

# BYOD: A FLOOD OF DEVICES IN THE FIELD

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This document highlights the evolving interest in the Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) strategy in mobile field service. A changing worker demographic demands that organizations re-evaluate this strategy for their business, and understand its viability for their future.

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Our mobile world continues to evolve. Think about it; just a few years ago who would have imagined that a field worker could capture a customer signature or upload a video of a down asset while on the road? These technological advancements have allowed organizations to think outside of the box in regard to IT investments for service. In this changing world, some organizations are evaluating and implementing a Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) strategy to allow technicians the autonomy to use personal devices for work use. Is this a fad or the next wave of innovation and empowerment?

## Avoid the Pitfalls of BYOD

The pitfalls and concerns of a BYOD strategy have been well documented, as seen in Aberdeen's *[The Increasing Costs of BYOD](#)* research (September 2014), but is there no place for this partnership with the field technician? Technicians already carry

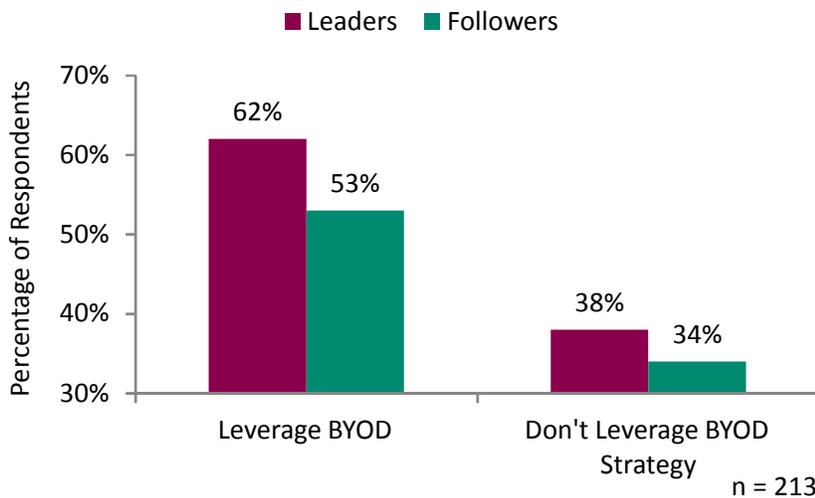
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"The Increasing  
Costs of BYOD"

on average two devices to complete their service work. And it can be assumed they are also carrying their own personal smartphone to use when they officially log off the job for the day. A recent research project by The Pew Center on *Device Ownership Over Time* found that approximately 60% of American adults have a smartphone and 42% own a tablet (as of January 2014). It is feasible that service technicians are hauling around up to three devices every day. This seems a bit excessive, especially in a technology world where one device can search the web, send emails, make a phone call, take a picture, shoot a video, and capture a signature, to name just a few of the capabilities of the latest smartphones on the market. So do we really need to still give technicians work devices, or is there another way?

# 62%

**of Leaders leverage some level of a BYOD strategy.**

**Figure 1: Leveraging a BYOD Strategy**



Source: Aberdeen Group, November 2014

Despite an apparent apprehension to a BYOD strategy based on previous Aberdeen research, Figure 1 highlights that 62% of Leaders currently leverage some level of a BYOD strategy (as compared to 53% of Followers). Furthermore, nearly half of all respondents stated that they plan to increase their use of

### Research Fact

In the next 12 months, does your organization plan to increase the use of employee-liable personal devices in field service (percentage of respondents, n = 213):

