

# **Next generation communications at UBC to advance research collaboration, learning and student engagement**

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# What we will cover



## Objective:

Narrative illustrating UBC's approach to refresh of its communication technologies ecosystem.

The next generation of services, not "next generation" tools!

Ecosystem approach to simplify user experience and meet emerging needs and differentiated needs

# Agenda



- Background
- Approach
- Roadmap
- Ecosystem
- Benefits and Considerations

# Background



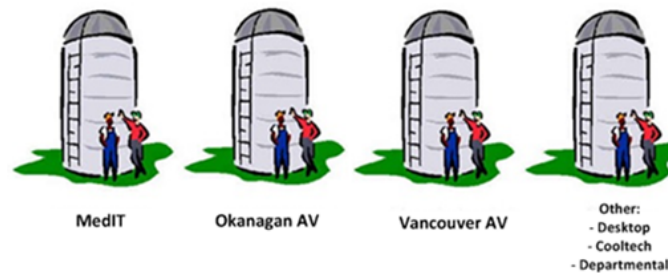
- Decentralized IT service model = silos
- Videoconferencing not a core service
- Demand for VC increasing steadily for 5 years
- Organic growth becomes hard to manage
- Users find it challenging to BYO and identify solutions to their needs
- Challenges land on the doorstep of 4 key groups

# Rethinking the approach



- In response to challenges, organic growth and escalating cost of services, 4 key groups formed an initiative to address these issues.

**VC @ UBC**



*A working group to share knowledge and develop a collaborative plan to enhance the services across the University.*



## Comprises of:

- UBC IT Communication and Collaboration Technologies
- UBC IT Audio Visual Services
- UBC Okanagan Media and Classroom Services
- Medicine IT

## Goal:

*Provide broad capabilities and support for collaboration at competitive cost, and provide a common user experience and ubiquitous access.*

# Current State



## Major Services:

- Bluejeans – administrative, education and research needs
- Cisco – Distributed medical program, health professions
- Vidyo - (via Compute Canada) research.

## Usage Stats:

- ~300 endpoints (Point Grey, Okanagan, Hospitals)
- 20+ million VC endpoint minutes / year
- 500+ desktop VC users active
- Does not include Vidyo usage
- Does not include commodity service usage (substantial)

# Drivers for Action



## External review committee on IT:

Suggestions from the UBC community:

19. Improve videoconferencing between the Vancouver and Okanagan campuses, possibly of telepresence quality, to increase the viability of remote conferencing to reduce travel between campuses:
20. Consider providing graduate-level classes via video between campuses;

## User feedback:

- Confusion – what services, and how to access
- Varying user experiences, limitations, and needs
- Inconsistent systems management
- Multiple owners of funding

