. videoconferencing with hosted video bridging), IM and presence, call control, universal access & security (a.k.a. NAT / firewall traversal), and resource management.

Polycom expects RealPresence Cloud to be of interest to small, medium, and large service providers and reseller partners as it allows those companies to quickly and easily deploy a hosted video service without the cost and risk associated with purchasing the required infrastructure equipment.

Polycom expects to beta the RealPresence Cloud service during Q2 with an anticipated GA release in June 2012.

Here’s What Ira Thinks: This is a wise move for Polycom. The company cannot afford to wait for the Tier-1 service providers to define their business models and roll hosted video collaboration services. Polycom also cannot run the risk that these providers will power their offerings with non-Polycom solutions. We especially appreciate that Polycom has chosen NOT to sell this service directly to end-user customers like arch-rival Cisco does with its Callway offering.

While we view this as a strong and necessary announcement for Polycom, we have a variety of concerns which we’ve covered in a research note (available to WR group video subscribers) released on January 18th called “Polycom RealPresence Cloud—A Bumpy Road Ahead.” For more information about WR’s subscription content, please contact sales@wainhouse.com
News in Brief

• Not to be outdone in the cloud, LifeSize has made available its cloud-based platform, LifeSize Connections, with a free 30-day trial for up to 10 users and 10 LifeSize rooms. The service features 9-way multiparty calling, data sharing and chat, NAT/firewall traversal, and interoperability between PC, Mac, and LifeSize endpoints.

• Business communications provider 8x8, Inc. announced that its total revenue for its third quarter of fiscal 2012 was $23.3 million, a 31% increase compared to the same period in the previous year and a 17% sequential increase compared to revenue of $19.8 million in the prior quarter. Total revenue from business customers, including hosted communications service revenue as well as cloud data revenue, grew 42% year-over-year and represented 93% of total revenue.

• Avaya announced its IP Office 8.0, a new version of the company’s UC solution for small and mid-size enterprises. The new version introduces a range of advancements for improving collaboration, including a set of mobile capabilities. The new mobility application now included—called one-X Mobile Preferred for IP Office—enables users to access a comprehensive set of unified communications capabilities on Android-compatible devices now, and on iPhones later this quarter. Key features of the mobility application include full multi-party conference management from mobile devices, integrated presence and IM, ‘geopresence’ for displaying location, and visual voicemail. As we were going to press Avaya also announced on January 24 its Avaya Flare Communicator for iPad. Complementary to Avaya’s one-X for smartphones and desktops and Avaya ACE for app integration, the Flare Communicator for iPad combines SIP communications with the iPad’s email, browsing, and other apps, and delivers voice, IM, presence, a contact fan, history, and conference access (not yet included but surely to come: video and web collaboration). The app can be downloaded from the Apple App store and deployed with the Avaya Aura 6.x foundation. And it works over both Wi-Fi and 3G networks. Avaya will be running several promotions this year, one through April 30 for a free 50-Aura client license. Another is an Executive User Add-on promotion from 6 February–30 September, offering 60% savings on US list prices and including Aura, Aura Conferencing, Avaya Flare Experience on the Avaya Desktop Video Device, Avaya Flare Communicator for iPad, and other services. Stay tuned for more WR coverage on Avaya’s announcements.

• Tamaggo, Inc., a Canadian-based consumer technology company, announced at the Consumer Electronics Show its Tamaggo 360-imager, a 14 megapixel device that captures a 360° x 200° field of view. Tamaggo licensed ImmerVision’s patented immersive optical technology. This earned Tamaggo recognition as a CES 2012 Design and Engineering Award Honoree.

• Continuing with CES announcements, TelePresence Tech teamed with Verizon Wireless and Alcatel-Lucent to showcase mobile commerce applications. Two TelePresence Tech 4G Kiosks demonstrated how 3D telepresence can be integrated with cloud computing and ultra-high bandwidth 4G LTE to create a new interactive personalized shopping experience for retail markets.

• Datatrend Technologies, an IT solutions provider based in Minnesota, announced at Lotusphere a Unified Communications and Collaboration appliance integrated with Glowpoint’s Virtual Video Room. The new solution provides an enterprise-grade HD desktop videoconferencing experience integrated with the collaboration capabilities of IBM Sametime.

• AGT launched a new global partner program designed to rapidly launch selected VARs, system integrators, and service providers into the mobile videoconferencing space. For qualified partners in the multi-tiered program, AGT will provide an app that can be branded for partners (or their end users) and enables them to integrate smartphones, tablets, and laptops into their new or existing service offerings. The program will enable partners to deliver AGT’s ENCORE UC Video Platform and Fathom HD.
• **VBrick Systems** introduced its next generation of video encoding appliances with its 9000 Series. The 9000 Series features two x 1080p60 or four x 1080p30 encoding, three encoding quality levels (baseline, main, and high profiles), and eight HD channels per rack unit and 44 HD channels per chassis. This enables more efficient video distribution from enterprise head-ends. The 9000 Series Encoding Appliance will be demonstrated at the upcoming ISE tradeshow in Amsterdam (need we remind you, immediately after the WR Collaboration Summit).

• Web conferencing and Learning Management System/Talent Management vendor **Saba** reported earnings, with $30.4 million revenue in its fiscal Q2, and a $0.16 GAAP-based loss per share. The company estimates fiscal 2012 revenues will range between $130 million and $133 million, with total billings growth of 16% to 18% over fiscal year 2011.

