

## Microsoft Lync Buyer's Guide

Microsoft Lync is a Unified Communications solution that integrates VoIP calling, instant messaging, live meeting and video conferencing. Lync is interoperable with almost any PBX and provides exceptional call quality (both voice and video) without special network accommodations. Microsoft Lync also integrates with Microsoft Exchange, SharePoint and Office, which can bring user presence information to team sites and enables instant messaging and phone calls to be initiated easily.

Before worrying about the many options for compatible and optimized Microsoft Lync hardware, it's important to determine what users need from their Unified Communications Solution, as well as the goals of the organization contemplating installing the solution. Although traditionally Lync and other Unified Communications solutions were designed for use in large enterprises, more and more small and medium-sized business are finding the productivity and communications benefits of Lync worthwhile.

### Who is Microsoft Lync For?

For many years of its existence, Microsoft Lync has been considered a solution for big businesses only. Now, however, Microsoft Lync is more accessible and practical for small and medium-sized businesses. The following types of SMB may be considered a good fit for utilizing the benefits of MS Lync:

- Information worker intensive
- Organizations already utilizing Cisco, ShoreTel, MEC or another type of 2<sup>nd</sup> Buyer PBX
- Consulting Firms
- Microsoft Partners
- Financial Services Organizations
- Architectural firms
- Certified Public Accountants (CPAs)
- Professional Services
- Organizations requiring an integration of business processes and a communication solution



### “Optimized” vs. “Compatible”

Microsoft utilizes a Compatible Devices Program that qualifies devices for Lync client on Windows-based systems. When using non-windows clients, users may evaluate the product lines offered by device manufacturers that are members of the Compatible Devices Program. Microsoft certifies devices that are “optimized,” which provide the best possible experience with the integration with Lync features, and “compatible,” devices, which often deliver plug-and-play compatibility, or minimal provisioning by network administrators. Lync-compatibility ensures basic features will be accessible, but not necessarily from the interface on the device.



### Lync Optimized Devices

IP Phones, headsets, conference phones and video conferencing systems, along with other hardware devices that are Optimized for use with Microsoft Lync are designed to deliver the best experience with Microsoft Lync.

Products bearing the *Optimized for Microsoft Lync Logo* have been tested to ensure they deliver the quality, compatibility, and reliability that give users the best Microsoft Lync experience. These devices offer many benefits to users based on the commitment level from Microsoft's partners. Manufacturers producing "Optimized" devices:

- Have a dedication to long-term interest in developing products for the Lync platform.
- Has a proven record of developing and marketing enterprise-grade systems.
- Have TSANet membership, to ensure product support.

Microsoft conducts all testing for Microsoft Lync Optimization, to ensure compatibility.

## Lync Compatible Devices

Microsoft Lync Compatible devices are interoperable, and deliver a quality experience without the use of gateways. Compatible devices are generally IP phones, video conferencing systems, headsets and webcams that work with Lync but do not offer advanced functionality or access to features from the device itself. Lync Server 2010 is backwards compatible with products qualified for Microsoft Office Communications Server 2007 R2, excluding new Lync 2010 features.

## Hardware

Microsoft Lync installations often are best utilized by installing Lync-optimized and Lync-compatible hardware. Hardware for Lync is available for desk phones, headsets, webcams and more.

### Desk Phones: IP or USB

IP Desk phones are available from manufacturers at various price points and with different levels of functionality. For lower-cost IP phones, users may need to sacrifice some of the higher-end functions, but that may not be a hindrance in a variety of situations. The snom 300 UC edition, a Lync-compatible IP phone, will be the least expensive option for Lync interoperability, but it cannot be used for presence information.

Mid-range IP phones may be Lync compatible or Lync Optimized. The snom 821 UC edition is Lync compatible, whereas the Aastra 6721ip, and Polycom CX 500 are Lync Optimized. All of these phones deliver more functions, but still may lack access to the advanced features that require a more elaborate display.



**Polycom CX300**

USB phones for use with Microsoft Lync are also available for mid-range prices, and are all considered Lync Compatible. These USB Lync Compatible phones include the snom UC600, Plantronics Calisto 540, Polycom CX300 and Polycom CX 200. USB phones are ideal for users who want to feel as though they are using a desk phone, but want to utilize the Lync PC client. USB phones optimized for Lync deliver plug-and-play functionality and can be controlled through the computer interface.

