
SteelCentral UCExpert

Global unified communications visibility for Cisco, Avaya and Microsoft environments

Business Challenge

Enterprise communication solutions are distributed systems made up of applications running on servers providing communication services to users with desk phones, conference video systems, and mobile applications. This collection of communication applications involving file/application sharing, presence, instant messaging, voice and video communications is known as unified communications or UC. Unlike other applications, voice and video calls rely on real-time media to traverse the network without significant delay or degradation in order to be effective. Users who experience poor audio or video call quality will have significantly reduced productivity and, especially when involving customers, impact their bottom line.

Major changes are occurring within enterprise communications in an effort to reduce costs and improve productivity. Rather than invest in upfront license fees and servers, enterprises are looking to move to cloud-based services where you pay monthly fees per employee for a set of UC services. In addition, employees are finding it cumbersome to use a desk phone for making calls when

they are accustomed to texting and using applications like Skype, Google Hangouts and WhatsApp in their personal life. As a result, enterprises are quickly changing to accommodate and provide similar capabilities in the workplace.

As the complexity of these UC applications increases, so does the management challenges. Traditional IT teams and roles that have led to infighting and finger pointing are only worsened in such a highly distributed application as unified communications. As organizations begin to adopt these advanced UC solutions, they need to carefully consider the ramifications on traditional IT roles and ownership. Now the data network, desktop support, Windows server and voice groups need to work collaboratively to ensure high-quality service and effectively troubleshoot user issues. Problem areas that used to be isolated to dedicated desk phones and PBXs are now significantly broader and can be caused by the shared data network, PC, mobile device, application servers, or even common user mistakes such as failing to use the provided headset.

In order to effectively understand adoption, performance, and to troubleshoot real problems, you need a holistic solution that can be used by the various teams. Without a single source of truth, it is easy to blame each other and never arrive at a resolution. Adopting the right UC management solution will be essential to ensuring success.



Riverbed SteelCentral UCExpert

Riverbed® SteelCentral™ UCExpert manages Cisco, Microsoft, and Avaya UC environments. It collects data from application servers, devices, and end-user experience reports to provide global visibility into the usage and performance of your communication system. SteelCentral UCExpert provides a multi-vendor, multi-tenant user interface that supports these vendors with common dashboards and troubleshooting workflows to drastically simplify your management costs and enable support and operational teams to quickly and effectively resolve performance and availability problems.

With SteelCentral UCExpert you can:

- Justify your investment by understanding UC performance adoption and usage
- Quickly identify root cause of network degradations, device errors or user mistakes
- Reduce number of escalations by enabling desktop support to be more self sufficient

By enabling your support organization to troubleshoot multi-vendor environments using common workflows, you are free to separate your UC vendor selection from your management solution. In this way, you eliminate the risk and cost associated with training your IT staff on multiple UC monitoring solutions while you adopt the best UC solution for your needs.

Using the common troubleshooting workflows users can:

- Quickly search for calls, media, phones across any vendor and time range
- Sort, filter and group by or across vendors to help isolate similar characteristics of failed or poorly performing calls
- Use hop-by-hop media path views to provide graphical illustration of the media path taken for calls to more quickly isolate the source of the problem on the network
- Easily compare data side by side to quickly identify what is different between similar calls, media streams or phones to speed root cause analysis

“Rather than waiting to hear from a user about a problem, we’re able to send an email out and say, ‘We know this is going on and we’re working on it,’ which helps the IT department be seen as proactive.”

Stalin Guilamo
Manager of Network and Telephony Operations,
Riverside Company

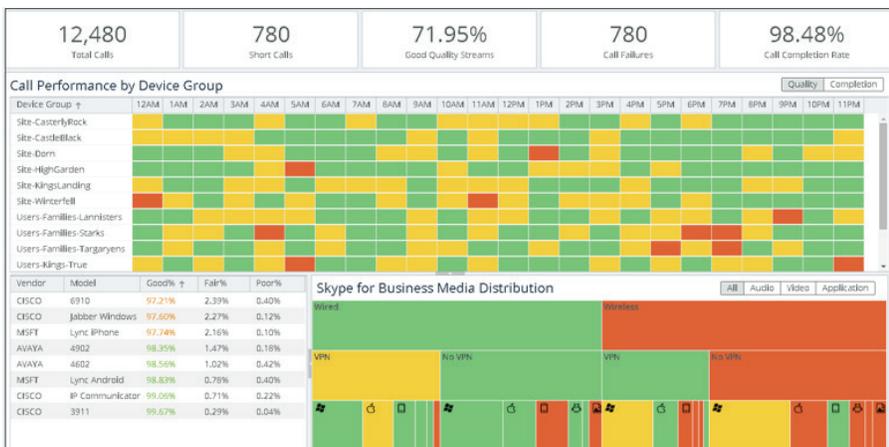


Figure 1
SteelCentral UCExpert provides at-a-glance views that allow you to quickly determine where and why UC performance issues are occurring without having to rely exclusively on packet capture devices in every office.

