Configuring Cisco Unified Communications Manager and Unity Connection: A Step-by-Step Guide (Networking Technology: IP Communications)
The definitive, up-to-date guide to planning, configuring, and administering Cisco call processing and voice messaging. This book brings together all the hands-on knowledge you need to successfully configure and administer Cisco’s flagship IP voice systems, including Cisco Unified Communications Manager (CUCM), Unity, and Unity Connection. Fully updated for the new CUCM, Unity, and Unity Connection, version 8, it presents step-by-step procedures for every common and complex task that installers, integrators, and administrators will encounter. Long-time Cisco voice implementer and instructor David Bateman begins with clear, well-organized explanations of Cisco Voice over IP technology, including its key functions and devices. Next, he guides you through preparation and deployment, including configuring CUCM for maximum performance, removing DNS dependencies, defining enterprise parameters, configuring regions, and enforcing security. The author presents quick access, step-by-step solutions for dozens of post-deployment tasks, each with thorough instructions and cross-references to prerequisite tasks wherever needed. He demonstrates how to integrate features to create more powerful IP voice systems, thoroughly introduces Cisco’s new management interface, and provides extensive coverage of the latest feature enhancements. David Bateman is a certified Cisco instructor, CCNA, and director of curriculum development for Skyline-ATS. He has 20+ years of internetworking experience, including more than a decade as a senior LAN/WAN engineer in networks serving up to 5,000 users. He then ran the business operations of a technical services company while maintaining his existing networking client base. David has taught and implemented Cisco voice technologies since 2000. He authored this book’s first edition, and co-authored CCNA Voice Exam Cram. Establish a foundation for CUCM: configure services, set enterprise parameters, register devices, and more. Add gateways and client devices. Create dial plans, including route patterns, route lists, route groups, CTI route points, translation patterns, and route filters. Configure Class of Service (CoS) and Call Admission Control. Implement IP phone service, media resources, and Extension Mobility. Prepare to deploy Unity/Connection: verify integration; define system parameters; and create templates, distribution lists, and CoS. Add, import, and manage users. Make the most of Unity/Connection call management, from basic auto-attendant to advanced routing rules and audio-text. Integrate legacy voicemail systems. Master Unity/Connection’s key administrative tools and utilities. Use time-of-day routing, call queuing, and other advanced features. This IP communications book is part of the Cisco Press Networking Technology Series. IP communications titles from Cisco Press help networking professionals understand voice and IP telephony technologies, plan and design.
With Cisco Unified Communications solutions (namely Unified Communications Manager and the Unity family of products) reaching the version 8 milestone in their lifecycle, there has been a lot of information published on the subject already. I’ve probably got a dozen or more Cisco Press books covering these topics on my own bookcase within close reach. But this one is different. It’s not just a ‘reference guide’ that is full of information but requires you to jump around to find what you’re looking for. It’s not a certification study guide covering only theory and leaving the practical knowledge behind - this title covers both, and does it well. It is my current ‘go-to’ title of choice. Let me talk about what sets this book apart from the rest.

Configuring Cisco Unified Communications Manager and Unity Connection: A Step-by-Step Guide does a good job at accomplishing what Bateman has set out to do; create a configuration guide in a step-by-step, building-block approach. Walking you through each new topic, building on knowledge you have already gained from previous...
topics, you will walk away from this title having a solid foundation of what you need to know to successfully implement a Cisco Unified Communications solution and keep it running. He doesn’t take you through the installation process itself, but covers just about everything else beyond that step necessary from a configuration standpoint when setting up a new system, as well as the daily administration activities you’ll be required to perform. This is clearly not meant to be a certification guide, but I would recommend it to the network administrator new to Cisco Unified Communications and certification candidate alike; both audiences will benefit greatly from the exercises and explanations presented in this book.

The book is intrinsically about the system administration of these Cisco products. It stresses that you should do a design phase prior to any actual installation. This should be as detailed as possible, to [try to] anticipate the phone behaviours and needs of the users. A key idea that needs to be kept in mind during this is that individual components of the system will fail, so redundancy needs to be built in at all levels above the cable that connects the device [ie. IP phone] to the rest of the network. The author remarks that the only real exception to redundancy is this single cable from the phone. Because a motivator for going to VoIP phones that have inline power is the reduced cabling needs. And users seem to accept as self-evident that if this cable breaks, then certainly the phone is disconnected. Chapter 2 discusses Communication Manager 3.3, where all services are turned off by default. Apparently, in earlier versions, some services were turned on, right out of the box. While the text does not say this explicitly, I suspect that this led to certain attack vectors that came in on some of those active default services. So live and learn, and Cisco is hence bolting down the services. What this means is that you, the sysadmin, needs to [or at least should] understand each service that you activate. The complexity in the book rises when you reach Chapter 4, on route plans and call flow. It increases in the next chapter, which is about implementing the equivalent of black and white lists for different devices. If you temporarily imagine each device to be not a phone but, say, a browser with Internet access, then the concepts of those lists are easy to grasp. But when it comes to phone devices, the implementation of the lists is rather intricate.

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