CHAPTER 2
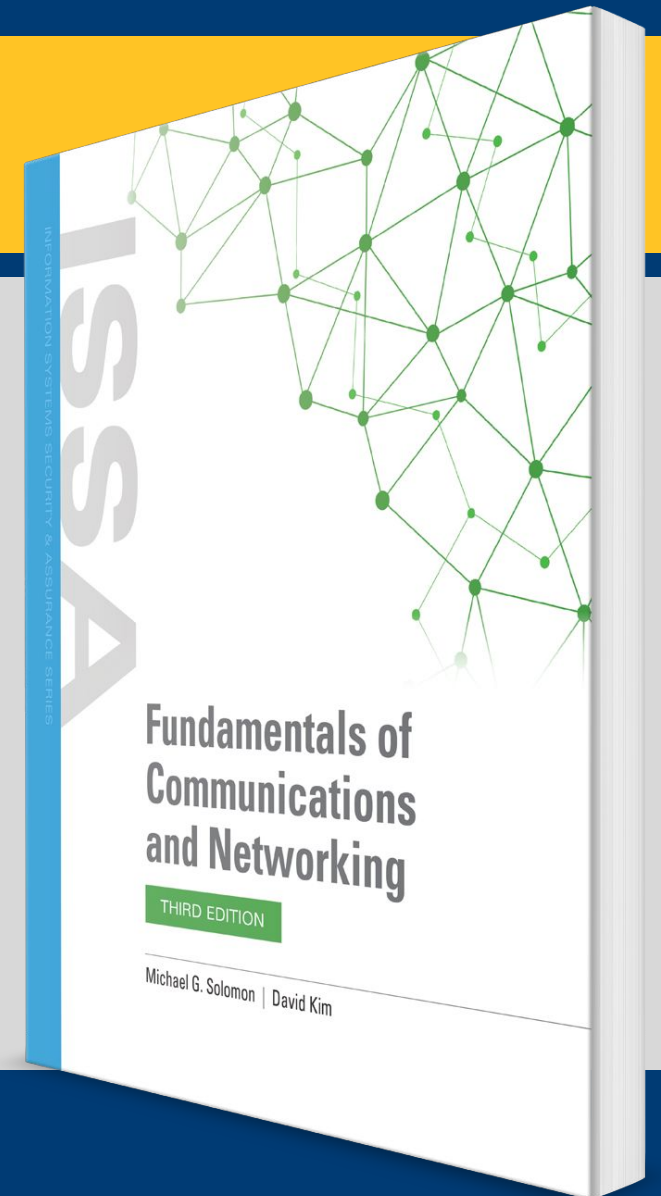
Solving Today's Business Communication Challenges

Learning Objective(s) and Key Concepts

Learning Objective(s)

- Explain how the evolution of communications and networking technologies solves business challenges.

Key Concepts

- Business communication challenges

- How the public sector and private industry solve business communication challenges

- How to transform communication requirements into network requirements

- How to define an organization's networking requirements

Organizational Communication Challenges

Challenges

- Being "off the air"

- Constantly sending reminders and updates

- Disconnected messaging

Fixes

- Act fast

- Clarify deliverables

- Set (or reset) expectations

- Try a different method

Unified communications (UC) can address the most important business challenges by making communication more efficient