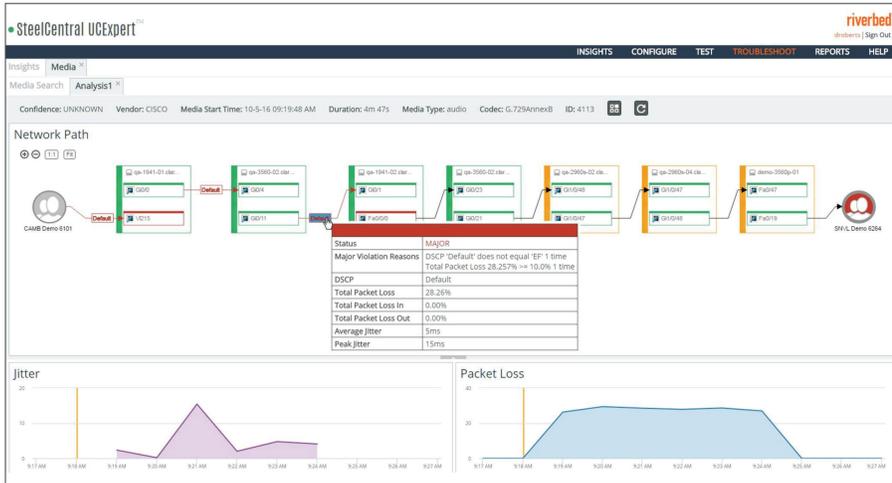


Figure 2

SteelCentral UCExpert's Intelligent Path Analysis streamlines troubleshooting of network and infrastructure-based unified communications issues from within the UC workflow. Intelligent path analysis pulls relevant performance and QoS metrics from SteelCentral NetProfiler and NetIM.

Key Benefits

Improve productivity

- Reduce end-user troubleshooting involvement
- Solve problems faster
- Improve team collaboration

Reduce costs

- Centralize support staff, reduce escalations
- Understand usage, eliminate unused technology
- Consolidate point management tools

Protect investments

- Ensure consistent, high-quality, end-user experience
- Prevent outages before business continuity is impacted
- Gain insight into adoption patterns to adjust promotion and training programs

Key Features

SteelCentral UCExpert provides a multi-vendor, multi-tenant user interface that supports Microsoft Lync/Skype for Business, Cisco and Avaya unified communication solutions. The dashboard provides an at-a glance view of overall UC performance when one or more unified communications solutions are deployed, allowing users from across IT (network, desktop support, Windows server and voice groups) and line of business managers to easily view information about usage, adoption and performance and to troubleshoot call issues using common workflows and common terminology.

Multi-vendor, multi-tenant dashboard

- Supports Cisco, Avaya and Microsoft Lync/Skype for Business in a single user interface, providing an at-a glance view of overall UC performance
- Allows users to easily view information about usage, adoption and performance by location
- No need to train users on different tools or even different terminology for each vendor

Common troubleshooting workflows and terminology

- Quick search for call, media, or phones/headsets across any vendor and time range
- Easily characterize whether issue is caused by network, device, or end-user mistake
- Easily compare data side by side to quickly identify what is different between similar calls, media streams or phones to speed root cause diagnosis
- Use hop-by-hop media path views to provide graphical illustration of the media path taken to more quickly isolate the source of the problem on the network

Business intelligence reporting

- Call Accounting—Call History, User Statistics by Group, Top N Called Numbers
- Adoption—Call Volumes over time by vendor
- Performance—Call Quality Summary and Detailed Media Analysis

Configuration management

- Performs daily snapshots of the UC environment configurations
- Detailed inventory and exception reporting to allow auditing and compliance adherence
- Differential reporting between any two points in time to identify configuration mistakes

Automated testing

- Ability to control deployed phones and generate real, single and multi-point calls
- Verify availability following deployment, after major changes, and as a nightly health check
- Prevent end-user outages by verifying complete end-to-end call routing from the end-user perspective
- Test for security and compliance violations (900 and Toll Fraud) and voice recording verification

Remote troubleshooting

- Remote phone control to troubleshoot without end-user participation
- Provide controlled access to configuration, call history, and media performance to support staff
- Compare working and broken phone configurations side by side to identify problems

Intelligent path analysis

- Simplifies troubleshooting of network and infrastructure-based UC issues
- Intelligent path analysis pulls relevant performance and QoS metrics from SteelCentral NetProfiler and NetIM
- One click drill down into SteelCentral Portal, NetIM and NetProfiler for fast troubleshooting of network and Infrastructure-based UC issues

Performance monitoring

- Alert on problems in voice quality, service availability, performance, security, capacity and other key performance metrics
- Monitor devices for server health to understand CPU utilization, disk space and standard usage patterns
- Generate historic reports for SIP trunk utilization, call admission control bandwidth, device registration and more so you can gain visibility into resources and adjust as needed

Product specifications

SteelCentral UCExpert is available as a Linux-based software package or virtual OVA image. All data is collected programmatically via standard, vendor-supported APIs.

Support for Cisco Unified Communications

- Unified Communications Manager 4.x-11.x
- Unity Connection 5.x-11.x
- Contact Center Express 7.x-11.x
- Presence Server 7.x-10.x
- Immersive Telepresence Availability Testing Monitoring & Reporting

Support for Avaya Aura Communications

- Quick search for call, media, or phones/ Communications Manager 5.2-6.x
- Enablement Services 6.3

Support for Microsoft

- Lync 2010, Lync 2013
- Skype for Business 2015

About Riverbed

Riverbed, at more than \$1 billion in annual revenue, is the leader in application performance infrastructure, delivering the most complete platform for the hybrid enterprise to ensure applications perform as expected, data is always available when needed, and performance issues can be proactively detected and resolved before impacting business performance. Riverbed enables hybrid enterprises to transform application performance into a competitive advantage by maximizing employee productivity and leveraging IT to create new forms of operational agility. Riverbed's 27,000+ customers include 97% of the *Fortune* 100 and 98% of the *Forbes* Global 100. Learn more at riverbed.com.

The logo for Riverbed, featuring the word "riverbed" in a bold, lowercase, orange sans-serif font.