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CU System rings in new era with Microsoft Teams Phone, realizing major cost savings and modernization [1]



July 15, 2025 by ES & UIS Communications [2]

University Information Services (UIS) recently completed the CU System migration from Cisco Jabber to Microsoft Teams Phone, marking a major milestone in its modernization initiative. The transition, announced in December 2024 [3] and finalized in late June, brings enhanced features, improved security and significant cost savings to the university's communications infrastructure.

The decision to move to Teams Phone was driven by the rising costs and end-of-life status of Cisco hardware, as well as the opportunity to streamline support and improve user experience.

"This project was about more than just replacing a phone system—it was about future-proofing our communications," said William Shelby Jr., UIS assistant director of Enterprise Cloud Services.

The migration, which involved a phased rollout and extensive vendor coordination, was funded internally through savings from previous data center moves. UIS projects that the initiative will yield approximately $875,000 in savings for the university over the next five years, with an average annual savings of $175,000.

Key benefits of the new system

- The ability to make external calls directly from Teams.
- Masking of personal mobile numbers for work-related calls.
- Enhanced mobile and remote capabilities.
- Transition from analog to e-fax.
- Improved security and vendor support.
- Simplified process for international calling access.

"Cleaning up our number pool was a big win," noted Shelby. The project will lead to greater automation for onboarding and offboarding phone numbers, reducing manual workload and ensuring better number management.

The transition was smooth, with no service interruptions to any department.

Personalized training for call center managers and a phased implementation approach were also key to the project's success. Steven Linenberger, UIS principal project manager, helped coordinate the four migration waves that helped avoid critical periods like open enrollment for Employee Services and the end of the fiscal year for the Procurement Service Center. Ultimately, the transition was smooth without any service interruptions to any department.

Shelby thanked the other project team members, Adam Newby, Brandon Sine, Tanya Scott, Tony Sengphirom, Deirdre O'Malley Keating, Cindy Kraft and Tony Brooks. He praised UIS' willingness to serve as the pilot group for the initial migration and the UIS Service Desk for troubleshooting issues before the other three CU System call centers migrated. He also gave a shout-out to the Teams Phone User Guide [4] and the Day One start-up guide, which CU System employees continue to refer to as needed.

The Teams Phone transition demonstrated cross-campus cooperation as well. Campus partners at CU Boulder shared lessons learned from their extensive migration, which started in 2022. Similarly, UIS shared training and communication materials with CU Anschutz Medical Campus as they recently began a similar project.

The UIS infrastructure team is now finalizing the decommissioning of the old Cisco system, with hardware removal and service shutdown scheduled for completion by the end of July.

If you have questions about this transition or Teams Phone in general, please contact the UIS Service Desk at help@cu.edu [5] or 303-860-HELP (4357).

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