- Yes - 48%
- No - 43%
- Don't Know - 9%

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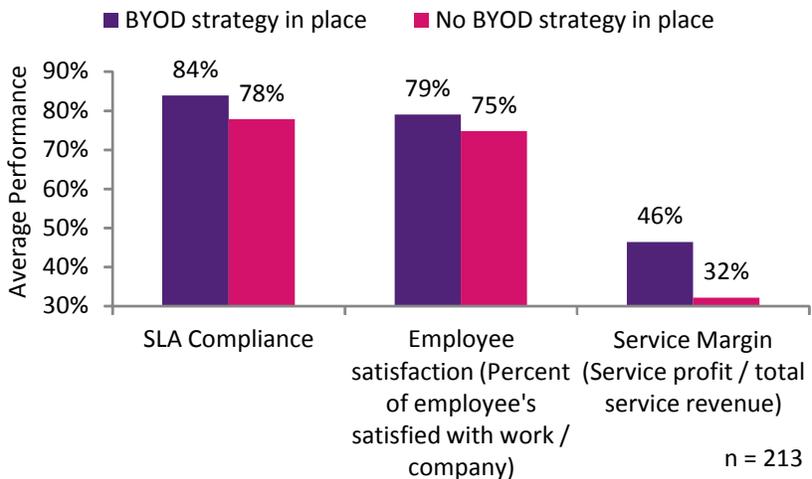
## Definition: CYOD

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For the purposes of this research, Aberdeen defines Choose Your Own Device (CYOD) is a policy where organizations define a list of supported devices that employees can choose from to access corporate networks and critical business applications. The objective of this policy is to enable mobile productivity while maintaining some IT control, in order to ensure that devices can be managed and supported appropriately.

employee-liable devices in the near future, signaling at least an interest to explore this strategy (see sidebar). The opportunity to benefit from BYOD goes well beyond just a reduction in organization driven IT spend. Organizations that have adopted some form of a BYOD strategy have been able to reap the benefits of improved SLA compliance, higher levels of employee satisfaction, and better service margins, as compared to their counterparts (Figure 2). While SLAs and employee satisfaction is important to service excellence, dollars matter in business. The ability for organizations that leverage a BYOD strategy to drive at profitability goals for the organization must not be overlooked.

**Figure 2: Results of a BYOD Strategy in Action**



Source: Aberdeen Group, November 2014

➔ [Read the full report, "Enterprise Mobility Management: Changing it Up With CYOD"](#)

In order to achieve these benefits, organizations need to follow a few best practices. A BYOD strategy isn't a silver bullet, but it can provide the organization with a number of benefits if some key points remain at the forefront of the deployment:

- ➔ **Trust the Technician** - A major concern with a BYOD mobile strategy is that technician productivity will suffer as a result of less monitoring of work. These concerns were highlighted in [Enterprise Mobility Management:](#)

*Changing it Up With CYOD* (October 2014), where productivity increased more for organizations establishing a CYOD strategy as compared to BYOD strategy (9% vs. 5%, respectively). Despite this disparity, a BYOD strategy still led to an improvement in productivity, if not one as dramatic as CYOD. In order to mitigate concerns over lost productivity, service organizations must get better at motivating and empowering technicians to go above and beyond the call of work. The concept of gamification, monitoring and rewarding desired behaviors is beginning to be used to drive performance goals in field service.

→ **Strategy for Mobile Success** - Mobility has remained a strategic part of service, as seen by eight out of ten respondents in Aberdeen's current research identifying mobile as vital. As mobile remains integral to the business, organizations must continue to grow with the technology. Without a clear strategy, leadership, and collaboration with IT, an initiative as ambitious as BYOD or company-owned devices will be set up to fail. As organizations continue to look at BYOD, it is imperative that all stakeholders are considered, the risks identified, and the value forecasted. Like all deployments, a BYOD initiative must be monitored and measured to ensure that value is being gained in productivity, efficiency, and employee satisfaction.

→ **Changing Workforce** - Aberdeen's *Field Service 2014: Access to the Right Information Empowers a Results-Driven Workforce* report highlighted that a top challenge facing service organizations is an aging workforce. As younger workers come into the fold, it is integral that organizations find ways to engage them. The ability to use a personal device which the technician is already

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accustomed to, as compared to a company mandated device, is one way to engage this next generation of technicians. As demographics of the working technician evolve, it is imperative that service organizations align with their needs and career expectations.

### Summary

The field service world is rapidly changing and organizations can no longer rest on past norms. And as consumer devices evolve to have better computing power and functionality, the opportunity to use these devices for work will continue to grow. The fear of security breaches and data loss is real, but organizations can overcome these concerns with proper controls and a clear BYOD strategy. As in other investment or IT strategies there is risk, but the flexibility and opportunity to leverage a BYOD strategy to the benefit of the technician, the customer, and the bottom line, is waiting.

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