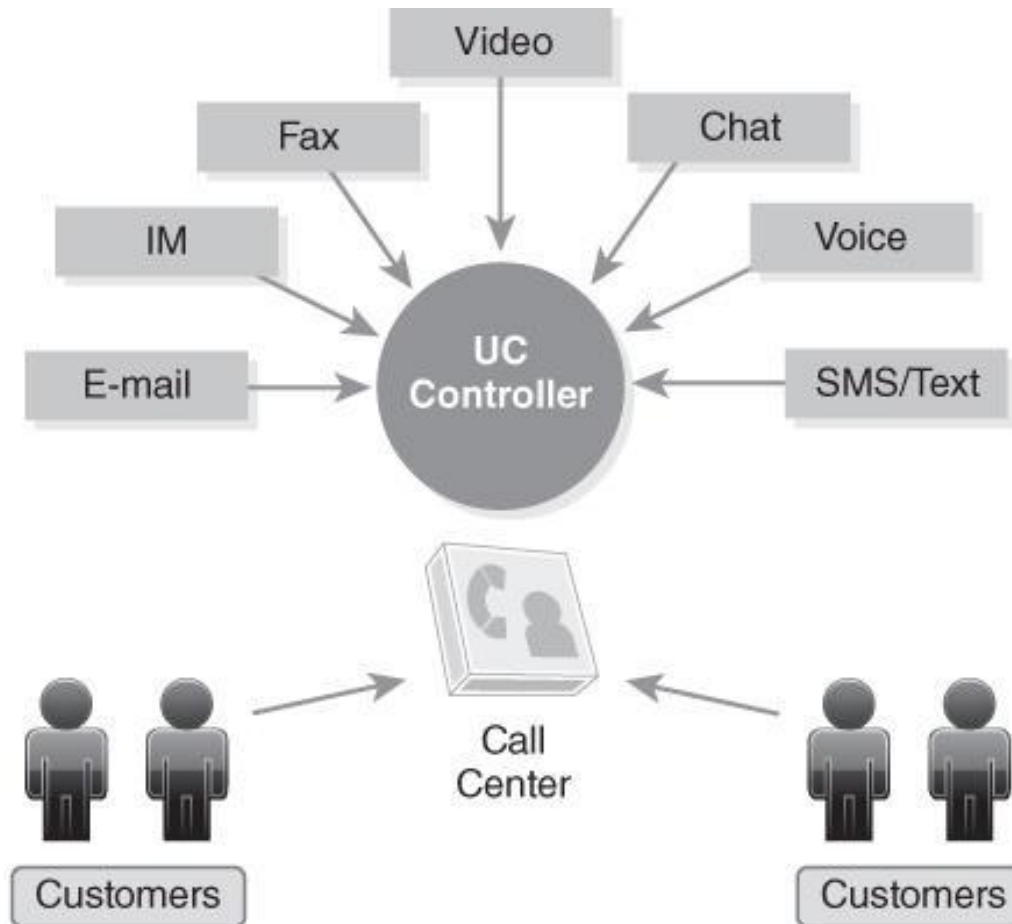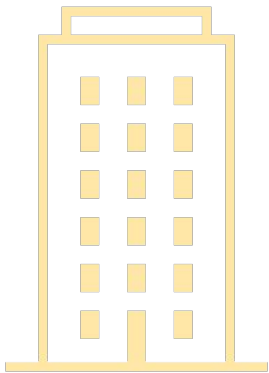# Today's Multimodal Business Communication Options

FIGURE 2-1 Today's multimodal business communication options.

Enterprise Challenges

Enterprise businesses have 500+ employees

Communications are split among multiple devices and applications

IT departments need to maintain many devices and apps and keep them all secure with minimal cost

Work/life balance is threatened by work communication on personal devices outside of normal business hours

Secure environments must be maintained to protect all regulated and unregulated content and ensure that it is acquired and managed effectively and in compliance with regulations

The customer experience needs to be improved through consistent and personalized communications utilizing the best channels

Government Communication Challenges

Keeping constituents engaged, active, and responsive

Addressing the demands of paper-based processes

Dealing with obstacles presented by legacy systems

Meeting an increasing number of requirements with shrinking budgets

SMB/SOHO Challenges (Small/Mid - Small/Home Office)

Comprehensive customer service

Marketing reach

Limited customer base

Competing demands for budget

SMB perception
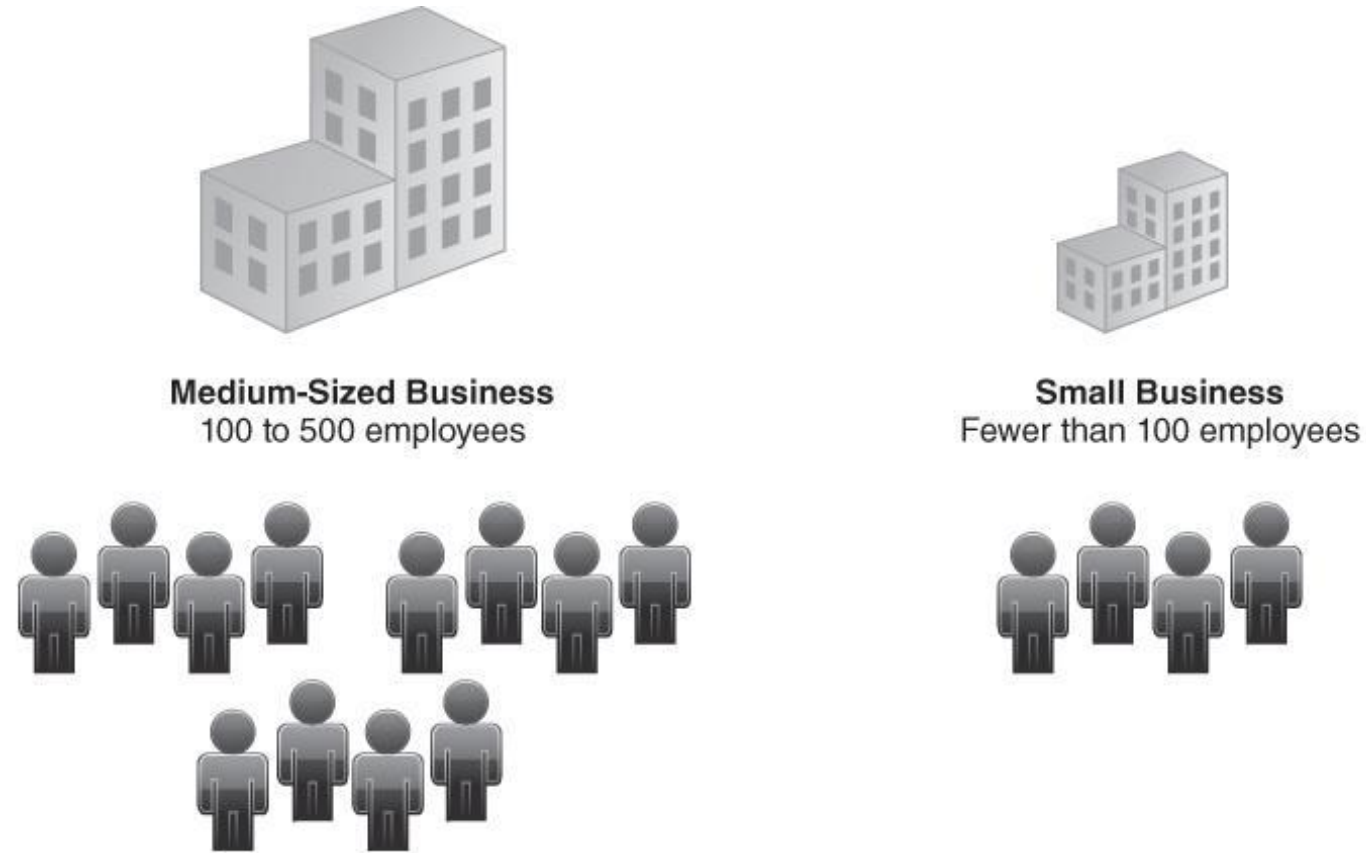
Small and Medium-Sized Businesses (SMBs)

