Lotus. software

Collaborate at the speed of business.

Achieving greater productivity, responsiveness and agility with unified business communications from the IBM Lotus Sametime solution family.

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Introduction

Do it faster, better, cheaper. It's a message that businesses hear again and again, and it keeps getting louder. Organizations feel the pressure every day for higher productivity, more innovative ideas and lower operating costs. What's going to make it possible for your business to do more with less? A shift in the way we communicate and collaborate with one another.

Business communications are on an inevitable convergence path, with open standards making it possible to unify data, voice and video technology. The way we communicate is already simpler than it was a few years ago. Cell phones automatically log and save phone numbers. Text and instant messaging (IM) give us more ways to connect in realtime. Streaming video technology enables true videoconferencing. Unified communications will intertwine these capabilities and transform the way we conduct business. It will enable people to connect remotely and over the PC the way we do face-to-face — seamlessly. And the IBM Unified Communications and Collaboration (IBM UC²™) strategy is helping to make it happen.

What is the IBM UC² strategy? It's the integration of voice, video and data, combined with a full suite of IBM Lotus® collaboration tools, working together in new ways to help deliver exponential value to your organization. The Lotus tools facilitate easy, intuitive communications, and they contribute to increased business agility and productivity. They also provide a powerful platform that can help improve the way you work, without making you change the applications and processes you already use every day.

Making a UC² strategy a reality for your business

A unified communications and collaboration platform provides a better way to work. But organizations struggle with how to best integrate different components into a whole solution that hides complexity from users. You may be concerned that you'll need to rip and replace your existing infrastructure, telephony systems and applications — a disruptive and expensive option for your business. How can you implement a unified communications and collaboration strategy that truly integrates components to make collaboration personal, professional and efficient for real productivity gains and cost savings? And how can you get even more return on the investments you've already made?

IBM Lotus Sametime software: your on-ramp to a UC² strategy

IBM Lotus Sametime® software is the critical component of the IBM UC² strategy. An open, extensible platform, IBM Lotus Sametime software offers in-the-box capabilities that can be used on their own or integrated with a large ecosystem of third-party and custom applications. Lotus Sametime software is designed to work with the telephony, video and data infrastructures you already have, so you don't need to start from scratch. The right foundation to help you achieve better integration of multiple, multivendor business communications, Lotus Sametime software enables:

- *Simplicity. Give employees an intuitive, easy-to-use and consistent front-end experience, and one that knits together and masks the complexities of your heterogeneous back-end systems, including your telecommunications network, data infrastructure, video platform and core business applications.*
- Choice. *Enable employees to work the way they want, from just about anywhere, communicating however they want — IM, screen sharing, VoIP, persistent group chat, telephone calls or video.*
- *Security. Extend encryption to customers, partners and suppliers, providing peace of mind for your business.*

- *Cost and time savings.* Enable people to interact with one another across the business processes and applications they use every day. Improve your bottom line, your ability to innovate, your time to market, your responsiveness and your time to value for business initiatives.
- *Investment protection.* Integrate collaboration with multiple platforms, directories and clients to leverage your existing investments, without ripping and replacing systems or applications.
- *Extendibility.* Enhance the value of business processes and third-party applications — including Microsoft® Office applications, IBM Lotus Notes® software and IBM WebSphere® Portal software — by integrating IM, Web conferencing, and voice and video communications.
- *Flexibility.* Meet the needs of your organization, regardless of its size, industry or geography.
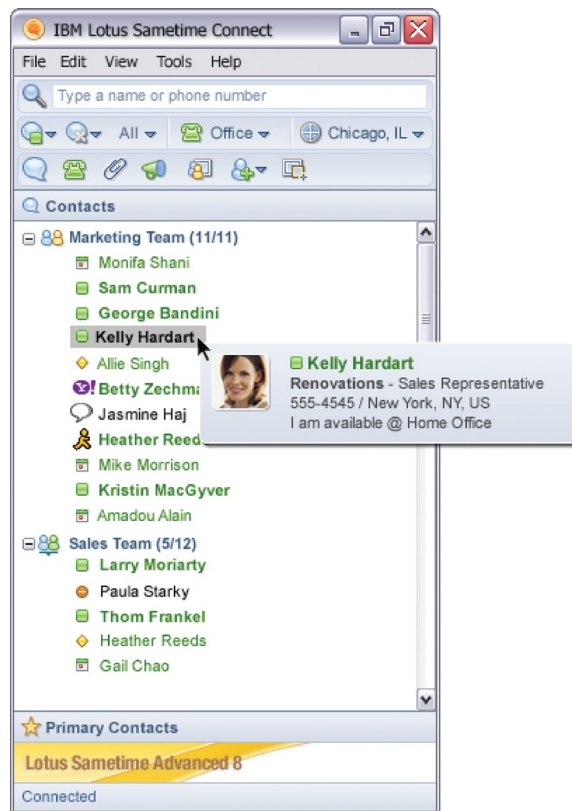

Figure 1. Instant messaging and presence awareness makes it easy to chat with colleagues within your organization, and contact lists can include "business cards" with pictures, so you can put a face to the person you're talking to.