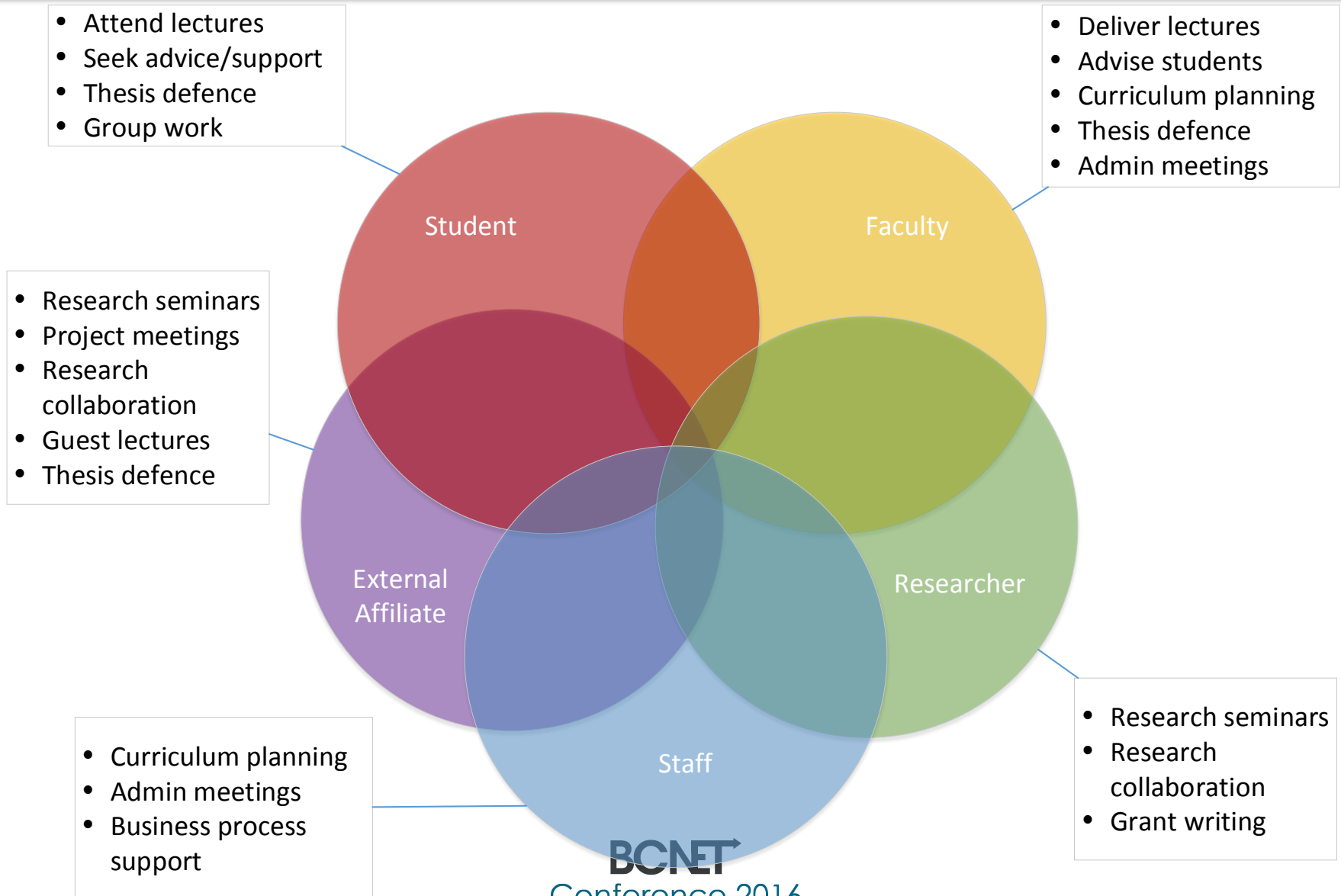


# Problems identified



- No readily defined service or way to connect
- Lack of user knowledge/education
- Scheduling limitations
- Limited Technical Capabilities
- Guarantee of experience
- Funds/Dollars limitation
  - Use of non-cost recoverable bridging through BCNET
  - Disparate silo'd solutions, increasing support costs
- User defined solutions
- Lack of defined roles and responsibilities

# Use Cases (sample)



# Support structure



- Matrix structure support team
- Experts from each area
- Standardized practices
- Broad base service, allowing customization
- Focus on tight relationships within support teams

# Approach



- Phase 1 - Information Gathering
  - Understand current state user experiences, needs, problems, and support processes
  - Use the information to develop a plan to address the issues / limitations identified across UBC
- Phase 2 – Solidify plans and execute
  - Further refine and structure the work streams
  - Unify the groups around the deliverables
  - Execute changes in a step-wise fashion