FIGURE 2-2 Small and medium-sized businesses (SMBs).

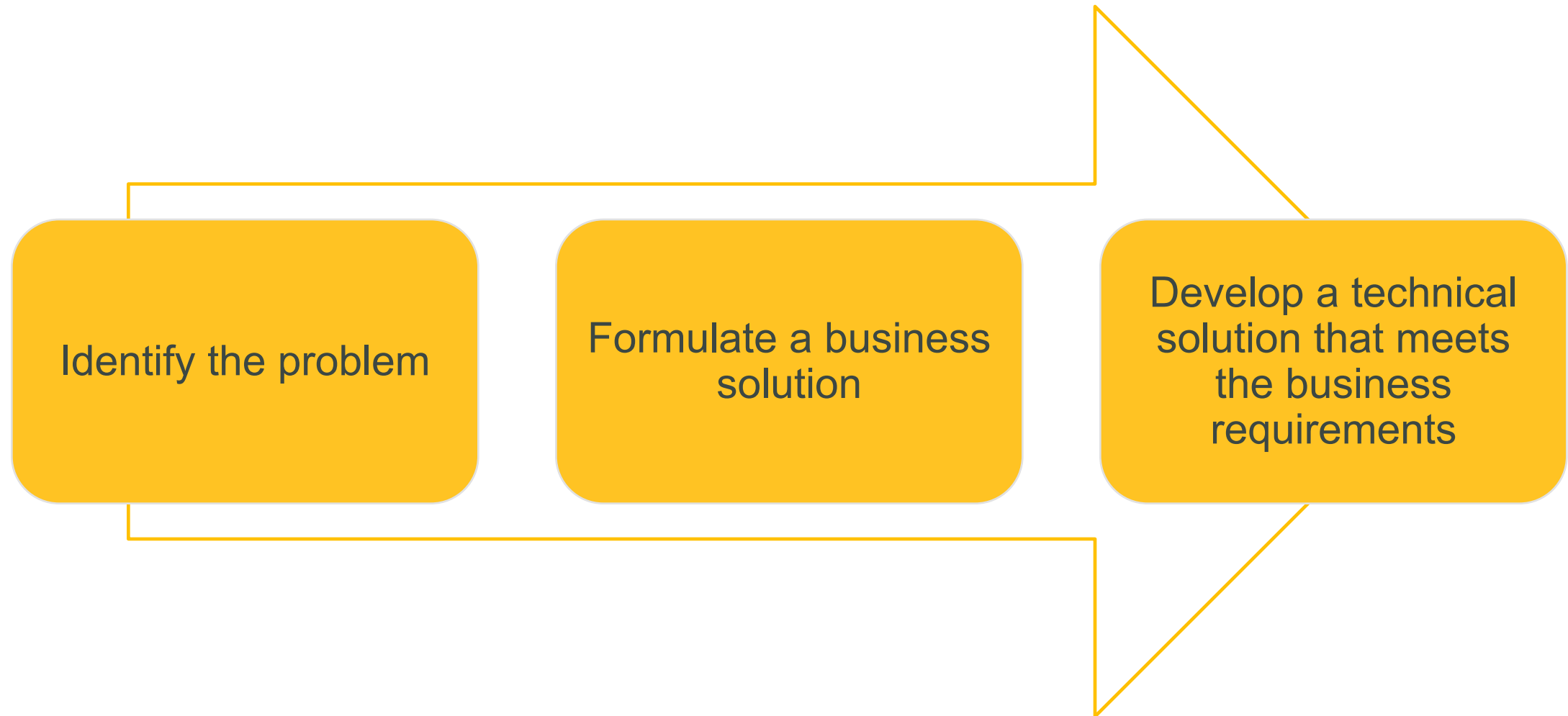# Small Office/Home Office (SOHO) Business

Small Office/Home Office
Fewer than 10 employees

FIGURE 2-3 Small office/home office (SOHO) business.