"Lotus Sametime creates a community. The agents appreciate that they can instantly connect with [Celina employees] at the click of a button."

—Rob Shoenfelt, chief information officer, Celina Insurance Group

An insurance company reaches out in realtime

Consider the example of Celina Insurance Group. Celina, a relatively small mutual insurance carrier in the midwestern United States, needed to gain a competitive edge over larger carriers by integrating business processes, reducing expenses and improving customer service and support. By integrating Lotus Sametime software into its Web-based applications, Celina enabled its staff and external independent agents to collaborate in realtime. As a result, policies are turned around in days, not weeks, and phone costs have been reduced 50 percent.

The IBM Lotus Sametime family: the right solution for different business needs

Every organization has unique communications and collaboration needs. Your company may want to deploy secure IM and Web conferencing. Maybe you need to more tightly integrate IM with your other data communications. Or your organization may be ready to converge multiple systems—voice, video and data—into a single user interface.

No matter where you are on this spectrum, Lotus Sametime software can help you connect without boundaries. The members of the Lotus Sametime family—IBM Lotus Sametime Standard, IBM Lotus Sametime Entry, IBM Lotus Sametime Advanced, IBM Lotus Sametime Unyte™ and IBM Lotus Sametime Unified Telephony—can provide you with the right way to communicate based on your business needs. And because the Lotus Sametime family of offerings is based on open standards, you can further customize your realtime communications and collaboration tools to best fit your business.

IBM Lotus Sametime Standard software

IBM's industry-leading and award-winning flagship solution for realtime collaboration, Lotus Sametime Standard software enables you to:

- *Integrate IM and enterprise presence awareness—including dynamic geographic location awareness—into your work life, simply and cost-effectively.*
- *Communicate with colleagues on other supported IM networks—including supported public chat networks and other Lotus Sametime communities—at no additional charge and with the ability to manage and control how your employees communicate externally.*
- *Work where you want and how you want with extended support for Microsoft, Linux® and Apple Macintosh operating systems, as well as multiple mobile device types.*
- *Collaborate with remote users as if they were in the same room, with file transfer, screen capture and Web conferencing capabilities.*
- *Use VoIP, Web conferencing and video from within your collaboration tools.*
- *Integrate third-party services and business applications with an open plug-in model.*

Lotus Sametime Standard 8 software is the entitlement path for current Lotus Sametime customers. It delivers all of the features found in Lotus Sametime 7.5 software, while adding enhanced capabilities, including:

- *A better-than-ever user experience.*
- *Broader platform support.*
- *Increased performance.*
- *Easier administration.*