# Work Streams



Unified  
Communications  
Ecosystem and Bridging

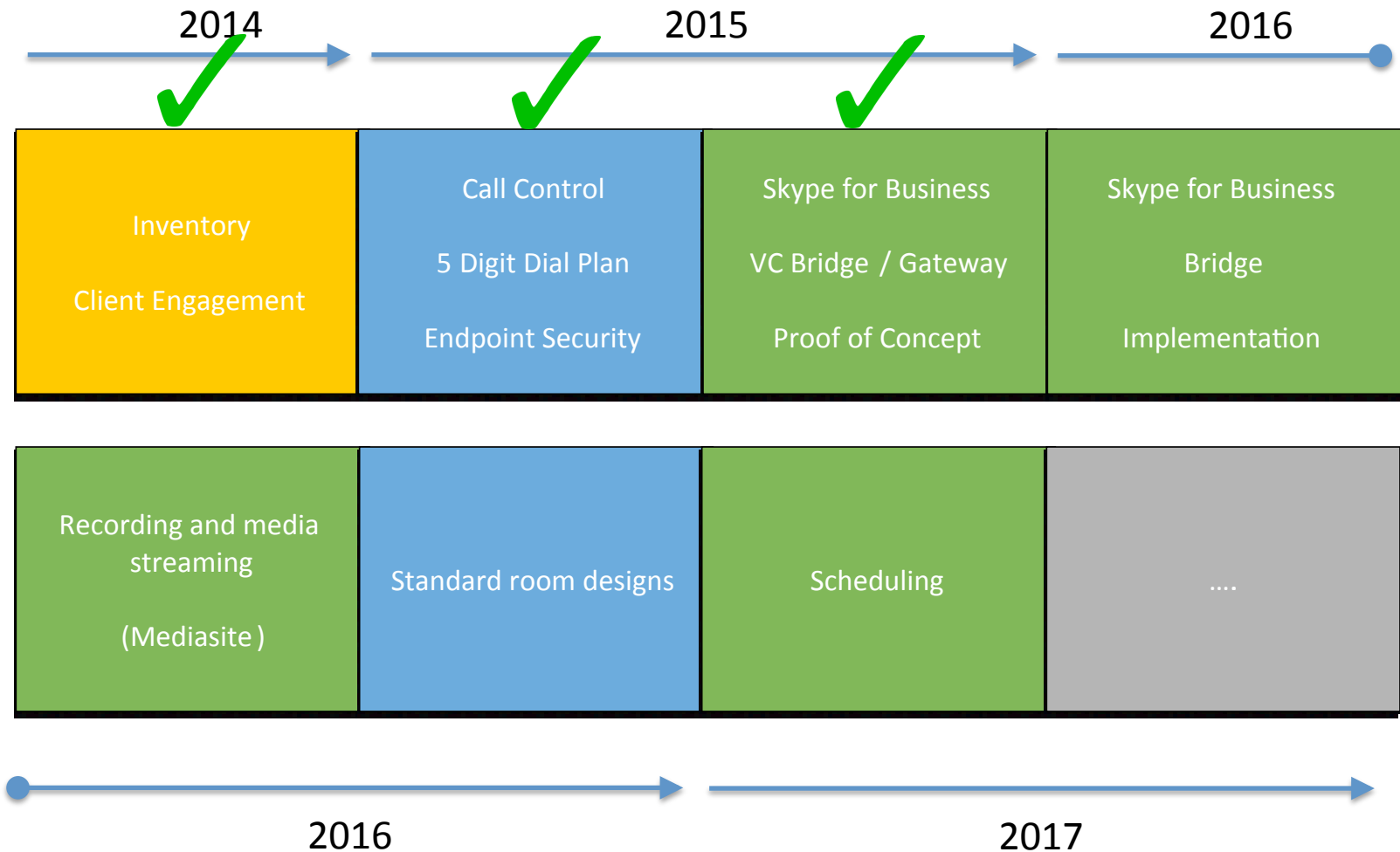
Room UX and  
Equipment  
Standardization

Connectivity and  
Security

Scheduling

Client Engagement

# Roadmap



# Ecosystem: Existing Investments



Shaw Business



lifesize®



SONY



AVAYA



# Unified Communications



## Skype for Business

- Circa 2013/2014, client units were asking for additional communications flexibility
- UC proof of concept was started, investigating two vendors
- Initially viewed as an add-on to voice services
- Quickly realized that VC integration was essential
- Provides IM, Presence, Softphone, and Web Conferencing\* components of an integrated offering



