

Teams Enterprise Voice - Cisco Hunt Groups & Call Centers vs Microsoft Call Queues

The purpose of this document will be to outline the various call flow tools available to Teams Enterprise Voice clients both from Cisco & Microsoft. Based on the client's needs and how their users operate on a daily basis will drive which path we go down as far as configurations.

OVERVIEW

Before we dive into the different scenarios, below is a high-level overview of each component:

Microsoft Call Queues Call queues allow for specific routing of calls in cases where the total number of callers in the queue or the wait time exceeds the limits that you specify. Calls can be routed to specific people, voicemail, other call queues, or auto attendants. For each call queue, you can specify if agents in the queue can opt out of taking calls and if calls should be routed to them based on their presence indication in Teams. You can assign a phone number to a call queue, however call queues do not provide separate call routing for off hours and holidays. Unless your call queue is staffed 24/7, we recommend assigning the phone number to an auto attendant that redirects to the call queue during business hours. Call queues are managed in the Teams Admin Center ONLY.

Cisco Hunt Groups Hunt Groups distribute calls through a telephone number or extension to multiple users within an organization. Within the hunt group settings Admins can control which line(s) will receive the incoming call and in what order. Similar to a Call Center, Hunt Groups allow users to be grouped together to handle incoming calls received by a Hunt Group's DID or extension (or both). Hunt Groups do not have as many features and options as a Call Center and are limited to a smaller subset of users (usually under 10 users).

Cisco Call Centers Cisco Call Center Queues are essentially more sophisticated Hunt Groups. Both are used to route calls to agents but what sets queues apart is their ability to provide queue information and hold time estimates, on-hold music and even promotional information allow clients to handle larger call volumes and offer a better overall customer experience versus hunt groups. Queues also have the ability to route calls based on priority or skill levels and the ACD (Automated Call Distribution) will route calls accordingly. Agents can log themselves out from a queue so their priority is not considered by the ACD. The ACD is also aware when agents are already on calls and can route traffic elsewhere.

FEATURES

Outside of there being a specific need (i.e. CRM Integration) where a client will need to use one application over another, if you are comparing Cisco & Microsoft at a high level, here are some key features to consider:

MICROSOFT TEAMS

Features

<ul style="list-style-type: none">Allows for 38 different languages transcribe, prompt and greetings to the caller
<ul style="list-style-type: none">File formats for greetings WMV, MP3, WAV
<ul style="list-style-type: none">2 different levels of routing individual agents and groups - Can route calls to single person(s) then flow to a group as a catch all if none of the aforementioned agents don't answer the call
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Presence based routing Agents only receive calls when in an available state

CISCO HGs & CCs

Shared Features

<ul style="list-style-type: none">Allows for 8 language differences
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Alternate Numbers
<ul style="list-style-type: none">File format WAV only
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Sim Ring routing limited to 10 users at a time.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Calling Line ID Updates
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Call Forwarding admin settings: Admin and Busy

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conference Mode available to reduce the amount of time it takes for a caller to be connected to an agent, after the agent accepts the call.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have an option to force agent to answer or more traditional HG – presented with call first and can decline and have the call move on to next agent
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Call Overflow handling - redirect or disconnect based on maximum number of calls in Queue reached. i. e. maximum amount of calls set to 50, 51st caller gets redirected or disconnected
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Call time out handling - max wait time reached i.e. 20 mins, caller can be redirected or disconnected
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Voicemail to O365 Groups

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business Continuity / Disaster Recovery
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Call overflow only based on timer expiration not specific to max amount of calls reached
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Call time out is the same as overflow option in Cisco
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Routing based on Time Schedules, User Priority
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Holiday and Time Schedules
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Voicemail Management via Cisco

HUNT GROUPS CENTERS CALL

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No option to force agents to answer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skills Based Routing available
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Calls flow to agents in any other state except DND 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Entrance Messages, Music on Hold
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhanced Reporting (22 stock reports)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supervisor Application available

CALL ROUTING

Regardless of which platform you are setting groups up on, both Cisco & Teams use the same distribution options for getting calls to your agents:

Cisco	Microsoft Teams	Description
Simultaneous Ring	Attendant Routing	Calls ring all agents at the same time.
Circular Ring	Round Robin Routing	Calls are balanced so that each call agent gets the same number of calls from the queue, starting where the last call ended
Uniform Ring	Longest Idle Routing	Calls ring to the agent whose has been idle the longest time receives the next available call.

Regular Ring	Serial Routing	Calls ring to agents in order one by one.
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INTERVALS

In scenarios where Cisco Hunt Groups or Call Centers are being used with Teams, the key piece in getting Cisco and Teams to work in unison is making sure that all intervals set up in OSSmosis are LOWER than they are in each user's Teams Call Answering Rules. This will allow calls to reach agents on their Teams application, but if they are unable to answer a call for one reason or another, the call will still be able to move onto another agent without the risk of a Teams voicemail picking up the call. Please note that each ring lasts approximately **6 seconds** in duration.

Examples:

- **Call Centers** - If your queue's Bounced Calls Settings in OSSmosis are set to *Bounce calls after ringing* after 3 rings (approx. 18 seconds), each agent's *Ring for this many seconds before redirecting* setting should be AT LEAST **20 seconds (default)** in Teams. Whether call center agents have a voicemail box assigned to them is at the client's discretion (most agent's sole purpose is to answer queue calls). If agents do not have a need for personal voicemail boxes, users can set their *If unanswered* setting to **Do Nothing**. This will also allow the call center's routing policy to continue on without issue.
- **Hunt Groups** - Same rules will apply when clients are using any routing policies outside of Sim Ring. The *Skip to next agent after ____ rings* setting will need to be less than the Teams setting.

Note: In addition these interval settings, admins and/or call center supervisors should also be instructing their agents to not decline incoming queued calls in Teams. This will (1) indicate to OSSmosis that the call has been responded to and halts the call flow and (2) if the agent has voicemail set up, it will send that call to their personal voicemail box rather continuing on with the rest of the routing policy and ultimately a group mailbox inside of that HG or CC (if applicable).

Bounced Calls

EVOLVE IP

Calls presented to agents that are not answered.

☒ Bounce calls after ringing

Rings

☒ Bounce calls if agent becomes unavailable while routing the call

☐ Alert agent if call is on hold for longer than...

Seconds

☐ Bounce calls after being on hold by agent for longer than...

Seconds

No Answer Settings

EVOLVE IP

☒ Skip to next agent after

Rings

☒ Forward call after waiting

seconds

Calls Forward to

Call answering rules

Choose how you want to handle incoming calls.

☒ Calls ring me
 ☐ Forward my calls

Also ring

No one else

If unanswered

Voicemail

Ring for this many seconds before redirecting

20 seconds (default)

Call answering rules

Choose how you want to handle incoming calls.

☒ Calls ring me
 ☐ Forward my calls

Also ring

No one else

If unanswered

Do nothing

Ring for this many seconds before redirecting

20 seconds (default)

Unlike Hunt Groups, Call Center ACD states allow OSSmosis to send calls to agents who are available to answer a queued call, which adds another layer to which agents should be presented with a call.

NOTE: Teams' presence is not shared back to OSSmosis so agents will need to make sure their queue ACD state is up to date otherwise, OSSmosis will continue to present calls as long as they are eligible to receive them.

REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

- [OSSmosis: Call Centers](#)
- [OSSmosis: Hunt Groups](#)
- [Microsoft Teams: Call Queues](#)