

Corporate Blog Post

Collaborate on the go; how mobile can bring us closer and let us innovate better

Enabling staff to collaborate when, where and how they want has the power to upend your organisation for the better, and the agent of change is robust mobile networks.

Executive summary

Clocking on and off.
Working only at your office desk.
Attending every meeting in person.

To the digital native generation, they're concepts as old and rusty as mainframe computers, the tea trolley and a job for life. Choice about how to work is the new normal, and the engine powering it is mobile.

Client:

Optus/Ogilvy.

Content type:

Post for the Optus consumer blog.

Brief:

To inspire business customers to embrace mobile technology because of the flexibility and innovation it will bring to operations.

Deliverable:

500 word blog post with strict parameters around sections, section lengths, SEO and keywords, social, key takeaways, related content, CTA, etc.

But changing paradigms around office spaces and meetings doesn't mean people don't want to collaborate. Mobile is fostering more togetherness, and with that many minds working in sync, innovation is faster and cheaper than ever.

Mobile has broken down temporal, physical and arbitrary barriers. It brings all your human talent together regardless of their job titles and makes their combined contributions more than the sum of their parts by letting staff collaborate in ways that suits their creative input.

But if you haven't seen it in your organisation, how do you foster it? The answer is a well-designed mobile workplace strategy with stated policies and contingency planning so the strategy can change as your organisation and market sector does – a plan that's about people, not machinery. As an organisation of people rather than technology we've done it, and you can too.

Here are some no-fuss first steps.

Inspired by leisure

In their pursuit of the consumer market, companies like Samsung, Facebook, Netflix and Apple have perfected the seamless technology experience in tools that inform and entertain us in our off hours.

We've been trained to expect a complete lack of friction in consumer devices and services, and research is showing that we're not getting it at work (<https://finance.yahoo.com/news/employee-experience-broken-fix-123000077.html>). Provide the same at work and it's been said you're already ahead of the curve (<https://www.marketwatch.com/press-release/the-employee-experience-is-broken-but-it-can-fix-it-2019-06-17>).

Release me

We're spending more time in meetings (23 hours per week up from 10 in the 1960s, according to HBR – <https://hbr.org/2017/07/stop-the-meeting-madness>).

Releasing ourselves from the yoke of constant meetings is possible with mobile technology. First, information and decisions can be shared seamlessly with staff who were absent. And if we can't get away from our desks, it lets us take part remotely without the process having to suck any more time out of our day.

It's especially important when solo or 'deep' work leads to creativity (as described by Georgetown computer science professor Cal Newport – <http://www.calnewport.com/books/deep-work>), the process whereby we're given enough time to settle into a state of mental flow without refocusing our thoughts after every interruption.

Working together apart

Inspiration strikes any time, and giving your people the means to connect and collaborate when and how it suits them wherever they are could boost your creative output across the board.

As a 2017 report by Deloitte said (<https://www2.deloitte.com/au/en/pages/economics/articles/collaborative-economy-unlocking-power-of-workplace-crowd.html>), companies that encourage collaboration are five times more likely to experience an increase in talent acquisition, twice as likely to be profitable and twice as likely to outgrow competitors.

Conclusion - From the ground up

A shift to a mobile environment should be a culture change, not a culture shock. It's not just about buying the best technology or forcing a technology solution or product you think will work on everyone.

By all means consult with IT and vendors, but remember your people have already done the research – they use seamless technology in their private lives and they know how they want to connect with colleagues, so they're your best guide to move forward.

Above all, just ask them. The mobile workforce is about people, not machines, and staff buy-in will be the difference between a business transformed and one littered with expensive ICT white elephants. ■