# Skype for Business



- Assessment of solutions supporting current investments
  - Skype for Business
  - Cisco Jabber
- Skype for Business selected based on:
  - Cost (campus licensing agreement)
  - MS office products Integration
  - User experience from PoC
- Challenges with Skype for Business:
  - Telephony integration
  - Video endpoint integration

# Pexip Infinity VC Bridge



- Initially a bridge replacement for Medicine's aging Cisco (Codian) MSE platform
- Current usage indicate on-prem cheaper than cloud
- Opportunities through VC @ UBC:
  - Solve the video interop challenge with Skype for Business
  - Scale to meet entire institution's needs
  - Cost-sharing, enabling ubiquitous access

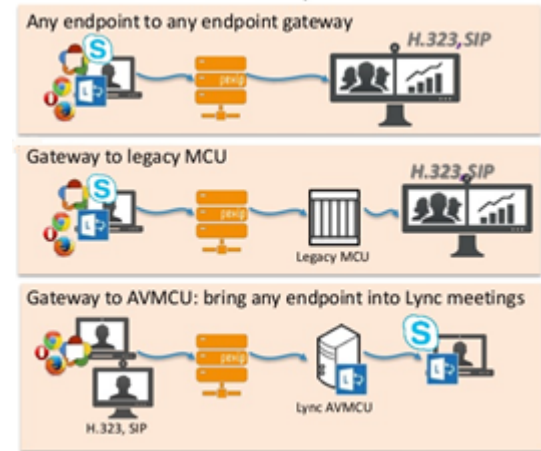
