

Mobility Brings Big Opportunities, Big Concerns



It's taken IT managers some time to recognize the impact of mobile devices in the workplace — and the reality that employees will use their phones, tablets and any other devices they can to get work done, in spite of prohibitions against it.

Enterprises need to recognize the risks they are taking and the opportunities they're forging if they continue to turn a blind eye.

Today at the [Gartner Symposium](#) in Orlando, Enterprise Mobility Management (EMM) provider [SOTI](#) and [IDG Enterprise](#) released the results of a survey that reveals that enterprise IT managers are not only opening their eyes but starting to take action on mobility.

Up to 70 percent of the IT managers surveyed said that they will spend up to one fifth of their budgets on mobility.

What's motivating them? They believe it's vital to their company's success: 68 percent of those surveyed indicated it will foster greater communications between employees and 62 percent said they expect improved communications with customers and/or business partners as well.

IT May Not Have the Upper Hand

Management objectives aren't the only drivers. About 28 percent of IT managers surveyed admitted that employees were in the driver's seat in dictating the speed of mobility adoption. But almost as many (27 percent) claimed to set the pace within their organizations.

Still, IT bosses may not be enthusiastic as they do this, we should note, because their early concerns continue. Security rates as the number one mobility challenge, followed by the ability to keep pace with rapidly changing mobile technologies ranks second and concern about integrating systems, data and applications with enterprise systems.

Mobility Strategies Aren't Options

An enterprise mobility strategy is, no doubt paramount and, less than half of the organizations surveyed have one in place.

That leaves businesses vulnerable considering that, according to the survey, 77 percent of workers use personal devices to access work data; 70 percent use employer issued devices to access public Wi-Fi; 64 percent use consumer cloud files storage for corporate work files; 61 percent have forwarded corporate work files to their personal email ([there's even a famous case](#)) and 60 percent have taken a photo of collaborative work.

Still, the impetus in the enterprise is to move forward despite the risks.

"Mobility, security and agility can be transformational," according to Natalie Lambert, senior director of product marketing at Citrix. In response to Gartner's CIO agenda report she noted:

"Organizations that achieve full mobility will unlock huge potential in their workforce and drive business growth; organizations that adopt a philosophy to protect and control application and data access across locations, networks and devices can address privacy, compliance and risk management priorities without compromising end-user productivity; and organizations that realize true business agility will be ready to adapt to changes, like mergers and acquisition, globalization, and facilities and infrastructure changes in real time."

It's time for IT leaders to address the challenges and harness the opportunities that enterprise mobility provides because the cat, as they say, is out of the bag.