Enterprise Mobility Management Done Right:

Top 10 mistakes to avoid when your business goes mobile

Insight

Introduction

No one disputes that mobility is the future. But the approach you take toward mobility can mean the difference between chronic troubleshooting and business success. Many organizations have underestimated the commitment a mobility program requires, thinking of the devices as self-managing accessories. They're not.

Businesses need to implement an enterprise mobility management (EMM) or mobile device management (MDM) system to integrate device use smoothly with workflow and business goals. Gartner's July 2014 analyst report, "How to Avoid the Top 10 EMM/MDM Deployment Mistakes" makes an excellent case for why and how to deploy an EMM or MDM. We also asked Insight Mobility Practice Architect Ben Nemeth for his take on common deployment errors, and his advice is included here.

Thinking you don't have to manage mobility

Mobile devices distribute your data and open your enterprise to the world. Gartner tells us "50% of users engaged in BYOD [Bring Your Own Device] have done so without their company noticing, or in violation of the rules." Those unsanctioned devices can cause security breaches and compatibility issues. If you don't manage your mobile devices, they will manage you.

Advice:
Be proactive in your approach.

Organizations that try to avoid mobile device management wind up managing the fallout from their inactivity. "The biggest single mistake any IT organization can make is to do nothing. Even if it isn't the best decision, IT leaders need to pick a basic management solution that fits their needs today, based on the available evidence." — Gartner analyst report

Underestimating the demand for mobility in your organization
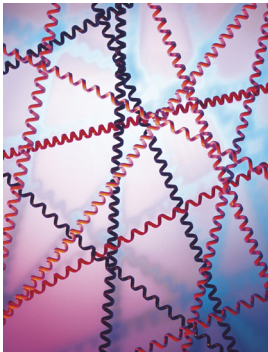
Think you can stall mobility? The clock — and every hand-held device your employees own — is working against you. "BYOD policies really broke down the wall in workplaces," Insight's Ben Nemeth says. "People wanted to use their personal devices because they were tired of waiting for their employers to give them technology."

Advice:
Put yourself in your employees' shoes.

Mobile-resistant workplaces now suffer in comparison to every other aspect of everyday life. Nemeth offers a little perspective: "Have you ever used the Domino's Pizza® Tracker®? You can sign in, build your pizza, hit 'order,' and then you literally see a tracking bar until the pizza guy is at your door. That's the instant gratification we receive as consumers. So it's natural for your workers to ask, 'Why can't I approve a statement of work with three taps on my phone?'"

Not having a plan for your devices

"We'll see organizations go get a great MDM/EMM suite — like an AirWatch®. They'll enroll users into a device … and that's it," Nemeth notes. "They don't identify the devices they need to support. They don't specify policies. They don't distribute applications or content or the things that make these mobile devices stand out."

Advice:
Customize your EMM plan to both users and devices.

Your devices perform better — and your mobile workforce becomes more effective — as you customize your EMM. "Identify the devices that will be supported," Nemeth encourages. "iOS®? Android™? Windows® Mobile? BlackBerry®? Then look at your user groups. Who is going to be using these devices? What purposes will they have? Building policies around each user group is the first thing we recommend for most clients."

Not starting early

Mobile communication may be convenient and instantaneous, but the planning and deployment of that communication takes time. "From the first conversation to having mobile devices up-and-running in the field — it's a 12 to 18-month process," Nemeth says. "It can be done very quickly, but to check off all the boxes and make sure all the necessary groups are involved takes time."

Advice:
Start asking internal questions now.

"Get your app team together," Nemeth advises. "Get your security and network teams together and start asking questions: Do you have the wireless bandwidth you need? Which devices do you want to use? Which operating systems? What carrier are you using?"

Limiting stakeholders in EMM plan development

Conversations on which mobile devices to use, and how to use them, should not be limited to the IT department or the executive suite. They should include representatives from every work group that will use the devices. "IT departments that make technology selections without user involvement have suffered conflicts since the arrival of the first computer," Gartner points out.

Advice:
Establish a global center of excellence.