# Pexip Infinity VC Bridge



Multiple Connection Methods



Scalable/Distributed Architecture



Gateway/Call Control/  
Endpoint Registrar

vyopta

myvrn  
Software for Scheduling

SYNERGY sky

Covene

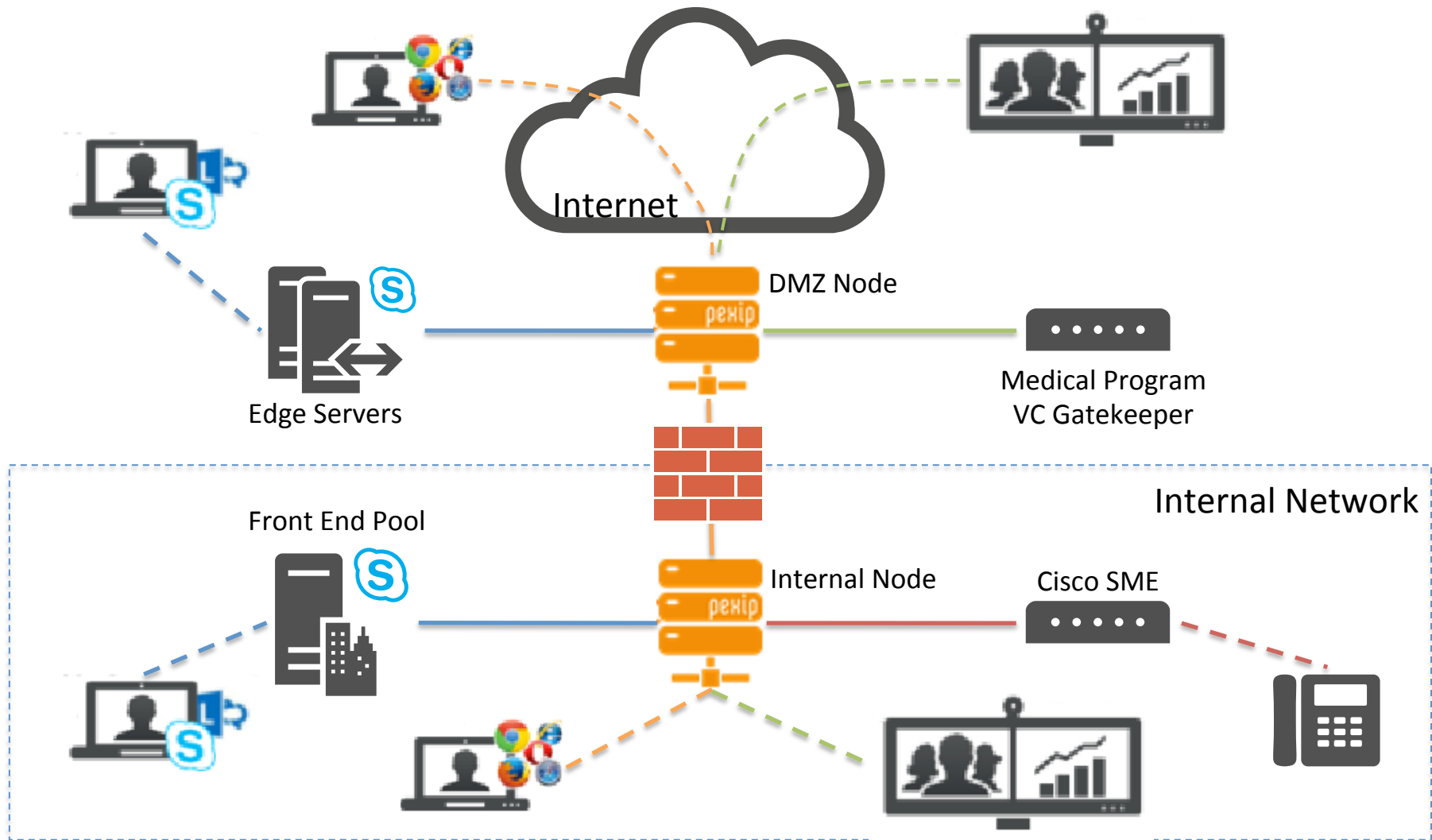
amazon  
web services™

YouTube

3<sup>rd</sup> Party tools and Open API

BCNET  
Conference 2016  
CONFERENCE 2016

# Architecture



# Early Results



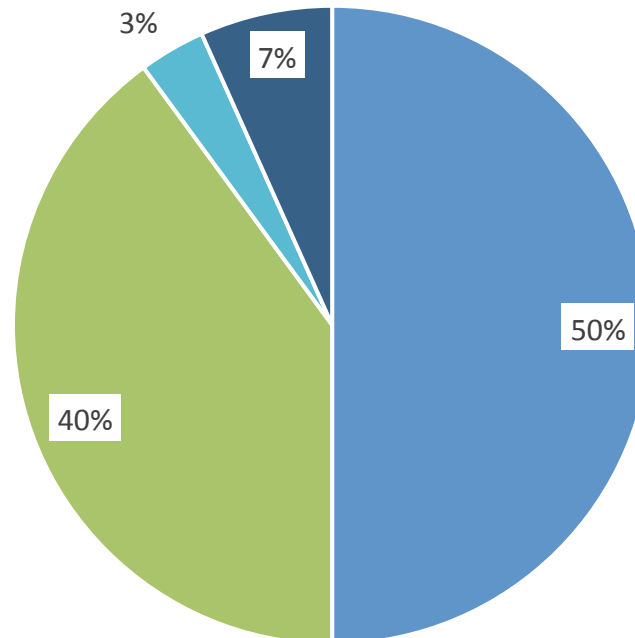
UC Proof of Concept participants were asked which UC features made them more effective in their role at UBC.

Feature	Extremely/Somewhat Useful
Instant Messaging	94%
Presence	84%
Desktop/Content Sharing	67%
Video Conferencing	61%
Audio Conferencing	54%
Web Conferencing	46%

# Early Results



“I find the unified communications tool useful in my job.”



