

IMPROVING CUSTOMER INTERACTION AND PRODUCTIVITY.

a study of Headset benefits in a unified
communications environment

OVERVIEW

In a service environment, people need to collaborate in order to provide an outstanding customer experience based on the fast, efficient provision of accurate information. A growing number of organisations are adopting Unified Communications (UC), which integrates email, telephony, instant messaging, voicemail and web conferencing in a single system.

Jabra UC-optimised headsets are designed to help users make the most of key UC features including the improved sound quality offered by wideband. Their handsfree nature also seeks to help staff realise the full benefits of collaboration during calls and make it easier for wearers to initiate a voice call in response to multi-channel communications, such as an email.

This paper presents the results of an independent study into the use of UC-optimised headsets, which investigated the impact of a UK organisation's move from handsets to headsets in a UC environment and the resulting benefits.

METHODOLOGY

In August 2010, Jabra commissioned an independent study, carried out by Dr Max Blumberg, Goldsmiths College, University of London, to investigate the benefits of headset use over handset use in a UC environment.

UC-optimised Jabra headsets were provided to 40 employees performing a variety of job roles at Newport City Homes, a charitable organisation in Gwent, Wales, and the study participants asked to replace their UC handset with a Jabra UC-optimised headset.

KEY FINDINGS

UC-optimised headsets provide optimum conditions for high quality customer interactions:

- 50% reduction in typical call length
- Daily savings of two hours through reduction in call handling and wrap-up
- Increase in first call resolution
- Wideband sound so the wearer can hear and be heard by the customers
- Easy multi-tasking during calls to boost productivity
- Realising the potential of collaboration opportunities afforded by a UC environment

Participants typically spent up to three hours a day on the phone and handled 20 calls per day. As many as 90% said their jobs required them to multi-task most of the time or all of the time during calls.

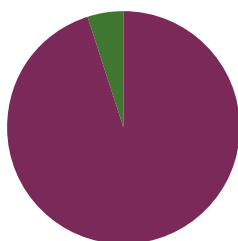
THE BENEFITS OF UC-OPTIMISED HEADSETS

The Jabra study investigated the impact of using UC-optimised headsets in a UC environment, compared to the experience of using handsets. Four key areas were studied: user productivity; the user experience; the ability for users to collaborate with colleagues and the customer experience.

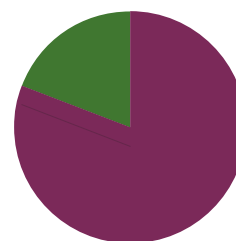
The study provides conclusive evidence that UC-optimised headsets can deliver real productivity gains to businesses, which result in greater employee and customer satisfaction.

THE IMPROVED SOUND QUALITY OF THE JABRA UC-OPTIMISED HEADSETS HAD A POSITIVE IMPACT UPON THE QUALITY OF CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIPS.

95% of participants said they believed the poor quality sound delivered by the handsets had a negative effect on customer relationships



81% agreed that the sound quality of the new headset leads to better customer relationships than the sound of their old handset.



Significant productivity gains

Headsets boost productivity by shortening call time, call wrap-up and total time spent on the phone. Users can handle more calls and a higher proportion of queries can be resolved in a single phone call.

- UC-optimised headsets reduced typical call length by up to 50%
- Overall time taken to handle a call, including wrap-up, was reduced by 33%
- Users who typically make 20 calls a day saved up to six minutes per call, resulting in two hours of productivity savings
- 62% said headsets made it easier to achieve first time customer call resolution

"You can wrap up the call, keep that person on the line and you don't have to call back"

Fully utilising the UC environment

Headsets are an enabling factor in realising the potential of UC to extend the working environment away from the office. Headset users agreed the most convenient aspect is the ability to make use of other UC functions while on a call, gaining easy access to information for the customer and reducing the amount of time spent trying to find colleagues using UC presence functionality.

- 95% of participants found it easy or very easy to switch between different UC functions during calls, compared to just 42.5% with handsets
- Over 75% of participants agreed that headsets made control of features like volume, mute and call termination easier

"I feel I'm getting more out of UC with my headset than I ever have"

Increased ability to multi-task during calls

Handsets inhibit the ability of users to multi-task during calls, but headsets ensure users have their hands free for typing and using UC functions to collaborate, so calls are completed quickly.

- Just 45% of participants said it was easy to multi-task using a handset
- 80% of participants found it easy to multi-task when using a headset

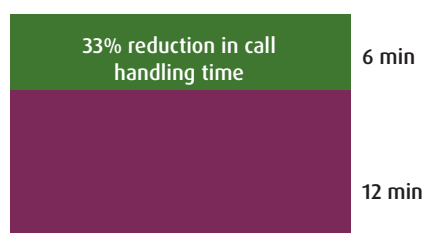
"I need both hands to use the keyboard and talk to a person at the same time...the headset is invaluable"

Improved call quality

Users agreed that headsets can enhance the value of a voice interaction over other forms of real-time communication. Headsets also deliver much better sound quality, with users feeling they could hear better and also be heard



THE JABRA UC-OPTIMISED HEADSETS PRODUCED SIGNIFICANT PRODUCTIVITY GAINS



- The Jabra UC-optimised headsets reduced typical call length by up to 50% and wrap-up time by 12% as compared with handset use
- The Jabra UC-optimised headsets reduced the overall time taken to handle a customer call, including call wrap-up, by 33%, as compared with handsets
- Users who spend up to three hours a day on the phone, were able to save a total of 6 minutes per call with the Jabra UC-optimised headsets, resulting in possible savings of up to two hours in a typical day

more accurately because of noise-cancelling that reduces background noise.

- 84% said they could hear callers far more clearly using a headset
- 81% said they could be heard more clearly by customers
- 81% agreed the sound quality of the headsets leads to better customer relationships



"I work in an open plan office which can get very, very noisy...the ability to cocoon yourself from the office and concentrate on the person on the phone is a lot easier with the headset"

Greater user satisfaction

The overwhelming majority of study participants said their experience of using Jabra headsets had been positive

- 94.5% of participants were satisfied with their headset compared to just 54% who were satisfied with their old handset
- 90% maintained they would not go back to using handsets given the choice

"All in all, having the headsets is a very positive experience"

CONCLUSION

The growth of the knowledge-based economy and the service sector, together with pressure on IT departments to streamline processes and create operational efficiencies, means that Unified Communications is rapidly gaining ground as organisations seek to reduce IT costs and boost employee productivity.

UC provides a common communication structure for businesses, integrating features such as presence (real-time staff availability), instant messaging, VOIP telephony and email through a single software system, making it easier and more cost-effective for employees to collaborate.

Implementing software is, however, only part of the UC story. As this study proves, Jabra UC-optimised headsets can ensure that businesses realise a full return on investment in UC, by providing the optimum conditions for high-quality customer interactions, enabling companies to provide an outstanding customer experience based on the collaboration opportunities afforded by a UC environment.

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ABOUT GN NETCOM

Through its Jabra brand, GN Netcom is a world leader in innovative headset solutions. With around 900 employees and sales offices around the world, GN Netcom develops, manufactures and markets a broad range of wireless headsets and speakerphones for mobile users and both wireless and corded headsets for contact centre and office-based users. GN Netcom's business activities also include its original equipment manufacturing (OEM) business. GN Netcom is a subsidiary of GN Store Nord A/S.

For further information, please visit www.jabra.com