Solving Enterprise Business Communication Challenges

Identify the problem

Formulate a business solution

Develop a technical solution that meets the business requirements

Banking and Financial Services Challenges

- Need timely, secure, clear, and reliable customer communications

- Confidentiality and integrity are very important

- Example UC solutions:
  - Chat or audio/video conferencing at automated teller machines (ATMs)
  - Integrated analysis training and tools
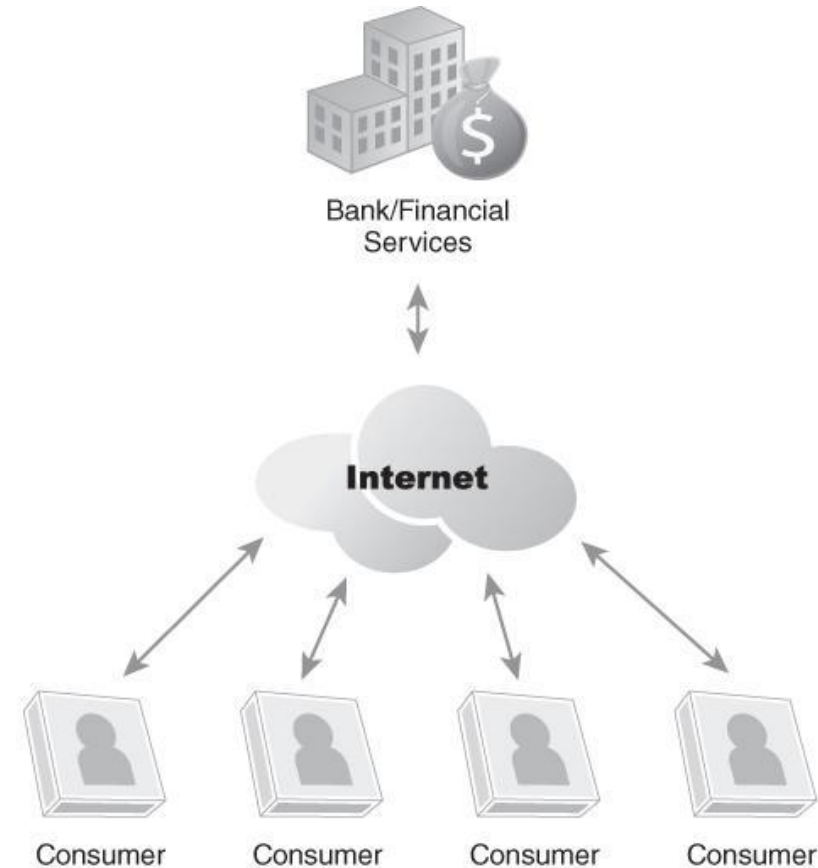 - Multimodal trade alerts and execution

FIGURE 2-4 Banking and financial services business.

Health Care and Patient Care Services Challenges

- Challenges are similar to banking and financial services

- Protected health information (PHI) is key

- Primary goals:
  - To enhance patient care services
  - To eliminate human delays in life-threatening situations