Lotus Sametime Standard software can also improve your ability to communicate with the business tools you use most, protecting your current investments by allowing IM features to be integrated into Microsoft applications. You can use presence awareness to see whether the author of a Microsoft Word document or Microsoft Outlook e-mail is online and available. And you can send an instant message to someone from within a document, Microsoft Excel spreadsheet or Microsoft PowerPoint presentation. This integration can enable you to save time and money, and extend the value of your favorite applications—making them more powerful business tools than ever.
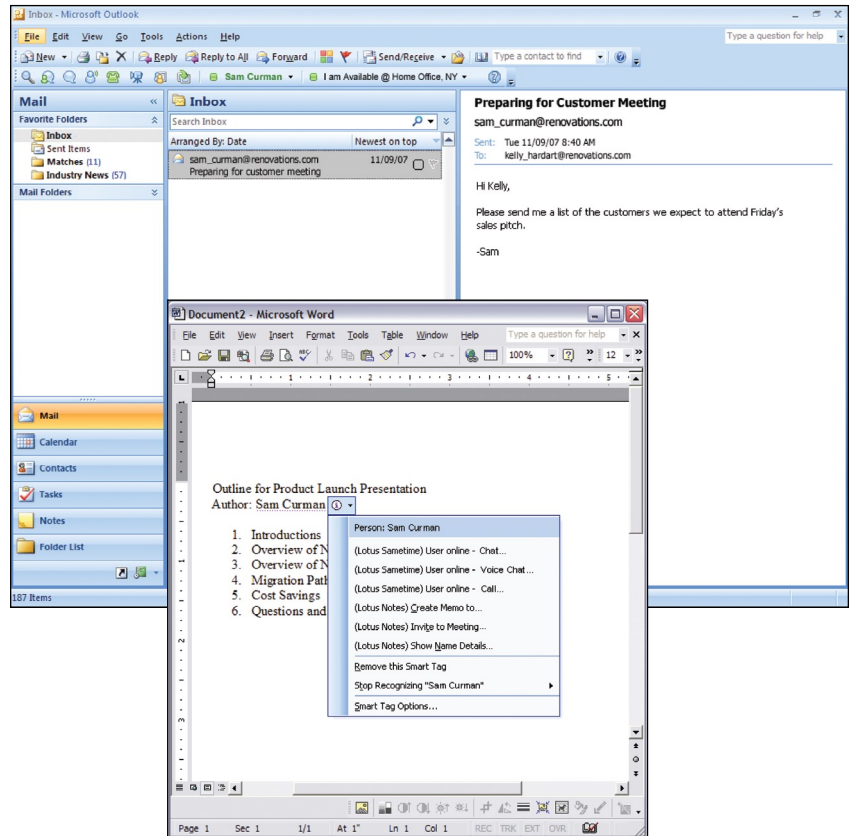

Figure 2. IBM Lotus Sametime software integrates IM and presence awareness capabilities into Microsoft Office and Outlook applications.

IBM Lotus Sametime Entry software

What if your business doesn't currently have IM features like the ones found in Lotus Sametime Standard and IBM Lotus Notes software, and you want to add IM to your communications tools and everyday applications? IBM Lotus Sametime Entry software can provide you with IM capabilities and extend your existing investments to include presence awareness, IM, rich text editing, encryption and authentication, and Microsoft Office integration—all at a cost-effective price point. Many businesses that use Microsoft technology are already enjoying the benefits of Lotus Sametime software, without overhauling their existing systems and applications.

IBM Lotus Sametime Advanced software

IBM Lotus Sametime Advanced software combines the features of Lotus Sametime Standard software with advanced personal, team and community collaboration capabilities. It can enable you to:

- *Search for experts and answers, even when you don't know who to ask.*
- *Capture and reuse shared knowledge, reducing the burden on subject matter experts and on your help desk.*
- *Provide a forum for teams to share information in realtime.*
- *Speed communication by instantly sharing your screen with your co-workers for document review or clarifications.*
- *Know where your colleagues—and experts—are at any given time, automatically, with geographic location awareness.*

Leverage one of your business's most valuable assets — employee knowledge
The features in Lotus Sametime Advanced software support collaboration driven by what people know, not who they know. Often, IM is a one-to-one form of communication, usually occurring between two people who already know each other. Lotus Sametime Advanced software expands this paradigm and fosters connections between people who don't know one another, but who do have the knowledge, expertise or information the other needs. You can get that information in realtime, and even save it for future reference. Several new capabilities, combined with the features found in Lotus Sametime Standard software, help you make the most of your company's tacit knowledge.

Persistent group chat

With the persistent group chat capability, you can keep a continuous discussion running on a specific topic with a related group of people in the atmosphere of an informal conversation. To stay connected and in the loop, you can monitor the chat rooms to which you have subscribed and set alerts so you'll be notified when a group is discussing keywords in which you're interested or when there is a certain number of unread messages or active participants. Step away from a chat at any time — when you rejoin, it's easy to get caught up with what the group has been discussing because the software features a built-in chat history of the entire

"There are five people in the Stock News chat group. Would you like to join this chat?"
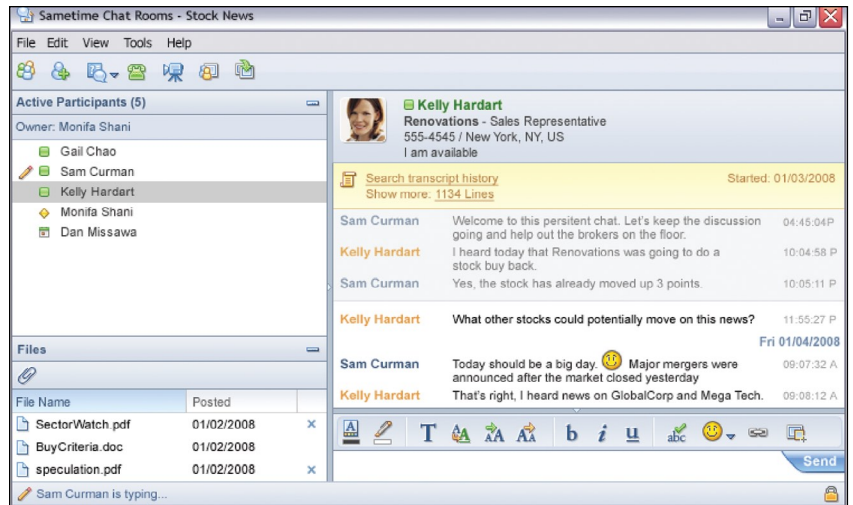

