A mobile enterprise environment

By Paul McIntyre   13 Feb 2019

Enterprise mobility is here to stay, and the C-suite must put the necessary strategies in place so their organisations can benefit from it. Even so, there are still several stumbling blocks to overcome in the traditionally-minded South African workplace.

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Adding to the complexity of the local environment, is the generational gap that exists when it comes to using mobility and technology in the workplace. But companies must manage their mobile strategies better to ensure that people accept it, understand what is expected from them, and have the necessary work ethic in place to fulfil their key performance indicators (KPIs) while working remotely.

This is about creating not only a more productive organisation in an ultra-competitive environment, but also giving employees the freedom to do their work from any location they have connectivity. Of course, this means a business does not have to cater fto an excessive amount of infrastructure at the office with employees becoming more remotely accessible.

Security focus

However, the myriad of mobile devices being used open a business up for the need to introduce an additional security layer. Cybersecurity measures must be spot on or the company can risk significant financial damage if anything is compromised. It is imperative to manage the mobile environment with an effective strategy.

Fortunately, a true cloud environment has all the required security elements built in. It must be remembered that accessing applications not part of this 'safety blanket' still require security to form an integral part of a device management plan.

There is no one size fits all approach in this regard. Each organisation is unique and has very specific requirements and business needs. And with mobile manufacturers frequently releasing new products, executives must keep abreast of all the necessary trends and technologies to ensure security policies also evolve.

Consistency key

Conventional wisdom states that more secure environments often negatively impact the user experience. Again, cloud-based solutions are cognisant of this and are developed to not only adapt to changing cybersecurity needs but also provide a consistent user environment. It is not practical to embark on new change management initiatives with every security update or feature enhancement.

The cloud can deliver true mobility and freedom (to a great extent) from technology limitations, but it needs to be planned for.

This brings us to BYOD (Bring Your Own Device) strategies which are often a double-edged sword. It is great to empower staff to have the freedom of choice when it comes to smartphones and other mobile devices they like. However, in terms of desktop and laptops, there is value in getting the organisation to purchase equipment in bulk. While it depends a lot on the maturity of the IT staff, true BYOD is expensive to make work. For example, buying Apple notebooks might not be ideal if the bulk of the network is driven by Microsoft software.

The South African business landscape is changing with the cloud being more accessible than ever. New employees (often millennials) expect companies to implement mobility initiatives. In this way, staff can be empowered and more engaged in their jobs. But whether it is catering for traditionalists or appeasing fresh talent, it all boils down to having an effective enterprise mobility strategy in place.

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