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Competitive Analysis Series: Microsoft Lync
LifeSize® 220 Series and LifeSize® Passport™, Powered by LifeSize® UVC Video Engine™ for Microsoft® Lync™

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Microsoft® Lync™

Overview

LifeSize 220 Series (Room, Team and Express) and LifeSize Passport room systems are the only products to date to pass Microsoft's Video Endpoints qualification program with Office Communications Server 2007 R2 (OCS). (See http://technet.microsoft.com/en-us/lync/hh239758.) Official qualification with Lync™ 2010 is expected in July 2012 and means LifeSize has passed the strict and rigorous testing procedures at Microsoft's labs. To date, no other video vendors, including Polycom, have qualified their products with Microsoft's Lync Video Endpoints qualification program.

The new LifeSize UVC Video Engine for Microsoft Lync works with LifeSize 220s and LifeSize Passport to enable HD video collaboration with any Lync-enabled users (Mac or PC). LifeSize UVC Video Engine is purpose-built to seamlessly integrate with LifeSize 220s and Passport in Lync environments. Together, they deliver the HD-quality meeting-room experience you expect from LifeSize, now with Microsoft Lync.

LifeSize Competitive Advantages Summary

1. **HD Quality**—Enjoy the LifeSize HD video experience you know, now in your Microsoft Lync environment.*
   - Lync RTVideo support allows HD 720p video calls for natural, face-to-face interactions.
   - This support also enables higher quality video calls than are available with Microsoft Lync AV MCU, which is limited to VGA.

2. **Flexible**—Deploy and grow on your terms with either hardware or virtual machine software options.
   - Select from room systems to fit various meeting spaces and locations. LifeSize solutions that work with Lync span form factor, sizes and prices so that customers can enable various meeting rooms and home workers on the systems of their choice.
   - UVC Video Engine is delivered via the LifeSize UVC platform with scalable licensing for growth.
   - Easily deploy and manage with web-based management and server administration.

3. **Interoperable**—Collaborate seamlessly with native Lync integration.
   - Native registration of LifeSize room systems with OCS/Lync ensures simple, easy setup and use.
   - LifeSize room systems connect to PCs and Macs through Lync.
   - LifeSize room systems push presence to the OCS/Lync Contacts list for click-to-call functionality from OCS/Lync clients to LifeSize room systems.
   - LifeSize endpoints utilize Microsoft Edge servers for firewall traversal, providing reliable calling and greater security.
   - LifeSize helped Microsoft develop its Video Endpoint qualification program.
   - LifeSize, along with Microsoft, is a founding member of the Unified Communications Interoperability Forum (UCIF).

4. **Continuous-presence**—Embedded MCU in Room 220 and Team 220 room systems provides continuous-presence video with Lync.
   - LifeSize is the most cost-effective, continuous-presence bridge for Microsoft Lync.
   - The embedded MCU provides up to 4-way HD calling and supports a mix of SIP, H.323 and Lync.

What Is UCIF?

The Unified Communications Interoperability Forum (UCIF) is leading the technical working group to define the future of interoperability between leading unified communications solutions providers. Standards that are established inside that forum will be implemented by LifeSize and Microsoft in future releases of LifeSize products to maintain interoperability with Microsoft's road map for Unified Communications.

*HD on Lync requires a quad-core PC at 2.7 GHz or higher and an HD webcam.

Advantages of LifeSize embedded MCU capabilities

LifeSize

The highest quality, most flexible and most cost-effective option for continuous-presence HD calls with Lync. Embedded multipoint control units (MCUs) in LifeSize Room 220 and Team 220 work seamlessly with UVC Video Engine to provide all of the following, at the same time:

- VGA and HD video calling with Lync using RTVideo
- Four-way continuous-presence video with any combination of Lync and standards-based callers (H.323)
- Four-way continuous-presence video in the meeting room and back to Lync clients (Mac and PC)

The Competition

Some competitor room systems disable their MCUs when calling with Lync RTVideo (VGA or HD). This leaves the user with compromised options, such as:

- Using the embedded MCU, limited to sending/receiving CIF video quality
- Using the Lync AV MCU for multiparty calls, limited to VGA and active-talker (one-at-a-time) video
- Adding an expensive infrastructure bridge (e.g., Polycom RMX) to get VGA or HD continuous presence

Enhancing the Lync Experience with Other LifeSize Products

LifeSize UVC Video Center: Single appliance for easy-to-use streaming, capturing and recording

- With the press of one button, users can initiate recording from any LifeSize 220 video system connected to a LifeSize UVC Video Center. All participants on the video call will be captured, including Lync participants.

- Other solutions require multiple servers for streaming and recording and often need an IT administrator's involvement to move and prepare the data.

- Users can deliver video content to desktops, tablets and smartphones and use video for lectures, meetings, trainings and more.

- Because of the simplicity and ease of use, LifeSize UVC Video Center is an added collaboration feature that stays consistent with the Lync offering.

LifeSize Competitive Response

Q: Why do I need to deploy UVC Video Engine instead of just using my LifeSize endpoint?

A: UVC Video Engine adds the capability for HD video calling with Lync using RTVideo without breaking or compromising any endpoint features, unlike competitor endpoints that deactivate other features (embedded MCU) when using RTVideo. LifeSize endpoints and Video Engine work together to deliver a full-featured experience.

Q: Why does UVC Video Engine need its own dedicated server hardware?

A: UVC Video Engine transcodes RTVideo to H.264. This creates heavy processing demands. To ensure the highest possible HD quality, we recommend dedicated server hardware, either the LifeSize UVC 3300 or virtual machine software on third-party server hardware.

Q: I have LifeSize endpoints at multiple sites. How do I deploy UVC Video Engine in a flexible and scalable way?

A: UVC Video Engine needs to be in the same on-site LAN as the LifeSize endpoints. Because UVC Video Engine is on the LifeSize UVC Platform, it offers the flexibility to be deployed as either virtual machine software or a hardware appliance. When purchased as virtual machine software, you can easily deploy only the number of UVC Video Engine licenses you need at each site, allowing your system to grow as your needs grow. Additionally, the UVC platform includes remote administration and management, simplifying the management of each instance of UVC Video Engine.

Q: Do LifeSize endpoints support data sharing with Microsoft Lync?

A: LifeSize endpoints can do data sharing in two ways: share the PC as the primary input, or have the PC participate from the Lync client to share data. This is consistent with all other standards-based endpoints.

Key Questions to Ask the Customer

- How are you managing the bandwidth requirements of RTVideo?

- Not all competitor solutions work in a customer's environment; for example, you may have firewall or bandwidth constraints and MCU/bridge requirements. Can the competitor really demonstrate handling this situation?

- Have you thought about extending video to streaming and broadcasting over the Internet?

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