■ Completely agree   ■ Somewhat agree   ■ Somewhat disagree   ■ Completely disagree

# (Some) Lessons / Key Success factors

- Pay attention to Wifi and headsets
- External users just as important as internal users
- Measure!
- Don't forget the Mac users
- Always check with the users
- Make sure you're addressing a business/ process/ operational issue

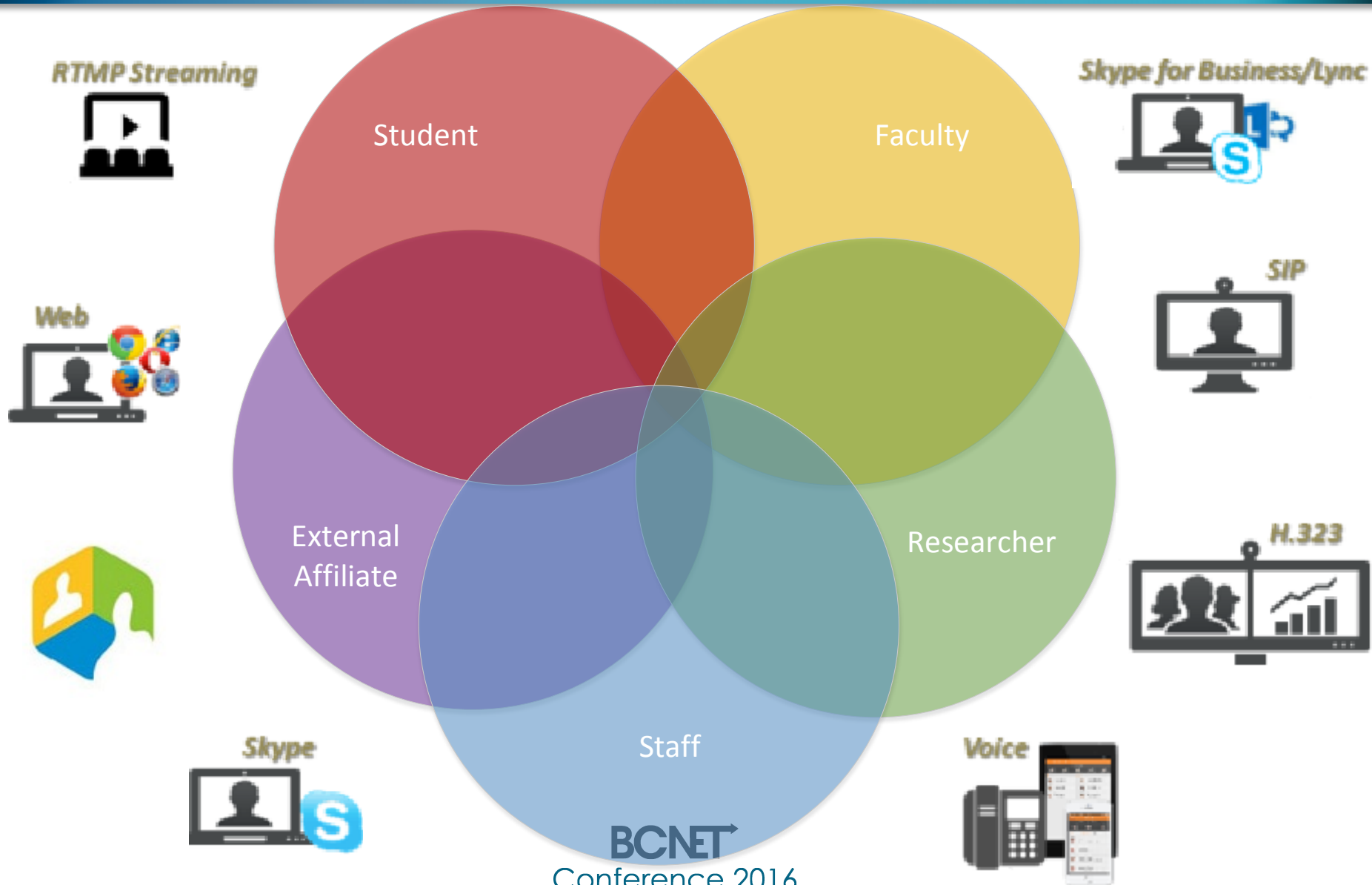
# Why best in breed?



- Make use of existing investments and expertise
- Combine best functions from different products
- Internal expertise to manage ecosystem
- Economies of Scale / Cost competitiveness
- Market volatility / consolidation
- Ability to customize for niche needs



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# Questions

