Enterprise mobility: connecting to a world of opportunity

Enterprise mobility presents opportunities to the business world and challenges to Chief Information Officers (CIOs). Opportunities can be found in new capabilities and applications that will reshape business models, empower workers, improve collaboration, help to better manage customer relationships and drive consumer loyalty. CIO challenges include the provisioning, security and ongoing management of these devices.

Enterprise mobility trends

Today's mobility trends are driven by new technologies, the broad adoption of mobile communications by Generation Y (persons age 15 to 30) a growing appreciation of the market at the base of the socioeconomic pyramid and changing business requirements. In the technological arena, mobile devices are becoming more sophisticated, providing users (both corporate and consumer) with voice, Internet, e-mail, chat, gaming, television, bill payment and barcode-reading capabilities, among others.

Because of this – and because of dropping prices – smart phones are becoming a true alternative to the personal computer. As important as the smart phones themselves are the network capabilities behind them, in particular the wide availability of low-cost, high-bandwidth wireless access to Transmission Control Protocol/Internet Protocol (TCP/IP).

Enterprise mobility benefits

Benefits of enterprise mobility span the business-to-employee (B2E), business-to-business (B2B) and business-to-consumer (B2C) spectra. Enterprise mobility can improve an organisation's productivity, optimise logistics operations, enhance customer relationships and streamline supply chain management (SCM). New mobile applications provide sales staff with updated information about their customers and new ways for field forces to work more effectively. By enabling employees to work from anywhere, businesses can also lower individuals' carbon footprints.

In some areas of the B2C arena, businesses can sell their goods directly through the mobile phone. In other areas, presence information gives businesses a stronger link to their consumers. Information on where the mobile phone user is located and what he or she is doing gives businesses a significant edge in determining how to present their products and services to that consumer.

The mobility challenge

Mobility offers new possibilities to enterprises, but the path to mobility is full of significant challenges. The first is to develop an enterprise mobility strategy. The second challenge lies in determining how to manage, implement and secure new technologies across a broad spectrum of devices and carriers. Finally, companies must decide which mobile devices are most appropriate for which employees or groups of employees. The challenge is to provide employees with the mobile devices they need to do their jobs, without overspending on communications products.

What's ahead

The growth of mobile enablement will be fuelled by openness and new applications. Motivated by huge growth opportunities in the mobile platform, Internet service providers (ISPs) and IT service providers are driving the openness of mobile technologies. These providers want to see open applications, open devices, open services and open networks.

How IBM can help

IBM is leading the enterprise mobility market with next-generation technology and functionality, providing differentiated, unified communications offerings and collaboration leadership in developing mobility solutions. IBM enterprise mobility solutions drive client value by making end users more productive through the use of anywhere, any-device access to critical applications and data. Every IBM Research Laboratory is participating in mobile Web research, developing new platforms and services for the mobile Web. And IBM has launched the World Development Initiative to help develop commercially viable mobile technology solutions to improve the lives of the world's poor.

For more information

To learn how IBM is working with organisations around the world to help them develop and implement enterprise mobility programmes, contact your IBM representative or IBM Business Partner.

For IBM insights and perspectives on the wireless and mobility issues that matter most to the CIO, visit:

ibm.com/cio/uk

Additionally, IBM Global Financing can tailor financing solutions to your specific IT needs. For more information on great rates, flexible payment plans and loans and asset buyback and disposal, visit:

ibm.com/financing/uk

CIE03040-GBEN-00