How businesses are driving productivity and efficiencies with enterprise mobility

Mobile devices, smart mobile platforms, collaboration tools and business applications are creating important efficiencies and opportunities in the workplace. With the app economy, especially business applications, mobility is expected to grow to US$6.3 trillion by 2021. (1)

Ilan Rubin, managing director, Wavelink, said, "The ability to work anytime, anywhere, is changing how employees work, how they communicate and how they collaborate with colleagues, customers and partners for large and small businesses."

Mobility has introduced a new dynamic into business communications across industries:

- Hospitals: regulated clinical workflows, nurse call and patient alarms can be managed and audited through smartphones and purpose-built applications.
- Manufacturing: operations staff can interact with sensor-driven machine information to optimise productivity from their mobile device.
- Retail: sales staff can improve the customer experience by knowing what stock is available at a glance with a mobile app.
- Hotels: seamless customer service is delivered as staff capture and communicate a customer's wishes and assign tasks to ensure the request is met.

Ilan Rubin said, "For today's workforce, enterprise mobility is frequently the solution of choice as people increasingly work remotely and on the move, and see the landline as irrelevant. From a commercial point of view, businesses are viewing this increased mobility as an opportunity to introduce efficiencies, build new revenue streams, and introduce higher levels of customer service.

"Of all the factors driving technological and behavioural change, mobility and cloud applications are probably the most significant and liberating. Together, they enable the introduction of enterprise-grade tools for communication and collaboration for businesses large and small."

The divide between personal and professional mobile devices is still a challenge for some industries. In a hospital, for example, devices need to be sterile. In manufacturing, they need to be rugged. In the hotel or store, the device needs to be a recognisable workplace tool, not a personal device, to alleviate any concerns that staff are distracted by their personal phones, instead of responding to patient or customer requests. So, work devices often need to be separate from personal ones, contrary to one common view of 'bring your own device' (BYOD) in the workplace.

Ilan Rubin said, "Although BYOD isn't for all businesses, employees' personal smartphone preferences and expectations have strong influence in the workplace, with employees of all ages expecting information and supportive apps, providing data and communications, at speed."

Many people today carry multiple phones or tablets, one for personal use and another for business, because there is an expectation that employees should be able to work wherever they are, whenever they want to, and be provided with the most appropriate device for the working environment.

Ilan Rubin said, "The mobile platform is critical, because it must be enterprise-grade and business-aligned with the ability to support sophisticated and complex workflows or datasets. IT managers and system architects therefore have to plan for a majority of instances where handheld mobile devices are the primary endpoints for both data and voice.

"As a result, a coherent approach to enterprise mobility is required. This includes considering unified communications and collaboration as a strategic first step when building business applications. When these things are a mere afterthought, it creates adhoc processes and requires that employees use multiple devices and systems to access information they need to complete routine tasks.

"To deliver a strong return on investment from mobile and the accompanying functionality, businesses need a mobility solution that encompasses: operational efficiency and mobile convergence; business workflows; employee and customer safety; customer service improvement; and regulatory compliance. For example, the Spectralink Versity is a great example of a purpose-built smartphone, that looks and functions like a consumer device, but is designed specifically to meet the business needs of the various industries with a mobile workforce."

Reference:
(1) http://go.appannie.com/report-app-economy-forecast-part-two