- Example UC real-time solutions:
  - Access to accurate and pertinent patient healthcare information and status
  - Access to medical specialists and experts to provide critical, time-sensitive input
  - Self-service patient services delivered via web applications
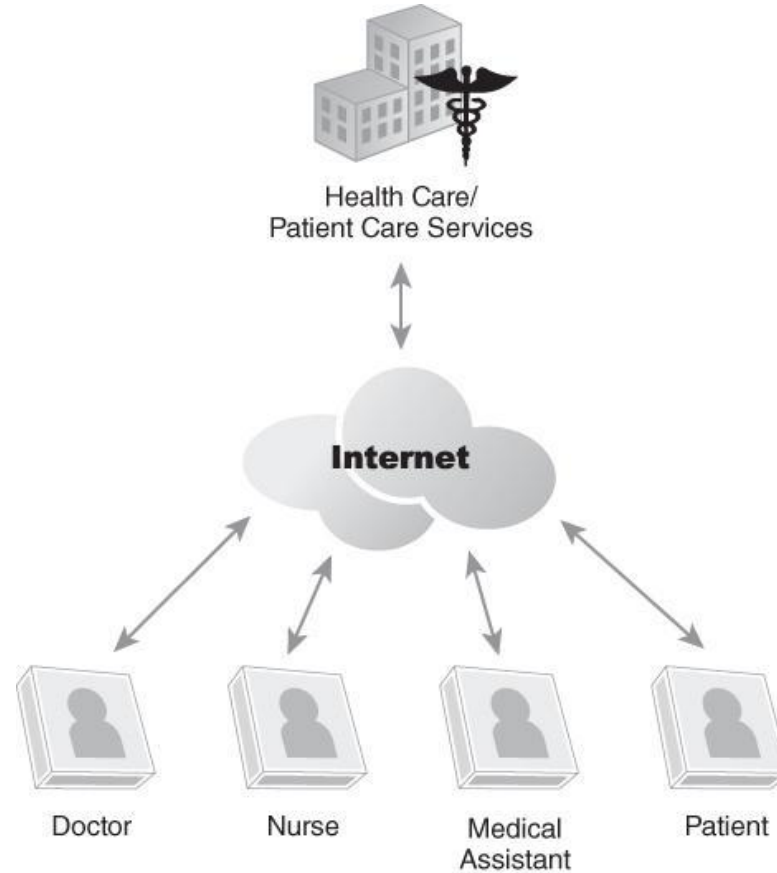
Health Care and Patient Care Services Business

FIGURE 2-5 Health care and patient care services business.

K–12 and Higher Education Services Challenges

- Information must be accurate, secure, clear, and available

- Multimodal communication solutions:
  - IM chat and audio/video conferencing during registration
  - Real-time remote advisement
  - Automated response system for common questions
  - Automated student/faculty interaction application
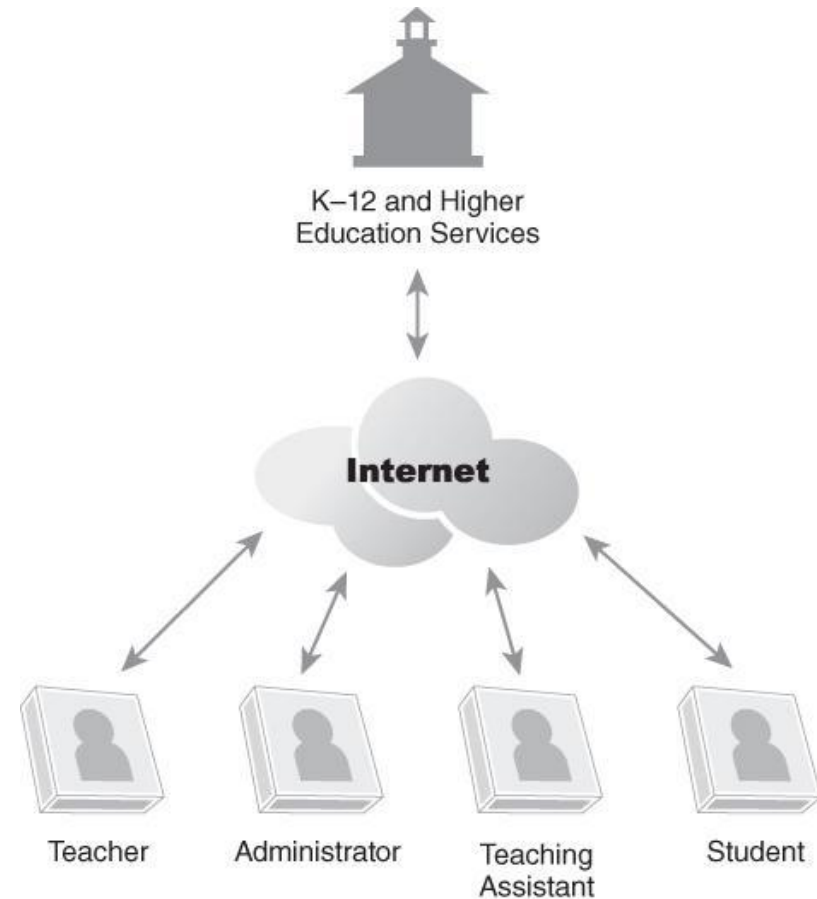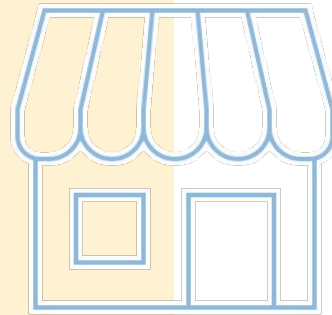 - Interactive grade distribution and explanation

FIGURE 2-6 K–12 and higher education services business.