The high-end executive, Lync Optimized, IP phones include the Aastra 6725ip, and Polycom CX600 and CX700 boast large, full-color, high-resolution displays that offer features such as integrated video

sharing applications and transferring phone calls to a mobile phone when a user is out of the office or not at their desk. The snom 370 UC edition is also a high-end IP phone, which is Lync Compatible.

## Headsets: Wired, DECT or Bluetooth

All headsets for use with Microsoft Lync are Lync Compatible. Headsets do not offer direct access to Lync features, but are compatible with features such as presence information.

Microsoft Lync certified headsets are readily available at any price point and for any user application. For interoperability with multiple devices, such as a desktop phone, mobile phone and softphone client, a Bluetooth headset, such as the Plantronics Voyager PRO UC, the Jabra GO 6430, or the Plantronics Savi Go is recommended.



**Plantronics Savi Go**

DECT headsets are ideal for users who need a wireless headset, but don't necessarily require connectivity to a mobile phone. DECT headsets offer a wider range of mobility and are available from Plantronics and Jabra in many different styles for maximum comfort.

Wired headsets offer the most convenience for users who are at their desk all day. With wired, or corded, headsets, users are able to benefit from easy connectivity, and never have to worry about an undercharged battery. Lync Compatible corded headsets include the Jabra GN2100 Telecoil, which is optimized for users with hearing aids, the Plantronics Blackwire C620-M, ideal for regular conference-call

participants, and the Jabra UC Voice 250 MS, which is a low-cost, highly portable headset that works well for video conferencing.

## Computers

Computers optimized for Microsoft Lync include desktops from Lenovo, desktops and laptops from HP, and laptops from Dell. Using a PC that is optimized for Microsoft Lync will ensure that workers can use all of the tools and features of Lync without the need for any USB peripheral.

## Conference Phones

Conference phones and systems from Polycom are optimized for use with Microsoft Lync. The CX3000 from Polycom is a Lync-optimized device ideal for the executive office or conference room as a lower-cost conferencing solution. The CX3000 has an integrated dial pad and controls, and can be paired with a PC or connected via Ethernet.

## Video Conferencing Systems and Equipment

In order to qualify for Microsoft Lync interoperability, video conferencing systems must first meet specific requirements, including:

- Being able to deliver 720p HD video quality
- Wideband audio quality
- Multiparty video conferencing capabilities with Microsoft Lync AVMCU
- The capability for Firewall Traversal



**Polycom CX7000**

- Encrypted and secure video and audio calls
- Presence capability for video endpoints
- Provides access to other protocols, such as H.323, H.261, and H.264

The Microsoft Lync Interoperability Program tests and qualifies video solutions to ensure interoperability with Microsoft Office Communications Server 2007 R2 and Microsoft Lync Server 2010, which will deliver a high-quality experience for users. Microsoft Lync delivers compatibility with three types of video solutions:

**Video Teleconference (VTC)** – A video endpoint will register directly with Microsoft Office Communications Server 2007 R2 and Microsoft Lync Server 2010 to and provides a seamless user experience, which allows users to initiate video calls to the VTC with just one click.

**Multipoint Control Unit (MCU)** – Multipoint control units enable multi-party video conferencing by offering the use of a virtual room or video bridge where various parties are able to connect. Such virtual rooms/video bridges show up in the Office Communications Server and Microsoft Lync contact list, which enables users to connect and participate in multiparty video calls.

**Gateway (GW)** – A gateway will allow connection between different networks, and provides Microsoft Lync access to different protocols to make video calls. Since Microsoft Lync uses SIP for signaling and H.263 and RTVideo as the video codec, gateways can provide the access required for interoperability with other protocols such as H.323, H.261 and H.264.

## Lync Optimized Video Conferencing Systems from Polycom

Polycom is the only manufacturer currently producing video conferencing equipment and systems optimized for use with Microsoft Lync. By using Lync Optimized systems and equipment, users get the most intuitive, integrated experience to receive the highest quality communications and collaboration experience.

### Polycom CX Series

The Polycom CX5000 HD is a unified conference station that can also serve as a conference phone. The CX5000 features a touch screen, high resolution camera, backlit graphical LCD as well as a full dial pad and controls. The CX5000 will provide remote participants with 720p HD active-speaker video that will automatically track the flow of conversation, as well as provide a 360-degree view of the room.

The Polycom CX7000 is also optimized for use with Microsoft Lync, and provides a multi-way collaboration experience. The CX7000 delivers HD Telepresence technology that enables Lync users to collaborate naturally.

