



How Enterprise Mobility is Changing the Workforce

Devices and cloud applications create changes and opportunities in the workplace. Mobility, the ability to conduct work anytime, anywhere, impacts how employees work, the way they communicate and collaborate, and the implications for businesses large and small. Mobility has become the path to a new workplace communications dynamic.

Today the world has over 3.5 billion people with Internet access, and for the first time, the number of mobile technology users exceeds the number of fixed access (read desktop) users.

For today's millennial-heavy workforce, enterprise mobility is often the first solution – or the only solution – as people increasingly ditch their landlines. From a business perspective, leaders see this increased mobility as an opportunity to build new revenue, gain customers and increase loyalty.

Trends shaping enterprise mobility

Of all the trends impacting technology today, mobility and cloud technologies may be the most significant, as they combine to bring enterprise-grade communications and collaboration tools to virtually every business, regardless of size.

We as a society have never been more mobile, and high speed networking, ubiquitous smartphones, and the “there’s an app for that” consumer mentality have percolated into the business world, resulting in the mobile enterprise movement.

With smartphones and tablets replacing cameras, laptops, music players, credit cards and – and of course telephones – workers of all kinds look at their phones first thing in the morning and last thing at night.

A third of the world's workforce (and half of the US workforce) were born between 1980 and 2000, and these hyper-connected workers seemingly have mobile devices embedded in their hands.

The impact of millennials is even greater for small- to medium-size businesses, where they comprise a dramatic 40 percent of IT decision-makers as well. As we become increasingly tech-centric, the impact of millennials – any tech-savvy members of other generations – on the workplace will only grow in the years to come.

One select poll, set to discover what type of mobile access companies provided to employees, showed a surprising result: 48 percent still relied on VPNs only for their communications and collaboration.

However, the quest for enterprise mobility is apparent in the growth of cloud-based access shown by 30 percent of poll members who have cloud-based access to employer resources and communications tools.

Security and regulatory challenges prevented 7 percent of the respondents from supporting any type of remote access.

Mobile first and always

Experts predict that 70 percent of mobile professionals will be conducting business on their personal mobile devices by 2018.

Where many people today carry multiple phones or tablets – one for work, another for business – there is an expectation that employees should be able to work wherever they are, whenever they want to, and from the device of their choice.

And with 75 percent of the US workforce now mobile, being tied to desktop computers, desk phones, and paper notepads are giving way to smartphones and tablets with touchscreens.

How will this enterprise mobility trend impact business processes?

Consider that by 2017 three out of four internal enterprise applications will be designed primarily for smartphones and tablets. Whether businesses are using salesforce.com or Excel to manage tasks, expect to see new applications designed with smaller screens in mind.

IT managers must plan for pervasive use of small devices as primary endpoints for both data and voice. What about the PC? Expect to see it go the way of the office fax machine.

A recent Intel study found that 50 percent of enterprise IT managers strongly agree that bring your own device (BYOD) has had a positive impact on worker output. Poll results supported the finding as 52 percent of respondents had a BYOD policy in place.

Another factor to consider is the growing trend of choose your own device (CYOD) which allows employees to choose from a selection of mobile devices (typically iOS and Android) that employers then procure on their behalf.

The major benefits of CYOD: users don't have a learning curve due to switching technology and thus can be productive from the start, and employers have the security of company-owned and imaged devices that can be locked down or disabled at a moment's notice if lost or stolen.

Even those who work at an office have mobility issues – a poll of attendees showed that nearly a third work away from their desks at least 50 percent of the time – rendering traditional communications and collaboration tools (i.e. desk phones) far less useful for real-time communications.

Technology designed for twenty first century demands

Technology must drive simplicity and efficiency, making work easier and faster. Today's "free range humans" work untethered, and their communications must be untethered as well.

A cohesive approach to enterprise mobility should include unified communications and collaboration as a key part of business applications, not a poorly-integrated afterthought that demands employees jump from one app to another to loop in team members or reply to urgent requests.

Business today occurs in a multi-channel environment of mobile and social applications, and employees must be prepared for all the methods with which customers want to contact your business.

Unlike a decade ago, today's businesses need social media experts to watch twitter, SMS or Yelp sentiment—and to share that information with business decision makers as needs arise.

Numbers to watch

Some important statistics driving the shift to mobile, cloud-focused communications:

- *Two-thirds of employees reported increased productivity among remote workers*
 - *Three-fourths of remote workers continue working in the event of a disaster. Snow, tornado, ice, earthquake—mobile workers keep on working, even if their office is inaccessible.*
 - *Employers save an average of \$10,000 per employee per year in real estate costs for each full-time remote worker, enabling reinvestment of those budget dollars into bottom-line focused uses*
 - *Half of all companies will embrace BYOD by 2017—as also evidenced by Mitel's poll.*
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Moving communications to the cloud

Every business has its own path to cloud, which may include public and private cloud components, as well as traditional on-premises infrastructure for communications.

Most firms are taking a staged approach, and emphasizing the simplicity of onboarding as well as the cost savings realized by adopting a cloud-based subscription model that puts mobility first, reduces capital outlay, provides redundancy in case of disaster and helps ensure integration with applications that today's millennial-heavy workforce demand.

Next Steps

Learn how we can leverage the experience we've gained from serving millions of cloud-based subscribers to bring your enterprise mobility vision to fruition

Visit us at www.ask-tig.com or email us info@ask-tig.com