



Service Provider Builds Competencies Around Key Architectures

Frontal Communication uses synergies between collaboration and data center practices to provide better customer service.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Partner: Frontal Communication



Country: Romania

Company size: 50 employees

Accreditation: Cisco Gold Partner, also participating in ATP Programs for Unified Computing System and IP Video Surveillance

Challenge

- Customer spending decreased
- Customers seeking smarter investments
- More competition among service providers

Solution

- Build business with broad skillset
- Implement applications cost-effectively with Cisco Unified Workspace for Partners
- Incorporate lifecycle approach into sales strategy

Results

- Completed three successful deployments with clients in government and financial services sectors
- Customers reduce costs by not having to maintain aging equipment
- Customers realize lower total cost of ownership through integration of services

Challenge

Frontal Communication is one of Romania's leading providers of ICT solutions and systems integration services. From its headquarters in Bucharest, the company has steadily built an impressive list of clients from the enterprise, financial services, government, education, and service provider sectors.

As expected, Frontal has noticed some major changes in the marketplace. "The economic downturn had a huge effect," says Bogdan Constantinescu, managing director of Frontal Communication. "PC sales pretty much halved, while telecommunications spend fell by around 40 percent. Enforced budget cuts mean that our customers are looking for smarter investments. But, there's more competition than ever before. On the flip side, we are seeing opportunities, for example, as the roles of service providers and a systems integrators begin to merge."

Solution

Fortunately, decisions taken by the company several years ago have significantly improved its chances of winning in a tough market. Since becoming a Cisco® Gold Partner in 2008, Frontal has focused on building its technology competencies and expertise around three Cisco architectures: security, data center and cloud computing, and unified communication and collaboration (UC&C).

"Our strategy is to be the most competent Cisco partner, with the broadest skillset, by focusing on key architectures," says Constantinescu. "As well as providing differentiation, we

believe this sends out a strong message about our commitment to our customers. It also helps us to attract and retain the best people."

Frontal entered the cloud computing market in partnership with OmniLogic when it recently launched OmniVCloud, the country's first cloud computing offering. Moving forward, the intention is to develop a portfolio of solutions that will appeal to a wide variety of customer business models. Aligned to [Cisco Data Center 3.0](#) architecture, Frontal also helps to construct and run data center operations, for example, by more closely integrating and better utilizing technologies from Cisco, EMC, and VMWare.

“We spotted a great synergy between our UC&C and data center practices. Using our DC expertise and experience in delivering managed UC, we will be extremely well positioned to help customers on their journey to future, cloud-based collaboration services, like unified communications as a service (UcaaS),” says Constantinescu.

–Bogdan Constantinescu, MD, Frontal Communication.

“You need to offer a true end-to-end service, whether that is helping customers to build their own facilities, or to get the best from cloud-based applications,” says Constantinescu.

Unified communication and collaboration is also an important part of Frontal’s strategy for growth. Since deciding to move from a previous relationship with another voice vendor to Cisco, the company has never looked back. “As a company we believe in using the technology we sell. So, to kick-start the partnership, we migrated our own voice infrastructure over to Cisco UC,” says Constantinescu.

Thanks to the Cisco Unified Workspace for Partners program, Frontal was able to implement the full range of collaboration applications in a very cost-effective way. Using the UC tools has also unlocked new business benefits. For example, productivity and sales conversion rates increased at the same time, as account managers began to build knowledge and confidence.

However, the real secret of Frontal’s success is following two proven business principles: giving your customers greater choice and supporting their various business models.

Incorporating a [lifecycle approach](#), based on Cisco’s PPDIIO (Prepare, Plan, Design, Implement, Operate and Optimise) model, into its sales and delivery strategy has helped to grow Frontal’s traditional integrator business. “We now offer a wide range of value-added services to support customer projects, from site surveys and net readiness audits, through to preparing the business case and low-level designs, and delivering operational support,” says Constantinescu.

Working with Romtelecom, the partner has also developed a fully managed Unified Communications service. The new solution provides a powerful three-way win:

- For the service provider, it helps to manage customer churn and protect valuable call revenue.
- For the Cisco partner, it helps to drive new conversations and sales opportunities.
- For the customer, it consolidates contracts (with multiple fixed and mobile operators) and reduces costs per user (by centralising management and reducing call charges).

Results

The Cisco UC managed service is proving to be a big hit. Frontal and Romtelecom have already completed three successful deployments with clients from the government and financial services sector. One of those customers, Raiffeisen Bank, is the subject of a separate Cisco best practice case study.

“Raiffeisen Bank is a great example,” says Constantinescu. “Before, we would have tried, and probably failed, to persuade the customer to swap out their technology. But, by offering more integration and adding services, they could instantly see the benefits of the business case.”

Importantly, the five-year deal will allow the bank to accelerate the modernisation of its branch network. The new solution will serve 540 branches and support IP telephony for 3500 users, 3200 mobile users, and 2000 wireless electronic point-of sale terminals. Other benefits include a lower total cost of ownership. Instead of paying several hundreds of thousands of Euros to different providers, the customer will receive one single invoice for 68 percent of the previous monthly total. That’s a total saving of several million Euros over the life of the contract.

The move will also provide other cost reductions, for example, by eliminating the need to send engineers to customer sites to maintain aging private branch exchange (PBX) systems.

Constantinescu is left in no doubt: "We won because we were able to put a better deal on the table," he says. "The customer is also happy because they have a project that will pay for itself in just under a year. That's what we mean when we talk about adding value."

For More Information

To learn more about the Cisco Unified Workspace for Partners program, go to www.cisco.com/go/uc



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