



# White Paper

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**Going Mobile:**  
*Cutting through the hype*



## Going Mobile: Cutting through the hype

The mobile revolution has brought about one of the largest and fastest behavioural shifts we have seen in our working lives. We are mobilizing much faster than we went online, and as a business, sifting through what is hype and what is real is no easy task. We are learning a whole new raft of TLAs; the BYOD 'wave' is upon us and we need a 'Mobile strategy' at all costs. But do core business principles and common sense hold true in the face of these shifts?

### What to expect

Firstly, don't expect mobility to solve any cultural or performance issues within the business. Giving people more access to information is likely to amplify, not fix, any embedded behaviour.

Mobilizing unproductive employees will make them unproductive in many more places and ways than they are now - the association between mobility and productivity is by no means guaranteed. If executives are receiving over 200 e-mails a day, giving them improved access to useless information is not going to solve the problem. In fact, it may amplify the distraction and it will increase your data traffic. If this is the case, the problem is the way you communicate in your business, not where you consume it.

'The BYOD wave is here.' This is debatable - many of us have been bringing our own cell phones to work for years and have been receiving our business e-mails on both our home PCs and smartphones for years as well. At this stage there are a few organizations that have seen the need or been prepared to alter HR policies and phone policies to suit the shifts in the market. They tend to do more of the same - if you bring in your own device, they will help manage it and cover some of the costs. If the organization provides the device and contract, not much changes. The tablet market is of course different, but while many businesses have tablets, they are mainly using them as larger smart phones, in other words for e-mail, document viewing, internet, messaging and calendar.

### Addressing the barriers

In most businesses, the barriers to mobility tend to be around the HR policies and the business processes. These have usually not been altered for many years other than to perhaps add an allowance for cell phone usage. We now have a very different world. The volume of data we consume driven by the 'always on' working world, combined with telepresence, remote working and the increasing need to compete and get to know and service our markets better, means we have outgrown these legacy structures and processes.



There are enormous benefits and savings to be had from mobility, and administrative processes should not be a barrier to embracing the opportunities. Existing policies and structures tend to fall away far more quickly with Executive support, so a leader (ideally an Executive who is looking to drive operational efficiencies rather than one trying to create policy and process) with the support of the Board will quickly move things forward.

Another barrier is where to start. Pick two or three business units that have a clear need and active support for the program from within the business. The process should be quick and easy.

Once you start, the process is self-informing, provided you keep monitoring it.

## When and how to mobilize

The best place to start is where the most and significant benefits can be seen. Usually in one of three places: with the Execs, with Sales, or on the Shop floor; you will inherently know the best order, without having to engage with consultants to tell you what you already know.

- The **Executive and Senior management** team tend to feel they are above most policies and therefore engaging them in any kind of restrictive policy usually fails. They will have the contracts and devices of their choice and will usually embrace whatever technologies they can to save time. Release and support them, and *deliver Business Intelligence and reports* to their devices as quickly as you can.
- **Sales forces** are usually highly mobile and *administration resistant*. Anything that can be done to support these two tendencies usually bears fruit.
- **Engineers** know what tool is right for the job (whether you agree or not) and foisting any technology upon them will meet with open or passive resistance. They need to be *engaged in the selection process*.
- **Shop floor and operational staff** tend to be pragmatic and require robust and simple solutions that make their lives easier. They don't need to be engaged in the process but the *benefits of the way forward need to be self-evident*.

### How to engage

- Decide if you are going to have a 'one size fits all' policy; if not, determine how many groups or tiers you want to divide your organization into. The fewer, the better.
- Once you have identified the groups, determine what the most 'common sense' approach is to servicing these groups. What device would they need? How should you manage and control their access? What benefits would you expect?
- Engage with a small group of each of these user communities and come up with as straightforward a policy as possible to mobilize. Put it in place for a trial period, e.g. six months.



## Closing the mobility productivity gap

The most important step in the process is the Return On Investment calculation. Using the 'it's better to be roughly right than precisely wrong' process, don't spend too much time on it, but you do need to have an understanding of the dynamics at play when mobilizing.

The factors below need to be considered (in order of difficulty):

- **The business processes and policies** – creating policies to define and manage the people and the technology through the Product Life Cycle
- **The administrative burden** - managing the above devices, platform and policies will add quite a lot of work, including carrier identification, negotiation and management
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- **The technical platform** – what devices are deployed and how they are controlled
- **The base software platform costs** – the software required to enable the working community, including the on-device software

## Costs

Expect IT support costs to go up by a small amount approximately 5%. You are supporting the same user base but now delivering the same data to multiple platforms and multiple devices. It is not going to be cheaper or easier.

Expect your data and voice costs to go up by much more, around 30%. While the per-unit cost of communication is falling, the volume of data we consume is increasing at an exponentially faster rate.

## How not to start - the dangers of 'going with the flow'

Jumping into the process without first determining guiding principles will take you down a path that is difficult to fix. Doing nothing will take you down the same path.

A fairly typical scenario is: an Executive has been given an iPad by his daughter for Christmas; Marketing wants iPads because they are cool; the shop floor team is constrained by the robustness of the device they need, leading them down a proprietary or Android route; and the ERP platform is running on a Microsoft platform which will lead this team down a Windows route. This multi-platform rendering approach can work for larger businesses as each community is worth servicing but can be an expensive route, especially if you add to this the escalating voice and data consumption, the number of packages offered by the various suppliers and the fact the device are often 'free' on contract. The carrier market is becoming increasingly competitive and the fight to carry your traffic at rates that are tumbling means there are some great deals to be had. You therefore need to be aware of what's available and able to negotiate the options using the negotiating power of a business as opposed to a number of single users.



If you go down this path it is difficult to fix. People will be tied into two-year contracts for free device, business units will begin to adapt their behavior to suit the platforms they have chosen, combined with the above device choices. Mobilizing this business in a coherent manner necessitates a 'rip and replace' process that becomes highly politicized and usually fails. The IT department becomes a choke point for support calls for devices and platforms they are not familiar with. There are many versions of the truth being rendered and gaining any kind of control over your data and controlling the devices accessing your business becomes an increasing headache.

All the needs of all of the communities can be met, and in a way that suits your business. It is just IT after all, and IT is a services business.

## In conclusion

Mobility is not a separate business process, it is just an extension of the working environment we are in, and as with any business process a bit of focused energy and structure goes a long way. The main problems are experienced because the internal approach falls across HR, IT, Operations and perhaps Finance. The external engagements become difficult because they fall across the ERP vendor, niche software vendor, cloud, data and voice carriers. The engagements and processes are not difficult in themselves; however, many organizations are just not structured to engage with them in an effective manner. It's time for change. The market has converged and yet many organizations have not.

There are significant strategic benefits and insights to be had, but ultimately it comes down to a single core driver.

## About SYSPRO

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SYSPRO, formed in 1978, has earned the trust of thousands of companies globally. SYSPRO's ability to grow with its customers and its adherence to developing technology based on the needs of customers is why SYSPRO enjoys one of the highest customer retention rates in the industry.



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