Commercial Retail Products and Services Challenges

- Main challenges:
  - Reaching out to new customers
  - Standing out from other businesses
  - Meeting existing customer needs
  - Keeping customers informed of news and updates
  - Securing customer data

- UC solutions:
  - IM chat, audio, or video conferencing to provide live customer service
  - Online ordering with flexible delivery options
  - Extensive purchasing assistance to increase add-on sales

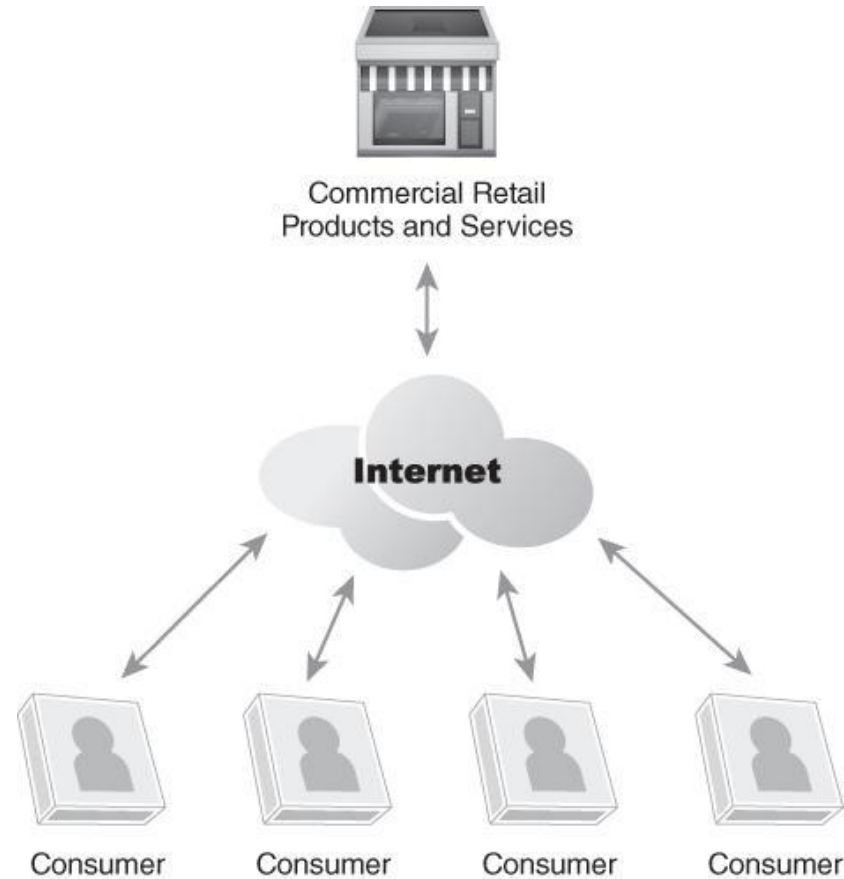# Commercial Retail Products and Services Business

FIGURE 2-7 Commercial retail products and services business.

Manufacturing Services Challenges

- Organizations can streamline the operational process by automating and linking individual activities, such as:
  - Sales order entry
  - Purchasing
  - Supply chain management
  - Just-in-time (JIT) inventory that the organization purchases or makes when it is needed, and not before
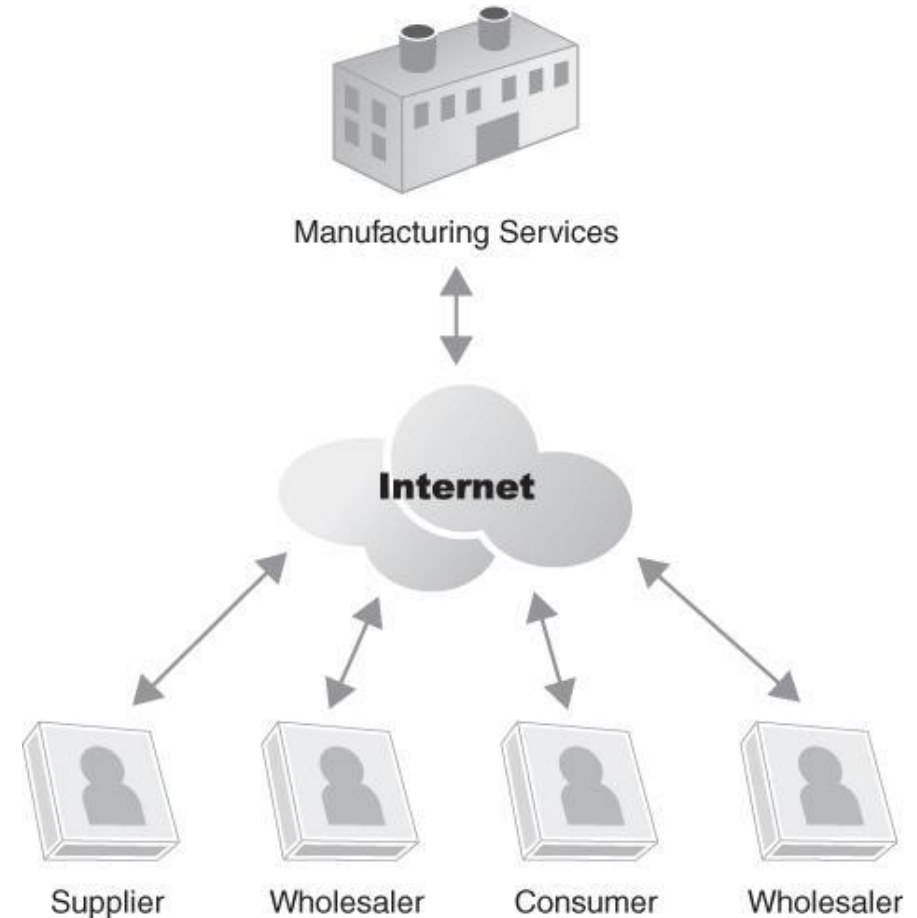 - JIT manufacturing processes

