Microsoft Lync delivers a combination of communications technologies and collaborative tools over the IP network, including voice, videoconferencing, and Internet Messaging that create a unified communications infrastructure available wherever you have network connectivity. Microsoft Lync enhances business processes by embedding communications capabilities into everyday business applications, such as the ability to chat with others directly off your website or make a telephone call through an IP soft-client on your laptop. Through these capabilities, enterprises can benefit from improved business agility, accuracy and speed, and this leads to increased revenue opportunities, lower capital and operations expenses, and higher productivity.

Meeting the Needs of Microsoft Lync

Business applications are being designed, built and deployed in completely new ways to take advantage of these new communications-enabled work environments. This places new and significant real-time requirements on the corporate network, which is especially true when the applications are delivered across the Wide Area Network (WAN) and Internet connections.

Microsoft Lync delivers the challenging task of offering seamless cooperation among:

- Telephony systems (fixed, mobile, and IP)
- Messaging systems (voice mail, e-mail, web mail, and instant messaging)
- Conferencing systems (audio and video)

All of this real-time dependent traffic must be delivered on an infrastructure that also transports other business-critical applications. The network must now protect the needed bandwidth of latency sensitive applications such as voice and videoconferencing, and control the use of non-business critical and unsanctioned applications.

How to Make Your Network Microsoft Lync-Ready

Blue Coat PacketShaper delivers the real-time network visibility and control required to ensure high-quality delivery of Microsoft Lync applications across the distributed enterprise and Internet.

Leverage Application-Level Visibility, Monitoring and Control

PacketShaper’s visibility and control simplifies the move to Microsoft Lync by giving you unmatched, real-time application-level discovery, monitoring, and control of all traffic across the WAN and Internet connections. With this robust network intelligence you can protect business-critical applications such as voice and video from bandwidth-hungry recreational or malicious applications. Protecting the right applications helps give your users a seamless, high-quality experience and speeds up the return on your Microsoft Lync investment.

Optimizing Microsoft Lync to Help your Network Deliver on the Benefits of Unified Communications

Enterprises are searching for ways to improve and differentiate their products and services, invest in revenue generating initiatives and increase productivity. They want to improve customer, partner, and supplier relationships while holding investment costs to a minimum. Communications technology has played a significant role in helping enterprises achieve these goals.

The evolution of high performance Ethernet network infrastructure has enabled the emergence of Unified Communications (UC). Unified Communications provides a unique opportunity to create a communications-rich business that can significantly increase productivity, reduce time-to-decision, and simplify communications. The results are to contain costs while improving customer, partner, and supplier relationships.
Identify and monitor all the applications on your WAN and Internet Links

PacketShaper provides network visibility and control that enables you to identify all the applications in your environment with the ability to auto-discover over 700+ applications – including specific Microsoft Lync (and Office Communications Server) functionality such as Voice over IP (VoIP), instant messaging and video. You can then monitor essential performance metrics and quality indicators of each function, including jitter, loss, and latency – the key inhibitors to high-quality voice and video when they exceed certain thresholds. You can also monitor server and network response times, utilization, efficiency, and many other metrics.

The information creates a baseline of all applications and their bandwidth utilization over time, which allows you to understand whether an application is on your WAN or coming from the Internet, the bandwidth it consumes, and the level of quality it performs at.

Apply Blue Coat policy controls to optimize your UC applications

With this baseline established you are then able to apply Blue Coat's intelligent traffic-shaping and policy controls to Microsoft Lync and other applications. These policies allow you to:

Protect latency-sensitive traffic through dynamic partitions that ensure real-time applications such as voice and videoconferencing have the right amount of bandwidth they need to ensure high-quality performance on a per-call or flow basis.

Control how much bandwidth is allocated to different applications through intelligent policies that assure business-critical applications have the bandwidth they need to perform at their peak.

Optimize the use of your WAN and Internet bandwidth by controlling how much bandwidth non-business critical or recreational traffic consumes to ensure current infrastructure is utilized according to business priorities before you invest in WAN link upgrades.

Summary

Enterprises that want to transform business processes to become more productive and efficient, and gain a competitive edge, see Unified Communications as a means of reaching these goals. However, they face challenges to assuring that users across the distributed enterprise can benefit from a high-quality Microsoft Lync experience. Blue Coat offers a unique solution to optimize your network for the delivery of these communication-rich applications to any user, on any network, anywhere.