

## BYOD needs cloud cover

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There is a real opportunity for CSPs to develop new revenue streams by managing mobile services, such as BYOD, for businesses. CSPs can become the trusted and valued providers that enterprises seek for their advice and their business network capabilities. Successful BYOD and virtual desktop infrastructures need business networks that are reliable, always available and scalable to meet demand - and CSPs have been delivering these qualities for years. CSPs need to recognize and understand this opportunity and not miss out



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In most enterprises, the working environment and employee experience is quite different from that of three or four years ago. Most people in developed economies around the globe have become accustomed to accessing information whenever they want, over any medium, and on a device of their choosing. These people now expect to transport their consumer experiences into their workplace, and this is forcing employers to shift their attitudes and their work-place practices.

What role, then, do communications service providers (CSPs) have to play in making this shift a reality? This shift gives CSPs an opportunity to move beyond being a mere bandwidth provider and deliver billable value added services that help organisations meet their employees' expectations.

### Embrace BYOD

Technology is empowering users and making everything easier. This trend is easy to see in the ever-growing smartphone and tablet market. Analysts predict that in 2016 there will be over 76 million more smartphone users in the US than today. By downloading mobile applications and configuring their mobile devices to suit their personal needs, users can access a raft of information and services, from the latest train times to the ability to order their evening meal. Today, people are increasingly using these same devices at work, in a trend dubbed 'bring your own device' (BYOD).

Offering employees the opportunity to BYOD can provide many benefits. When employees work with a device of their own choosing,

with which they are familiar and comfortable, they are more satisfied and productive. So enterprises are increasingly embracing BYOD - although some are quite slow to address the challenges it poses.

As enterprise applications for mobile devices permeate the market, employees will increasingly want to connect to business networks from their own homes, vehicles, or even from public WiFi networks in coffee houses. As such, organisations need to ensure that any device that connects to the network does so in an authorised, safe and secure manner from wherever it may be and that data security is not compromised if the device is lost or stolen.

With a 'choose your own device' (CYOD) programme, enterprises provide employees

with a pre-approved list of devices to choose from. This lets IT departments retain a degree of control over the devices accessing the network and can tailor the systems to cope with demand. Nevertheless, CYOD also increases the burden on the IT department, who need to quickly test, certify and offer the latest devices. Since mobile devices go through generational changes in a matter of months this is no easy feat. A more cost effective strategy might be to contract enterprise mobility services from CSPs that can administer the corporate networks and manage device lifecycles as a core part of their business.

### Take your cloud offering to the next level

Effective BYOD and CYOD strategies also require application and service provisioning models tailored to each organisations specific business needs. Increasingly enterprises are embracing the flexibility of both public and private clouds. Public cloud is where CSPs come into the equation. According to a recent Ovum report, IT departments inadequately manage nearly eighty per cent of current BYOD activity. This suggests there's a real opportunity for CSPs to step up and deliver a superior employee experience, better business efficiency, and scalable, flexible, cloud architecture focused on device management, connectivity and collaborative communication services.

CSPs will need to extend their existing approaches to the enterprise where managed services and Infrastructure as a Service (*IaaS*) have been the focus. The advent of geographically distributed workforces and mobile access to enterprise data has created a significant opportunity to add services beyond this and provide a secure platform supporting smarter working strategies. Virtual desktop infrastructure, for example, offers users safe access to their work desktop anytime and from anywhere. Providing users working from multiple locations and multiple devices with remote access to various business tools and processes is not enough, CSPs must guarantee Quality of Service (*QoS*) to ensure employees can be productive while mobile. In this way, CSPs not only enable businesses to increase employee productivity, they also position themselves at the heart of the process and become a valued technology solutions provider for enterprise cloud, creating a new, potentially sizeable, revenue opportunity through diversification.

### Collaborate and communicate

A unified communication and collaboration (*UCC*) solution is one service CSPs could

offer enterprises through the cloud. *UCC* supports smarter enterprise work initiatives, by encouraging communication and collaboration among employees via email, instant messaging, calendaring, MMS, social media, and SMS using multiple devices, locations and channels. By combining these forms of communication via a desktop and network, CSPs lets collaborating colleagues keep up to date on each other's whereabouts and status - regardless of their device and location - and help organisations by easing the challenges of managing a remote workforce.

With collaborative technologies available on almost any connected device, teams can effectively communicate without needing to be in the same room - which is critical for both the team and individual performance. As a result, in today's professional environment, *UCC* is a service that allows CSPs use one of their core assets to become trusted partners of their customers.

Beyond hosting applications that enable communications and collaboration, CSPs need to understand how enterprise communication needs are changing as businesses move into the cloud, and adjust their offerings to accommodate this. Traditionally, CSPs have been at the core of every recent communications evolution - from the rapid uptake of mobile devices to accessing business emails on the move. Cloud-computing networks will move this trend to a higher level as business applications become more easily accessible and useable on the go.

As such, CSPs should seek to understand their clients' communication needs better than any other service provider, to help them leverage the cloud and communications as a way to better their business. For instance, a health organisation such as the Pan American Health Organization, may wish to collate and store the information from a clinical trial in the cloud. By understanding this need, the CSP can create the business process to ensure the cloud platform scales computing power up and down, provides proactive communication between the trial and employees, and adheres to the tough data security requirements.

For the first time, organisations seek not only to leverage computing power and store data in the cloud, but also to edit information and collaborate with employees through it. As owners of the platforms responsible for making the cloud a reality, as well as being in constant communication with software and hardware vendors with the technology to keep the cloud a secure and effective platform,

CSPs understand the cloud's capabilities better than any other industry, and are well placed to take the offering to the next level.

### Better manage the network

Aside from managing business applications and monetising the cloud, the emergence of real time web communications in the workplace creates another revenue stream CSPs can tap. Real-time web communications will provide a seamless browser based environment where live video conferencing can be set up with the click of a button. This allows colleagues to effectively collaborate, share content and insight with each other even if they are not in the same location, and thereby increase productivity.

As part of the process, enterprises will share vast amounts of data over the network, so CSPs must ensure they can effectively manage quality and security of the networks. To cope with user demand, CSPs need to control the network's bandwidth and seamlessly manage the data passing through it. In many instances, employees will be using mobile networks, so CSPs need to have the relevant network and policy management solutions in place to cope with demand. Providing a guaranteed experience can lead to a competitive advantage for clients, their employees business and the CSP and help clients retain top talent who, otherwise, might look elsewhere for a better work experience.

### A trusted, valued, provider

There is a real opportunity for CSPs to monetise new revenue beyond their traditional network offerings by offering and managing mobile services, such as BYOD, for businesses. By delivering messaging and communication applications in the cloud and optimising network performance to ensure seamless communications, CSPs have a real opportunity to become a trusted and valued provider that enterprises look to for advice and business network capabilities. Organisations will increasingly implement smarter working initiatives in the coming years, so it's critical that CSPs recognise and understand the opportunity and not miss out.

For initiatives like BYOD and virtual desktop infrastructures to be a success, business networks need to be reliable, always available and scalable to meet demand. CSPs have been delivering these capabilities for years, and now is the time to really show their expertise and take full advantage of the opportunity ahead of them. ●