Figure 3. With persistent group chat, you can set alerts to notify you when a chat room you've sub-scribed to has a certain number of active participants or unread messages or when the group is discussing certain keywords.

conversation. You can save a group chat so that others can search for and see what you were discussing, and they can avail themselves of your group's insight and expertise. Plus, you'll be able to participate from anywhere, via Web browser or the IBM Lotus Sametime Connect software running on your desktop. Persistent group chat can help you keep in touch, stay in the loop and remain on top of what's happening in your organization.

Broadcast tools

Information and experts are often in places you don't normally look, or places you don't even know about. Broadcast tools can help connect you to those people and that expertise—in realtime—using several new tools:

"*My customer wants to speak to a company running version 8 on Linux—any suggestions?*"

- *Skill tap.* Make a realtime request for information. Community members and experts can chat with you to answer your request (or, sometimes, opt out of responding at all). You can optionally archive these conversations and rate the value of the answers, building over time an organic, searchable, reusable base of knowledge.
- *Instant poll.* Poll other community members to gather answers and opinions that help you make faster, more informed business decisions.
- *Broadcast chat and announcements.* Let the people who need to be in a conversation know about it. Or invite a certain group of people to join a group conversation. Or keep everyone informed in realtime with periodic announcements.

Broadcast tools can help you gain insight into the buried knowledge within your organization to keep people informed of important news and events—and enable them to work more effectively and be more productive.

"Does anyone here speak Korean?"
You can solve in minutes the problems that once stalled productivity. For example, an IBM technical support representative in the United States recently received an urgent technical support telephone call from an IBM customer in Korea. The customer didn't speak English, and the U.S. tech support rep didn't speak Korean. Using Skill Tap, the U.S. support rep was able to send a realtime request for help. In about 30 seconds, the U.S. rep got an answer from a bilingual IBM employee who agreed to join the call and translate—helping to solve the Korean customer's problem and keeping him happy.

Be one click away from collaboration
Lotus Sametime Advanced software also enables you to communicate more efficiently and make decisions more quickly with the following capabilities.

Instant screen sharing

Lotus Sametime Advanced software allows you to instantly share your desktop screen with your co-workers, providing valuable insight during a phone call or IM chat. Instant screen-sharing capabilities allow you to:

- *Share an application, portion of your screen or your entire desktop with others, in realtime.*
- *Share what you need to share without having to stop to schedule a Web conference.*
- *Allow your chat partner to drive your PC mouse or make changes to your on-screen documents with encrypted, behind-the-firewall security support.*
- *Enable tech support or your IT staff to instantly start up a remote desktop session to see a user's PC, troubleshoot a problem and, if possible, fix it.*

"Can I make a few edits to this?"

Let's say you have a sales proposal due to a customer in 30 minutes—and you just noticed an error in your pricing data. You start a chat with your colleague in accounting, and then instantly share your screen to show the mistake. You and the accountant can jointly crunch the numbers and edit the spreadsheet, correct the mistake and get back to business. You can revise your proposal and send it off within minutes.

Geographic location services

Lotus Sametime Advanced software can take the geographic location aware-
ness available in Lotus Sametime Standard software a step further by creating a
central, shared place to save location information (or even leverage other loca-
tion services, such as GPS). The enhanced location services in Lotus Sametime
Advanced software not only can show you where people are now, but can show
you where they were the last time they were online. Make decisions and get in
on what's happening now based on up-to-date location information.

IBM Lotus Sametime Unified Telephony software

Your business may be ready to capitalize on the value that a unified communi-
cations solution can provide by reducing costs and improving productivity. But
you may have multiple private branch exchange (PBX) environments and other
existing telephony investments, and you may be worrying that you'll need to rip
and replace these systems to realize the benefits of the IBM UC^2 strategy.

