

Converting Office IT to a Mobility Force

Posted At : July 29, 2019 9:25 AM | Posted By : Admin

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by Karen Gilleland

As an office IT decision-maker, you're concerned with making employees' lives easier and more productive—that's why you're always on the hunt for new tech solutions that add convenience. And in the current environment, office IT convenience means utilizing mobile apps. Mobile apps, which have long been platforms for more trivial matters like gaming, are quickly emerging as the dominant business interface.

But while companies are rushing to extend mobility to customer interfaces, executives are slow to grant their own employees mobile access, according to a study by [Accenture](#). Currently, only about 40 percent deploy mobile apps for their employees.



Three areas ripe for mobile integration include collaboration, task management, and workplace productivity. With these points in mind, now may be the right time for business leaders who are on the fence to consider how mobility can empower their workforces.

Use collaborative tech to motivates employees

A study by [Stanford University](#) researchers found that employees tend to be more productive when they have a sense that they are working together. According to the study, “simply feeling like you're part of a team of people working on a task makes people more motivated as they take on challenges. Moreover, the results reflect an increase in motivation—not a sense of obligation, competition, or pressure to join others in an activity.”

Fortunately, you don't have to look far for useful mobile collaboration tools; Techradar grades the features of some of the most popular, including Slack, Asana, Podio, Ryver, Trello, and Flock. With such a wide range of offerings, companies can choose precisely the right apps for their business.

Complete work on time with task management apps

Task management software can help your team complete client jobs on time while managing budget and scope constraints effectively. Cloud-based project management software can be acquired through providers known as “software as a service” firms (SaaS).

Check out [Project-Management.com](#) to learn the value of leveraging software apps including Wrike, Smartsheet, Clarizen, Workzone, Mavenlink, Jira, ProWorkflow, Intervals, and Office Timeline.

Drive workplace productivity

The “Big Four” software companies have glimpsed the future and declared that mobile apps will dominate the business landscape. Accordingly, these companies have re-crafted their flagship products to adapt workplace productivity apps to the small screen in the following ways:

- Microsoft Suite transformed MS Word, Excel, and PowerPoint into smartphone technologies. According to [The Street](#), the app makes it easy to edit documents, crunch numbers, and create presentations while mobile.
- Apple claims its Apple at Work offering for iPhone, iPad, and Mac will help employees solve problems in creative ways, be productive wherever they are, and collaborate more effectively

through intuitive interfaces and a wide selection of business-oriented apps.

- Facebook has tossed its hat into the ring with Workplace, which brings elements of the popular social network into the world of business. The service combines the look and feel of Facebook's consumer app with features targeted toward enterprise users.
- Google offers G Suite by Google Cloud for the new generation of connected workers. To understand how mobile solutions will alter the shape of business, Google teamed with Raconteur for cross-industry research and found that for many organizations, especially those in retail, the time for mobility is now.

Take advantage of mobile printing

“Business went mobile. Now printing has caught up.” That’s how HP describes its new HP Roam for Business, a subscription-based cloud solution that allows mobile professionals to print from any device, virtually anywhere, to any HP printer—securely through the cloud. HP Roam uses GPS to display nearby printing spots, such as hotels, airports, and libraries. Customer and company data are protected by encryption, authentication, and integration with Azure Active Directory.

The HP Smart App enables users to handle certain tasks directly from a smartphone. These tasks include ordering print toner, printing documents, scanning files using the camera or printer’s scan bed, and sharing documentation to email or the cloud.

Join the smart app revolution

In 2020, [worldwide mobility revenues](#) are expected to reach \$188.9B, according to Statista. That figure would reflect growth of more than \$100 billion since 2016. This success underscores the need for every company to integrate mobile features into their own platforms and systems. Firms can start their own smart app revolutions internally by taking the following steps:

- Create a business case for providing collaborative mobility apps to teams who perform critical business operations
- Determine how many projects have run over client deadlines or required significant staff overtime, then find and recommend appropriate task management apps to address any issues
- Determine which workplace productivity apps would best enable your employees to handle remote work
- Survey employees to determine the feasibility of mobile printing across teams

As you put your office IT systems under a microscope, you may be surprised at how many areas stand out as prime candidates for mobile enhancement.