FIGURE 2-8 Manufacturing services business.

Travel and Transportation Services Challenges

- Hotel reservation system communicates with travelers via email or SMS text messaging

- Frequent travelers issued hotel room key card with embedded RFID chip for automated check-in

- Hotel automation system configures room to traveler's preferences (Internet access restrictions, environmental controls)

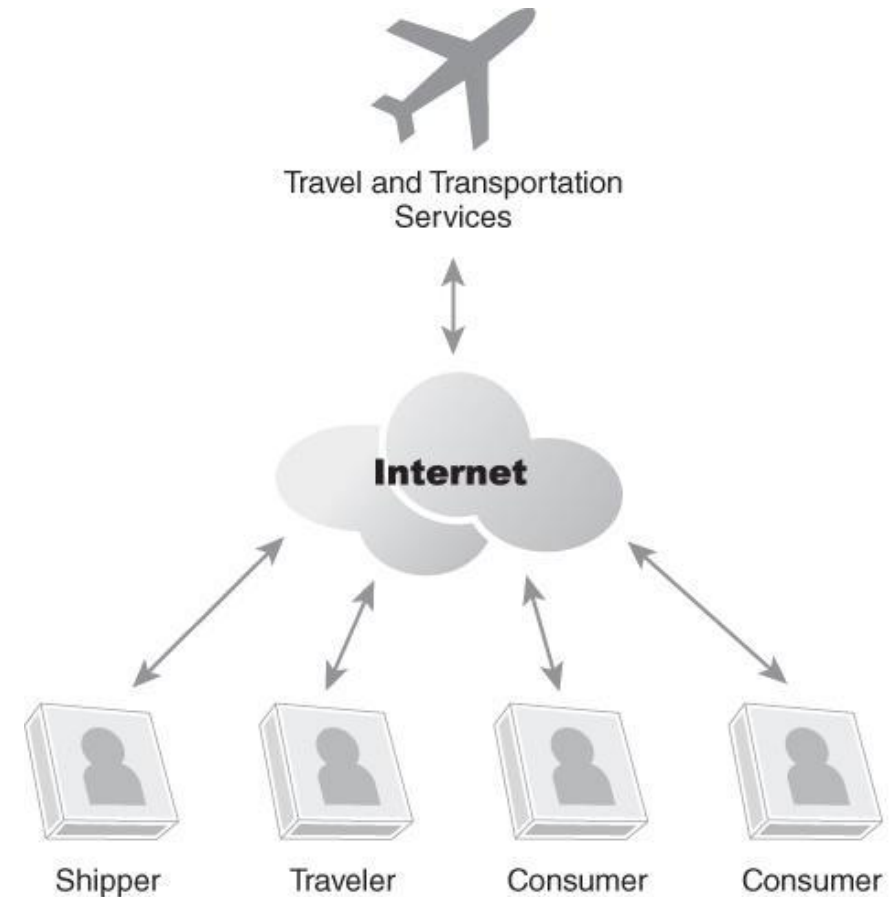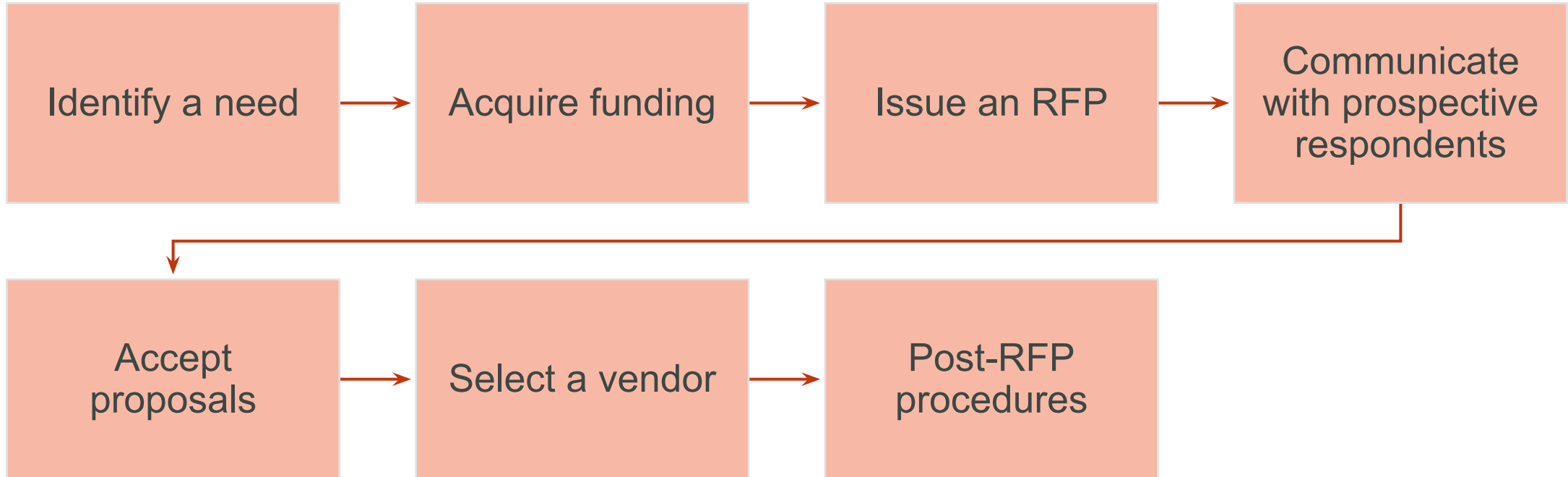- VoIP and UC calls directed to traveler's laptop via the Internet