With the planned IBM Lotus Sametime Unified Telephony offering, you can pre-
serve your systems, get more out of your existing investments and cause minimal
disruption to the way you work. The Lotus Sametime Unified Telephony solution
helps integrate heterogeneous back-end telephone systems. And, at the same
time, you can provide a better experience to your employees, customers, part-
ners and suppliers with an easy-to-use and consolidated user experience.

As part of a unified communications and collaboration solution, the Lotus Sametime Unified Telephony offering can:

- *Reduce cost and complexity by integrating unified telephony with your existing systems, rather than forcing you to replace existing investments with a whole new solution. The software can also help you save on telephony costs by enabling employees to make calls via the integrated softphone.*
- *Improve ROI by extending the investments you have already made and breaking down the barriers that many organizations have between their IT and telephony deployments.*
- *Improve response time and efficiency with on-screen notification of incoming calls, the ability to route calls to the most convenient phone option, click-to-call and aggregated presence awareness indicating phone status.*
- *Simplify the way you work with rules and preferences that allow you to easily manage and route incoming phone calls based on personal preference, presence status, geographic location or calendar status.*

Add telephony capabilities to your most commonly used applications and support the way you already work. Use click-to-call or click-to-conference capabilities from within the Lotus Sametime client, the Lotus Notes client or a Microsoft Office application. Make phone calls on a built-in softphone to save time and reduce telephony costs. Streamline your call management process with incoming call alerts, robust call management and automated call routing to designated phone lines. See whether your contacts are on the phone or available before you call them.

"When my Lotus Sametime location shows I'm working from my home office, route incoming calls to my cell phone."

"I have a quick question—and need an answer fast."

You have a report due in two hours. You need clarification on an issue—and it's too complicated to work out over IM. With Lotus Sametime Unified Telephony software, you check your Lotus Sametime contact list to see that the person with the answer you need is available. You click to start a voice call with her using your integrated softphone. She's traveling, so the call is automatically routed to her mobile phone at the airport—without your having to know where she is or which number to call. You get the answer you need, you meet your deadline and you get back to business.

IBM Lotus Sametime Unyte service

With the IBM Lotus Sametime Unyte Web conferencing service, the Lotus Sametime family extends its communications and collaboration portfolio to give you the choice to use a service to hold Web conferences. The Lotus Sametime Unyte service makes it easy for organizations of virtually all sizes to collaborate inside and outside corporate intranets. Because the Lotus Sametime Unyte product is a Web-based service, it has no desktop footprint and is easy to access, use and integrate into the way you work. In fact, it's as easy as joining a conference call. What's more, you can get started immediately, without burdening your IT department. IBM has integrated the Lotus Sametime Unyte service with other members of the Lotus Sametime family to enable you to initiate Web-based conferences from almost anywhere.

IBM

Why IBM Lotus Sametime software?

Lotus Sametime software is one of the most-deployed enterprise IM solutions in the world, with more than 20 million licensed business users. Ground-breaking new features and almost limitless integration possibilities continue to earn industry accolades, including the 2007 NetworkWorld Clear Choice Award,[1] the 2007 Frost & Sullivan North American Unified Communications Global Excellence Award,[2] the 2007 Product of the Year Award from Unified Communications magazine,[3] and the Frost & Sullivan 2008 North American Enterprise Product of the Year.[4]

Why IBM?

A recognized industry leader, IBM can deliver an open and extensible platform that integrates rich realtime collaboration capabilities with communications services to create a unified experience for people on their desktops and mobile devices. Working closely with industry-leading partners in telephony and communications, IBM is providing comprehensive, compelling offerings that can work for businesses of all sizes. IBM has decades of communications experience that can help enhance and transform the way organizations communicate and work together.

For more information

To find out more about IBM Lotus Sametime software, contact your IBM representative or IBM Business Partner, or visit:

ibm.com/sametime

Endnotes

1 Barry Nance, "IBM Lotus Sametime serves up messaging any way you want it", NetworkWorld.com, ftp:// ftp.software.ibm.com/software/lotus/lotusweb/product/sametime/NETWORKWORLD.PDF

2 IBM, "IBM wins 2007 Frost & Sullivan award", http://www-306.ibm.com/software/lotus/sametime/frost.html

3 IBM, "IBM Lotus Sametime named product of the year by Unified Communications magazine", press release, March 18, 2008, http://www-03.ibm.com/press/us/en/pressrelease/23708.wss

4 IBM, "Lotus Sametime celebrates 10th anniversary with industry accolades", press release, March 7, 2008, http://www-03.ibm.com/press/us/en/pressrelease/23660.wss