



How enterprises can design more effective mobility solutions

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The following is a guest article from Gary Lee, Chief Solutions Officer at [Stratix Corporation](#).

This has been a blockbuster year of mobile devices for the enterprise.

Samsung debuted the Galaxy S8 earlier this year, and with business-friendly features such as the Knox 2.8 security platform, analysts predict sales in the millions among enterprise users. Meanwhile, Apple released the iPhone 8 in September and plans to roll out the iPhone X — its most expensive phone to date — in November.

As a growing number of businesses use mobile to power their workforce, these newest devices will likely continue to fan the flames of enterprise mobile adoption. Enterprise smartphone shipments climbed 15% year-over-year to hit 107 million units in the second quarter of 2017, according to a recent Strategy Analytics report, while tablet shipments grew 1% year-over-year to more than 17 million.

Businesses across every industry consider technologies like mobile the key to driving competitive advantage. A recent IDC report found two-thirds of CEOs will have digital transformation at the center of corporate strategy by the end of 2017. Global IT spending is on the upswing as a result, with 4.3% projected growth in the worldwide device market in 2017.

But while mobile initiatives unfold at countless enterprises, a clear enterprise mobility plan is essential to recognize increased productivity, efficiency and business growth. Failing to fully consider how a business will deploy, use and support mobile devices can lead to spiraling costs, compromise data security and derail mobile adoption among workers.

Before your business invests in the latest crop of smartphones, consider these areas of a well-executed enterprise mobility strategy.

Finding the right solutions

Workers may be clamoring for the newest consumer phone, but the best solution for a workforce depends on a number of factors. Consider how and where devices will be used, the applications they need to run and current support resources when developing a mobile blueprint. For example, businesses planning to deploy devices in harsh conditions, such as refrigerated warehouses or outdoors, may be better off deploying rugged mobile devices over consumer options.

In addition to the type of device, consider the operating system, security, compliance, mobile device management (MDM) solutions and required accessories, such as mounts. Designing a comprehensive mobile solution based on each business' unique requirements will help ensure employees are equipped with the tools they need to drive business success.

Balancing the budget

For today's IT leaders, the struggle between advocating for innovation and controlling the budget for enterprise mobile is an ongoing one. According to Gartner, it costs \$500,000 to buy and support 1,000 enterprise-owned tablets — and it's common for enterprise deployments to be many times that size.

To make mobile costs more predictable and affordable, some enterprises are considering alternatives to the traditional capital outlay. One option is Mobility as a Service (MaaS), which eliminates upfront capital spending on new devices by bundling all device costs and mobile services into a flat monthly fee paid through operating dollars. MaaS typically includes built-in technology refresh options, enabling companies to easily upgrade to this year's newest devices without worrying about mobile devices still being depreciated on the books.

The "as a Service" model is rapidly gaining traction in the enterprise, with companies outsourcing software, security and more to drive efficiency and performance. According to a 2016 Accenture report, more than half of company

leaders reported they want to adopt these models to power parts of their businesses in the next two years.

For one national auto parts distributor, huge capital costs stalled the launch of a much-needed technology refresh across its warehouses. By adopting MaaS, the company trimmed 10% from its previous capital expense approach and reduced ongoing operational costs by streamlining picking, packing and shipping processes.

Deployment and support

For employees used to a seamless "out of the box" experience from their phones, meeting their expectations can be a challenge for enterprises. Many IT teams are already stretched thin and may not have the bandwidth or mobile-specific knowledge to execute and support a large-scale deployment.

Before rolling out thousands of devices to workers — who may be scattered around the globe — consider how to acquire, provision and deploy all the components of a mobile solution. Proper configuration of devices, end user credentials, applications and MDM enrollment are essential to keep corporate data safe and ensure devices perform at their peak in the field.

Once mobile devices are in users' hands, a robust support strategy can help minimize downtime and strain on IT staff. When adopting new hardware or operating systems, front-line support needs a nuanced understanding of the technology to address issues quickly and reduce unnecessary device returns.

An external mobility provider can free teams to focus on more high-value tasks by offering 24/7 support from personnel trained in the organization's hardware, systems and job roles. To ensure mobile initiatives are supporting business goals, look for a partner who can also provide device-level visibility into trends like help desk call volume, common issues and other metrics.

Thinking ahead

The pace of mobile innovation shows no signs of slowing, so forward-thinking businesses need a plan to leverage the latest solutions in a way that drives measurable value for their organizations. A managed mobility partner can help enterprises put all the pieces together, from hardware purchases and deployment to ongoing support, creating cost-effective solutions that can transform their operations.

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