• Too good a story and too true to save for April, **Skype** and ruggedized iPads are being used for Wi-Fi video chats between orangutans, according to **Extremetech**.

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And Then There Were Ten

Last issue we promised a third new member, who brings us up to ten analysts and consultants. Joining Mark Mayfield and Scott Walters this month as new members of the team, we welcome Bill Haskins, who will serve as our new Senior Analyst covering Unified Communications. Well known in the UC&C industry, Bill will have WR’s principle responsibility for UC product and service coverage, providing content for subscriptions and acting as a consultant in this area. Prior to joining WR, Bill spent over 15 years delivering converged collaboration services within global communications companies. He has directed teams responsible for delivering hosted audio, video and web conferencing services and directed an IT organization responsible for a company’s enterprise collaboration services, including network, telephony, video, email, and their internal UC&C deployment. In these capacities, Bill has developed an expansive working knowledge of core UC&C vendor solutions and strategies, while supporting strategic relationships with multiple Fortune 50 enterprises. Based in Denver but serving clients globally, Bill earned his undergraduate degree at the University of Colorado, Boulder and his MBA at Colorado State University. He can be reached at BHaskins@wainhouse.com

Join the Group

If you are an end user of meeting room technologies, would you like to share your thoughts? Wainhouse Research will be conducting two online focus groups February 8th and 9th and invite you to participate. Visit www.wainhouse.com/mrfg for more information and to sign up. If you are selected and participate, you will earn a $50 Amazon gift certificate. No drawing, all yours!

People & Places

- Avaya, Marc Randall, SVP and GM, Networking; Gary Barnett, SVP and GM, Collaboration Infrastructure; Brett Shockley, Senior VP and GM Contact Center, UC, and Emerging Technology; Tom Mitchell, SVP and President Go to Market and Worldwide Channels
- Desire2Learn, Dennis Kavelman, Chief Operating Officer
- Internet2, George Loftus, Interim Senior Director
- LifeSize, Craig Malloy, Vice Chairman, and Colin Buechler, CEO
- RADVISION, Gaby Koren, GM North America, and Tom Henkel, VP Sales North America

New White Paper on Videoconferencing With MS Lync

Videoconferencing with Microsoft Lync is a new white paper from WR that provides readers with an overview of the options available in today’s market. While multiple vendors have approached this UC integration challenge with different technologies and architectures, the white paper lays out the major advantages and disadvantages of the two most promising approaches: direct Lync integration and Lync gateway deployments. Sponsored by RADVISION, this document is available as a free download.
UCP, AC Subscriptions

CSP Trends – SpotCheck Q3 2011
Quarterly reports that track historical trends in 12 major local collaboration service provider markets for audio and web conferencing, and video bridging services.

EDU Subscription

Market Sizing & Forecast 2011-2016: Lecture Capture & Streaming for Education & Training
This market sizing and forecast covers the worldwide market for on-premise products and hosted services / software-as-a-service (SaaS) lecture capture and streaming offerings as applied for education and training. A subset of the streaming and webcasting technology markets, lecture capture and streaming for education often include a specific set of features designed to enhance learning, be it to support distance education programs or — more frequently — brick-and-mortar or blended programs. This sizing exercise describes the amount of revenue that can be associated with education and training.

Company Profile: Promethean
Founded in 1997, Promethean is a publicly held British company that provides interactive learning technology for the education, corporate and government markets. The company offers interactive whiteboards and software, learner response systems, analytical tools, a social networking platform, mobile learning applications, training and support services, and an online community website for education exchange. Considered the number two player in the interactive whiteboard market, Promethean faces distinct challenges in growing as it faces the dual headwinds of reduced spending in primary / secondary education and a highly competitive marketplace.

VCP, GVC Subscriptions

Polycom RealPresence Cloud
RealPresence Cloud is a turnkey cloud-based offering available as a white-labeled service via select Polycom partners. While WR applauds the goals of the offering, this research note examines our concerns about the company’s readiness to offer a hosted service.

Two-Way Street: Acoustics in the Videoconferencing Room
Today’s high quality videoconferencing systems can offer a convincing visual approximation of same-room collaboration – provided that cameras and displays are properly calibrated and room lighting is optimized at both ends. These issues are highly technical in nature, but can be fairly easily addressed. Optimizing the audio experience can be a little more challenging, however. This research note discusses how best to optimize the audio experience and implications for end users.

Comparison Matrix – Multi-Codec (Telepresence) Systems
This comparison matrix includes information about leading multi-codec (telepresence) videoconferencing systems. These systems typically include 2 or 3 video codecs / videoconferencing systems, 2 or 3 cameras, and 2 or 3 video displays that work together as a single system providing a panoramic view of the remote site(s). Vendors include AVI-SPL, BrightCom, Business Octane Solutions, Cisco Systems, Dekom AG, Huawei, LifeSize, Magor, Polycom, RADVISION, and Teliris.

Rich Media Metrics: 2011 Videoconferencing End-User Survey
This annual study tracks end user attitudes, preferences, and buying/deployment trends for visual collaboration and conferencing products and services, with an emphasis on videoconferencing in particular. The report provides survey results for the current year and tracks some trends over multiple years.

WCP, PWC Subscriptions

WebMetrics 2H 2011 – Web Conferencing User Survey
Biannual research program designed to better understand user preferences and usage trends for web conferencing and related areas. Covered in this survey: Deployment model and purchasing preferences, measuring ROI, thoughts about mobile devices and team workspaces.

Comparison Matrix – Web Conferencing Offerings