

**Topic: Collaboration**

Issue: Who are the Collaboration providers and how will they compete?

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Avaya Acquires Esna to Collaboration-Enable Business Applications

Summary: *Avaya's acquisition of Esna is another in a slew of acquisitions by UCC players with the intent to embed communication and collaboration into business apps and processes.*

Event: On May 28, 2015 Avaya announced its acquisition of Esna, provider of a cloud integration platform for embedding communications and collaboration into business applications and processes. Terms of the deal were not disclosed.

Analysis

Avaya's acquisition of its partner Esna is a play to position itself as an integrator of communication and collaboration capabilities into any business application or process. The acquisition follows Cisco's move to buy Tropo, a cloud-based API and PaaS platform for building and embedding communication and collaboration into business applications. The horn sounds loud and clear here as traditional UCC providers make a push for integration into all business processes.

Communication and collaboration capabilities from UCC providers have traditionally been proprietary to their own technology stacks or platforms. As collaboration and other technology decisions move into the hands of business buyers, vendors realize they need to directly support business processes. CEBPs have failed to catch on in the UCC space because proprietary platforms prevented deep integration.

This move to further integrate with the processes and applications where business users actually work is a defining moment in the communication

and collaboration market, where the desire for specific business outcomes is beginning to drive technology decisions. Along with cloud and mobile enablement, collaboration is now at an inflection point.

Esna supports browser or web-based integration with many cloud collaboration and productivity services such as Office 365, Google Apps, Salesforce Sales Cloud and Jive. Esna is already an integration partner with Avaya's Aura platform and its Scopia Desktop video solution. It also integrates with other UC platforms such as Alcatel Lucent and Mitel.

Avaya believes this acquisition will help it to offer an integrated, Esna-enabled Avaya Communicator web client for Avaya IP Office and Avaya Aura platforms. This will directly enable video and voice capabilities to be embedded into public or private cloud-based business applications.

Esna has amassed a large number of business customers, especially those in the SMB space who use Google Apps. While Avaya does support Microsoft Office 365, we believe support for collaboration-enabling Google Apps is a strategic move to cover the full spectrum of cloud office productivity services that enterprises use.

A key problem for business users is context switching. Due to the lack of a universal identity across applications, people traditionally had to leave their business apps and switch to a collaboration platform to communicate, thereby losing the context of the interaction. The move to embed collaboration into business apps is a step toward fixing the lack of context that has plagued collaboration for years.

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Challenges and Opportunities

Avaya has a big opportunity here to move down-market with better support for SMBs. It also gets better traction with the growing number of Google Apps business users. We expect more UCC players to make similar moves to integrate collaboration into cloud services and business applications and processes.

Aragon Advisory

- Esna customers and partners should be diligent in getting full guidance from Avaya on a clear roadmap of its future plans.
- Enterprise planners looking to collaboration-enable business processes and applications should evaluate the integrated Avaya/Esna offerings.

Bottom Line

Several mega-trends are converging to cause dynamic changes in the collaboration market. Cloud, mobile and the growing API economy are taking communication and collaboration out of proprietary stacks and embedding them into the business applications, processes and services that people do their work in. This revolution has caused the ongoing emergence of business-led API architectures with measureable business outcomes as the driving requirement.

Related Aragon Research

- [The Aragon Research Globe For Web and Video Conferencing, 2014](#)
- [Cisco Acquires Tropo To Enter Communication & Collaboration PaaS Market](#)