FIGURE 2-9 Travel and transportation services business.

Request for Proposal (RFP) Process

Identify a need → Acquire funding → Issue an RFP → Communicate with prospective respondents → Accept proposals → Select a vendor → Post-RFP procedures

- RFP process helps avoid wasting taxpayer money and requires formal communications

- UC can help government vendors be compliant:
  - Multimodal communication enables government businesses to communicate with agency personnel without violating necessary regulations
  - A UC-enabled environment can make sure all contact with agencies is authorized
  - The UC system can deny unauthorized contacts and redirect authorized contacts to authorized individuals
  - The system can also automatically document each contact and alert appropriate people when mandatory action is approaching

- A UC system can integrate with a scheduling system to help manage the RFP project

- UC can help organizations manage government projects they have won as well

Solving SMB Business Communication Challenges

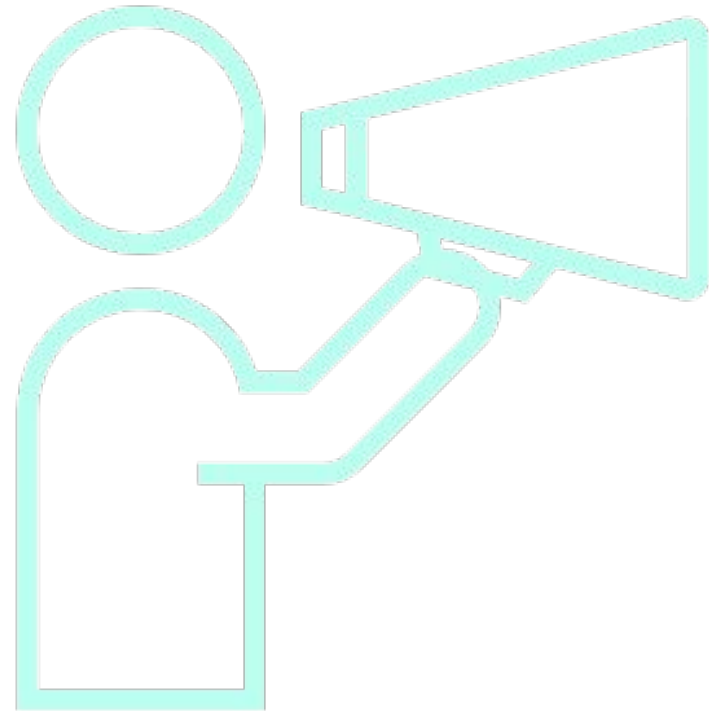A well-planned UC solution can help the SMB in many ways:

- Multimodal communication
- Comprehensive customer service
- Reach more prospects
- Maximize resources
- "Large company" perception
- Measurable feedback

Solving SOHO Business Communication Challenges

Technology and UC solutions can help SOHOs solve their unique problems by:

- Extending organic communication

- Providing a professional appearance

- Leveraging limited resources

- Responding to customer needs

- Reaching new customers

FIGURE 2-11 Transforming business requirements into technical solutions.

FIGURE 2-12 Solving communication challenges.

Defining Your Organization's Networking Requirements

High availability	Bandwidth	Physical infrastructure	Hosting infrastructure
Physical and logical topology	Quantity and types of endpoints	Access controls	Remote access
System/ application/data connectivity	Network security	Network operations	Network management

Summary

- Business communication challenges

- How the public sector and private industry solve business communication challenges

- How to transform communication requirements into network requirements

- How to define an organization's networking requirements