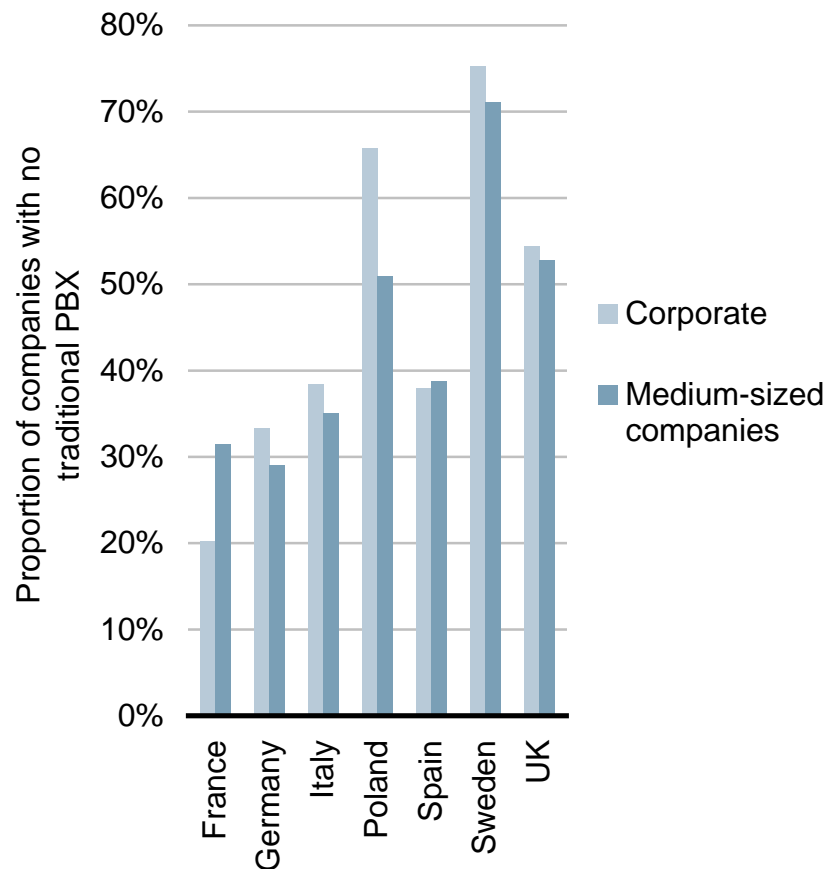


The main UC platform does not have to be the PBX

- In September 2009, the majority of IT managers expected to buy their UC infrastructure from their PBX vendor, but this may change as UC deployment becomes more mainstream. There are three main ways in which a company can deploy UC:
 - **PBX-centric.** A SIP PBX is used as the core of the UC deployment, and the directories and presence information are managed here
 - **Email-centric.** The email platform is used as the core of the UC deployment, with added IM and with presence extended to embrace voice and video
 - Microsoft OCS is the most common of these and the first steps are relatively easy to take
 - mobile operators are starting to offer this architecture
 - **IM-centric.** The company deploys an IM system with presence management, which is then linked to the voice and email systems. In the enterprise, the IM system might well be Lotus Sametime, as the entry-level version provides IM and presence.
- Whichever approach to deployment is preferred, the key to realising the benefits from deployment is tight integration with existing communications and other applications, despite all the risks and potential expense that integration projects bring.
- SMEs may prefer to use a hosted UC system, and service providers are starting to roll out such services.
- The risks and costs of integration will be reduced by having a fully standards-based SIP infrastructure – although the variations in the standards and the implementations mean that there can still be difficulties.

By 2014, many companies will have no traditional PBX

Figure 8: Percentage of companies forecast to have no traditional PBX by 2014 [Source: Analysys Mason, 2009]



- Integration is a lot easier to achieve if it is not necessary to work with DPNSS and QSIG, the protocols required to talk to traditional PBXs. Neither these protocols nor traditional PBXs support the feature ranges that are now standard in SIP PBXs, but may support others that the SIP PBX does not.
- As the number of companies with no traditional PBX grows, it will become easier to deploy UC.
- Even when dealing with SIP PBXs from different vendors, there are often problems with varying interpretations of the standards.
- Integration reveals a host of mismatched features. For example, 'Out to lunch' in your presence interface may translate as 'Do not disturb' in one PBX and 'On the phone' in another.

Tim Stone of Cisco says, "The trickiest area is around presence and legacy PBXs, which is a possible combination, but is quite complex for any vendor to do."