

Corporate Blog Post

Meeting tomorrow head on: Your mobile strategy and the future

Very few organisations have a cohesive mobile strategy, which means if you put the right effort into yours, you'll be ahead of the pack.

Executive summary

Why do you even need a mobile strategy? Everyone at your organisation has a mobile - why not just issue malware software to everyone and leave them to it? The reason is because a well-planned mobile strategy can save money, increase productivity or provide an uptick in employee satisfaction.

Client:

Optus/Ogilvy.

Content type:

Post for the Optus consumer blog.

Brief:

To educate and market the potential for 5G to retail store users by highlighting uses of the technology in use today and coming soon.

Deliverable:

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

That's provided you're doing it for the right reasons, as Philip Parker, Optus Director of Product Marketing Mobility Business says. "It's about what you're trying to achieve," he says. "Most companies are trying to achieve cost saving, productivity, employee engagement or how they interact with customers."

So many stragglers

If you have a clear mobile strategy Parker thinks you're already in front – very few companies in his experience have a cohesive strategy at all.

He says there's a schism between the back-office ICT people who govern the distribution of tools and those who can maximise the benefits. It's more common for pockets of a business to do well using mobile devices in isolation rather than across an entire enterprise.

Another reason is that procurement tends to only consider cost, not how mobile can benefit the customer experience or some other aspect of the business.

But while very few organisations do mobile management well, Parker points out the Commonwealth Bank of Australia and its 'mobile first' strategy. All branch staff are being given handheld devices so they can come out from behind desks, improving the customer experience on the front line.

The workflow

Below are Parker's steps for an effective mobile workflow.

Mobile for all?

First you need to be sure which roles mobile devices will benefit. "There are an awful lot of processes that can be digitised and made more efficient, and that can only happen if you understand which employees will benefit."

Sense of ownership

Next is whether to allow BYOD or deploy a company-owned fleet. Many customers ask Parker about the pros and cons of staff using their own devices, but he thinks it comes down to two simple points – operating system and life cycle management.

The OS will dictate the apps your staff can use, and the rate of turnover will greatly affect your ICT budget.

Lock it down

Next is security. It's comparatively easy if you provide a company-owned fleet because your IT department will manage malware protection and software updates. But in Parker's experience, a lot of people who use their own devices at work don't have malware protection.

"The best approach to try and balance corporate and individual employee needs is to dictate what types of personal devices can be allowed to connect to the corporate network," he says.

The apps

The final pivotal step is to invest in the apps that will help your staff and customers collaborate to meet the goals your mobile strategy set out to achieve. As Parker says, it's not just about having mobiles, but the apps you're using to mobilise the team.

The latest and greatest

The biggest constant in the consumer phone and handheld market is change. What was once the coolest device on the market will be considered laughably inadequate a year later. There can be similar pressure in the business world to seem similarly up-to-the-minute, especially when customer-facing staff use mobile technology.

But while there are marketing considerations around the tools your customers see you using, Parker says the more important thing is to make sure you choose the best operating system to suit your requirements, not the shiniest new gadget for its own sake.

Where to from here?

The biggest change that will affect any mobile strategy is 5G, and it's going to offer (and force) several changes on your organisation. The first is obviously faster speed thanks to more bandwidth that delivers data, but that's only the beginning.

Constant uptime will also be a hallmark of 5G. The smarts built in to the way the network maintains both its infrastructure hardware and the data, as well as the low latency as information moves faster, will mean constant connectivity.

Increased speed and more robust connectivity will give rise to a whole new class of apps and online services, tools that take advantage of a world where dropouts are a thing of the past. Professional areas like remote surgery, self-driving cars, AR and VR transmitted through the air will become a reality.

Conclusion

Like any ICT procurement process, 'mobile strategy' can be a trendy bandwagon term. Don't embark on one because you think it's a magic wand to make you more productive, your people and business conditions are different from everybody else's. Start now, but start for the right reasons. ■