"The common best practice we share with clients is to create a global center of excellence (GCoE)," Nemeth explains. A GCoE is an internal steering committee that embraces all voices on mobility planning and maintains oversight after the devices are in use. "Get someone from HR; get someone from marketing; get an executive … get them in a room to share ideas on a monthly or quarterly basis. This prevents divisions from 'going rogue' and creating their own apps. It's the biggest thing clients can do."

Taking a "laptop approach" to EMM

Enterprise mobility management is not a set-it-and-forget-it technology. "That's one very common thing we see," Nemeth says. "An organization will stand up a mobile device management or enterprise mobility management platform, and they think 'we're done.' They have a kind of 'laptop mentality,' assuming that you then don't have to revisit EMM for three to four years."

Advice:
Think of Mobility and EMM as a commitment.

Smoothly integrating your mobile device program means ongoing stewardship through your management system. "Every aspect of efficient mobility requires a commitment," Nemeth explains. "EMM is just one step. It takes a team of people to manage EMM suites. You have to follow it up by answering questions: 'What kind of EMM policies are you going to build?' 'Are your [use] policies going to be scope-specific?' You can't have a 'checkbox mentality' about it."

Being unprepared for how quickly mobile devices evolve

Those all-too-frequent software updates you receive aren't unique to your personal phone. "Mobile devices have a long-term iterative process that organizations frequently aren't prepared for," Nemeth explains. "Whether it's an internal mobile app or a public-facing app that your company's using, you've got to be ready for how rapidly this stuff evolves and updates."

Advice:
Accept change as the new normal.

Every device manufacturer has a calendar. "You'll see a major operating system upgrade from the Apple® iOS suite at least once a year, and you're going to see three or four patches in between that 12-month period. Android usually has a once-a-year or 18-month update, but they probably have two or three times those interim updates. On top of that, with Android, you have to expect that each device manufacturer will distribute those updates on their own schedule." — Nemeth says.

Assuming your IT department will not change

The deployment and management of personal devices changes the character of IT departments — which can catch organizations off guard. "In many cases, the IT departments have taken a draconian law approach: 'This is what you do,' and the end users do it." Nemeth says. "With the number of devices in the enterprise, and the level of worker satisfaction required, that dynamic has to change."

Advice:
Reimagine your IT department's philosophy.

Nemeth advises IT departments take a page from the consumer market and regard end users as clients. "IT has to see itself as a customer support service. The best results come when IT departments have started gauging their end users' customer support levels — and their satisfaction with IT — as their new metric for success."

Trying to implement too many policies

Gartner tells us, "A side effect of analyzing users' roles and requirements is coming up with management frameworks that are so complex that they cannot be implemented or used. This problem can be exacerbated by the ever-growing lists of features being promoted by EMM and security vendors."

Advice:
Use an IT review process for streamlining.

"As in many other markets, less is often more," Gartner continues. "If the IT department can master an effective review process for role- and task-based management requirements, then the set of necessary policies can be streamlined."

Not getting help

Workforce mobility can be a lot to manage. Since overseeing your own mobility probably isn't your core business, it's understandable that all the planning, transition and ongoing supervisory issues can take your eye off the ball. "Enterprise mobility management takes a lot of time," Nemeth admits. "There's a long, exhaustive list of things to do."

Advice:
Know your limits, reach out to experts.

Insight can help, especially in those early stages when mobility is just a concept and must be properly designed. "One area where Insight provides service is actually doing a lot of that info gathering for our clients," Nemeth says. "We call it our Mobile Enablement Workshop, where we basically put everybody in the room and conduct all the interviews, kick off the project and ask, 'What is the plan for this company? What is the path to mobility?'"

Why Insight for mobility management?

Insight works with you to design, deploy and maintain a mobility platform that can help power your business growth. Our partnerships with the world's top mobile device manufacturers, combined with more than 1,100 certified consultants and in-house lab and distribution resources, give Insight the tools and expertise to customize a mobile network that can make your organization fast, responsive and secure.

For more information on mobility deployments or an assessment, contact your Insight representative, call 1.800.INSIGHT or visit INSIGHT.com.

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