

The Bigger Picture

According to **David Dadds**, Managing Director at **Vanilla IP**, it's time for everyone to look at the bigger picture. Dadds says that as the growth of business applications continues at exponential rates the real challenge for the reseller is not just how to manage the different applications/services available but the whole ecosystem.

Comms Business Magazine (CBM): How can service providers differentiate their offerings these days?

David Dadds (DD): The days of a portal that does only one element, for example provisioning, are limited as this means the resellers has to knit everything else together which typically involves multiple, manual time consuming process, higher staff cost and greater chance of errors.

Hence the growth of Smart Portals like our Uboss where rather than having individual portals for vertical product set like Access, Broadsoft HPBX and inbound, the Smart Portal brings all these services seamlessly together via APIs.

Importantly, layered on top of these services is a rich set of powerful unified features like single data entry from provision to bill, hardware fulfilment, analytics and network monitoring. This is available to the Distributor, Reseller and Business that gives true Self-Service in all respects.

For example, Uboss can seamlessly bring together the Broadsoft telephony portfolio, TalkTalk network services and connectivity, Kakapo Call Centre applications and more. Whatever services the user consumes is automatically provisioned and billed

We believe that differentiation for channel partners is important in this market. White label is not just about being able to add a logo on the portal page. It's about the partner owning all elements of the service from the branding to service and package mix including bringing in their own services down to the URL used to access the portal.

VanillaIP provides tools for our channel partners that allow them to decide upon that differentiation where the end result of having Uboss orchestrate all those services is that the functionality and features for all services look and feel like an integrated single feature set.

All that remains for the reseller to add to this mix is a salesperson steeped in the skills and ability to understand and determine customer need – a requirement growing in importance as buyer knowledge expands. Being a professional salesperson means knowing your product well and to remain relevant, resellers must be able to educate and advise their users.

The bigger picture is therefore all about selling services that customers will use, growing the average revenue per user (ARPU) and being comfortable doing this in any environment – SME and Enterprise.

Without this, resellers run the risk of providing the customer only the opportunity to buy a solution and not the solution!

Resellers supply customers with what they believe are best in class services which they can support themselves. Part of our methodology with Uboss is the ethos to support multivendor solutions where we can bring competitive products in to the bundle. This way the resellers can package

products and services for simple SMB solutions as well as say sophisticated call contact centre applications.

CBM: What are your views on the Cisco acquisition of Broadsoft?

DD: It's good news. It will allow Broadsoft to focus on building best of breed solutions rather than having to keep one eye constantly on Wall Street.

The fact of the matter is that dial tone is no longer the most important part of a communications solution – it's just an element in a mix where applications are key. Broadsoft is a rock-solid telephony platform in the centre of a much more diverse range of requirements the user needs such as collaborations tools.

Those with a PBX heritage will know that back in the day all applications were proprietary – designed, developed and built by the PBX vendor. Today, all the solutions are software based and built to open standards where no single supplier, even say Microsoft, has the capability to build all the best solutions.

Cisco's stated commitment to the Broadsoft Service Provider community was good to hear when the initial announcement was made about the acquisition back in October 2017. We believe this is the right strategy and will fully leverage the strengths of all stakeholders.