## Lync Compatible Video Conferencing Systems from Polycom

Polycom also offers Lync Compatible systems to deliver a seamless experience with Lync users. Polycom's HDX, RealPresence Group and RPX systems are all Lync interoperable. These systems can provide up to 720p resolution when used with an RTV license.

### Polycom HDX Series

The HDX Series Video Collaboration Systems from Polycom includes Lync-interoperable systems. HDX systems natively deliver CIF, 352 x 288 resolution when used with Microsoft Lync. However, purchasing an RTV license, available from Polycom, up to 720p resolution can be achieved, delivering HD video communications.

The HDX 7000 from Polycom is a Lync-interoperable system that offers HD video conferencing and Telepresence, ideal for education, medical, and other on-demand environments. The HDX 7000 also delivers high-quality rich media presentations, making classroom presentations more effective.

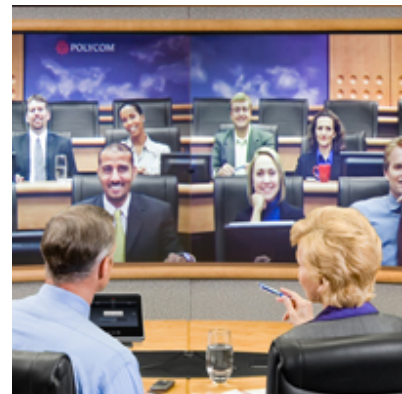
Polycom's HDX 8000 is also Lync-interoperable and designed to provide access to on-demand video communication in a flexible, robust solution.

The HDX 4000 series includes Lync-interoperable systems that will turn any personal workspace into a virtual collaboration environment. The HDX 4000 is available in two versions: the HDX 4002, which includes a 20" screen, and the HDX 4500, which comes with a 24" LCD display.

The Polycom HDX 6000 delivers simple connectivity with HDMI output for easy connection to any HD displays. The HDX 6000 is Lync-interoperable and provides a high-quality experience on any network. The HDX 9000 from Polycom offers a high-impact experience; whether it's being used in a conference room, lecture hall or executive suite.

### **Polycom RealPresence Group Series**

Polycom's new RealPresence Group Series, including the Group 300, Group 500 and Group 700, bring effective collaboration along with broad interoperability. Polycom's Group Series delivers native interoperability with Microsoft Lync, as well as full 1080p60 content and video to deliver a high-quality experience. Group Series systems even support previous investments in Polycom technology, such as microphones, and the EagleEye Director. The Polycom RealPresence Group Series delivers the broadest interoperability available, even with non-Lync users.



***Polycom RPX***

### **Polycom RealPresence RPX**

The Polycom RealPresence Experience (Polycom RPX) offers an immersive Telepresence solution that is Lync-compatible and delivers the HD quality required by executive meetings, board meetings, trainings and more. The RPX offers true-to-life dimensions, which allows participants to accurately see facial expressions, make eye contact and read body language. Polycom RealPresence RPX is ideal for executive meeting spaces.

### **LifeSize Lync Compatible Video Conferencing Systems**

LifeSize UVC Video Engine enables HD video calls through your LifeSize system over Microsoft Lync.

LifeSize is a cost-effective, standards-based, interoperable solution designed for use by organizations large and small that are looking to take advantage of video communications.



***LifeSize Passport***

#### ***For Small Groups and Individuals***

The LifeSize Passport is interoperable with Lync and delivers HD collaboration, ideal for users working from remote areas to collaborate at a minimum expense. With LifeSize Passport, users benefit from interoperability with Microsoft Lync and Microsoft Office Communicator, as well as interoperability with Skype for easy collaboration with more users.

The LifeSize Express 220 is an HD video conferencing solution compatible with Microsoft Lync. The Express 220 can support dual displays and a Full HD camera while utilizing low bandwidth usage.

### ***For Flexible Deployment Options***

The Room 220 from LifeSize is a Lync-interoperable, Full HD video communications system that will enable high-quality collaboration with 8 total participants. Users are able to choose whether to focus on the primary speaker, or the most active four. Room 220 comes with an 8-way multipoint bridge that will show four visible sites. The LifeSize Room 220 is compact, yet powerful, making it a useful solution for office deployments or even larger conference rooms.

### ***Dual Displays***

The LifeSize Team 220 supports dual displays, which can allow you to see participants on one screen and information on the other. Team 220 is interoperable with Microsoft Lync and uses low bandwidth while delivering a crisp, clear data sharing.

