Now Trending: Enterprise Mobility and the Enhanced User Experience

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Mobile is changing the game. According to AdWeek, one of the big three "BAT" companies — Baidu, Alibaba, and Tencent — plans to halt its development for desktop platforms and instead focus all of its attention and resources on mobile in 2018. This is no surprise since business leaders predict desktop devices will drive just 8 percent of user attention next year.

Mobile-first companies are able to provide a superior customer experience.

Closer to home, what does this shift away from desktop mean for enterprise mobility? It means mobile-first strategies hold the key to enhancing customer experiences and empowering employees.

Defining the Mobile-First Strategy

What exactly is a mobile-first strategy? As Marketing Land reports, there's still some confusion around this phrase as enterprises look to improve the customer journey and drive brand loyalty. Some organizations create new applications, while others focus on developing a responsive user interface for their web properties to improve conversion rates. However, the ultimate goal of any mobile-first strategy is to
improve the user experience by integrating as many mobile contact points as possible. This includes responsive websites and applications, cloud-based contact centers, and the ability for consumers to connect anytime, anywhere, using any device.

Why Now?

Mobile device adoption is on the rise and showing no signs of slowing down. While that’s a solid starting point for enterprise mobility evolution, there’s more to the story: Mobile devices and always-on connections are changing the way users interact with technology. On the consumer side, a Google survey shows if sites are mobile-friendly, 74 percent of users are more likely to return, and 67 percent are more likely to buy a service or product.

Employees, meanwhile, leverage mobile devices to make their work lives easier: As Business 2 Community notes, 80 percent of workers admit to using software applications that aren’t approved by IT. According to Practical Ecommerce, this move to mobile is also set to impact SEO rankings: Google plans to release a new mobile-first index next year that puts mobile ranking data above desktop results.

The result is that mobile-first isn’t just the newest technology fad; it represents a fundamental shift in user/technology interaction.

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Enterprise Mobility in Practice

It’s one thing to know the value of mobile-first strategies — it’s another to translate abstract expectations into reality. For enterprises, embracing the shift to mobile means tackling four key challenges:

1. **Application Building:** As noted by Entrepreneur, the majority of Americans check their phones at least once per hour, with 90 percent of this time spent using apps. Combined with declining desktop use, this means enterprises have the best chance of capturing consumer attention if they build compelling apps. While some enterprises have the internal expertise to handle this challenge, it’s often more cost-effective to partner with specialist firms that can quickly deliver responsive, reliable applications.

2. **Added Content:** It’s no longer enough to simply mimic desktop features. Consumers and employees expect applications that leverage mobile devices’ unique abilities. Consider the example of Walgreens, which designed an app to detect when users were shopping in-store, then bring up relevant sales or promotions. TurboTax, meanwhile, now lets users scan their W2s, import them into its preparation application, and video chat with experts.

3. **Cross-Device Usability:** Despite the decline in desktop engagement, users haven't abandoned traditional e-commerce shopping just yet, and many employees still use desktops for critical tasks. As a result, enterprises must design mobile web presences that work across devices; if users shift from tablet to smartphone to desktop, their experiences should be seamless.

4. **Thinking Forward:** As the wearable device market grows, any discussion of mobile devices must also include health monitors, fitness trackers, and smartwatches. Building apps to integrate with these technologies gives enterprises another way to interact with users and employees while helping to reinforce a mobile-first strategy.
What technology infrastructure do enterprises need in place to turn mobile potential into mobile reality? First, they need mobile cloud technology. In-house servers don’t have the resource flexibility to scale on demand in response to user needs. Support from top-tier cloud providers, meanwhile, gives companies the space they need to develop mobile websites, innovative apps, and multiple contact channels simultaneously.

It’s also important to consider the value of unified communications-as-a-service (UCaaS) in empowering staff to complete critical tasks. By unifying multimedia channels such as video conferencing, texting, and emails with real-time collaboration tools, enterprises can take advantage of the fundamental mobile promise: content and communication anytime, anywhere.

Enterprise mobility is now a top priority for companies hoping to capture consumer interest and improve staff agility. Maximizing impact means developing best-in-class applications that work anywhere, anytime, backed by reliable cloud services that underpin agile UCaaS.

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