IDC reports the EMEA Unified Communications market reaches $5.7BN in 2010-- and expects it to grow to $16.6BN by 2015, with a CAGR of around 23.7%.

However, as the credit crunch and fears of a double-dip recession across the region make enterprises increasingly cautious, companies will review ICT budgets even more closely before investing in new IT solutions.

France will be the biggest UCC market in W. Europe, with the UK and Germany following. Meanwhile instability and inadequate infrastructure within the CEMA region will continue hampering new UCC deployments.

The analyst forecasts a rise in UC hosted services, especially within the SMB community-- with businesses outcourcing UCC solutions as a service in order to reduce network management and maintenance costs.

The dominant protocol of UCC and VoIP vendors will be SIP, as "it provides a common platform for system, handset, and application development and compatibility" IDC says.

Increasingly complex company network infrastructures will also drive business demand for converged network management services-- driving a move from a capex-based model to an opex-based model.

Finally business VoIP, collaborative applications and IP PBX platforms will continue driving UCC solution integrationn.

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