## **Benefits of Using Lync with Video Communications Solutions**

As video conferencing becomes more important to organizations, and teams become more distributed, Lync Server 2010 steps in to unify and simplify the user experience. Microsoft Lync allows the incorporation video into a unified client. This unified client makes scheduling an online meeting, or spontaneously switching from audio-only to video, much more easy to do. Lync Server 2010 will support a variety of video conferencing options.



### ***Polycom CX5000 HD***

leverage existing video conferencing hardware while simultaneously taking advantage of the UC platform.

### **Seamless transition**

Lynch 2010 makes it easier to add video to a standard voice call. Lync delivers enhanced support for audio and video devices, and users experience improved collaboration with an easy-to-use interface.

### **Panoramic View and Active Speaker Detection**

Lync 2010 will support 360-degree panoramic view of a meeting room. Whenever there is more than one participant on one end of a call, Lync can detect and display the active speaker in the video window.

### **Supports HD Video**

Lync supports High-definition (720p) video and VGA video (640 x 480) on peer-to-peer calls between users both running Lync 2010. The resolution delivered to each participant may vary due to the capabilities of their individual machines. High-definition video cannot be supported in multiparty calls.

### **Interoperability with Other Systems**

When using Lync Server 2010, users may communicate using various endpoints from other hardware providers. This allows users to

## Webcams

Microsoft offers several webcams that deliver great results when used in conjunction with Microsoft Lync. Webcams are ideal when using the desktop video client from Microsoft Lync.

### *For the Road Warrior*

Laptop-mountable cameras are ideal for mobile employees who need to be able to work from anywhere. The Microsoft LifeCam HD-6000 is designed for laptops with a custom laptop mounting mechanism and a short cable that doesn't get in the way. The HP HD-3100 and HD-3110 webcams can also be used on laptops, and deliver up to 720p30 video resolution.

### *For the Executive Office*

Executive offices often require on-demand small group or individual video conferencing, without having to sacrifice quality. The LifeCam Cinema from Microsoft delivers HD 720p video at up to 30 frames per second for a fantastic video conferencing experience. Logitech offers the B990 HD Webcam, which includes integrated microphones in addition to 720p HD video, and the B910 HD webcam, which boasts the highest-quality face-to-face communication experience available from a webcam.



**Logitech B990**

### *For the Budget-Conscious*

The LifeCam VX-2000 is a VGA camera, which offers a cost-effective solution for desktop video communications, delivers the compatibility with Microsoft Lync required for plug-and-play interoperability.

## Lync-Certified Manufacturers

Certain manufacturers have partnered with Microsoft to engineer optimized hardware that compliments your Microsoft Lync Unified Communications Solution.

### AudioCodes

AudioCodes addresses large enterprises, and enables delivery of products and services on a global basis for gradual migration and rapid adoption of Microsoft Lync.

### Dialogic

Microsoft Lync Server 2010 delivers future-ready, software-powered VoIP that will deliver more streamlined communication to end users. Dialogic products integrate with existing messaging and telephony infrastructure. Dialogic Media Gateways will link PBX, IP and PSTN voice networks to Microsoft Lync Server 2010.

### Logitech and LifeSize

LifeSize, which is a division of Logitech, delivers the LifeSize Passport and the entire LifeSize 220 line of products, all of which are fully interoperable with Microsoft Lync. The integration of LifeSize HD and Microsoft UC platforms will enable users to connect over video from LifeSize to the desktop, and vice versa.

## Net

NET (Network Equipment Technologies) offers a modular 1U system designed specifically for Unified communications. Net's UX2000 is qualified as a Survivable Branch Appliance for Microsoft Lync 2010.

## Plantronics

Plantronics offers audio devices that enable people to communicate effectively and comfortably regardless of location thanks to easy installation with little to no configuration. Plantronics devices offer compatibility and high-quality audio at a variety of price points. All Plantronics products are optimized to seamlessly integrate with Microsoft Office Communicator 2007 and Microsoft Lync 2010.

## Polycom

Microsoft and Polycom work together to deliver interoperable UC solutions with devices designed to transform enterprise communications by integrating voice, video, instant messaging and conferencing solutions.

## More Information

Still have questions? Contact the friendly sales staff at Video Conferencing Supply for answers. We'd love to help you find the perfect Lync-enabled video conferencing equipment for your organization.

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