

BYOD – Is it the Right Conversation?

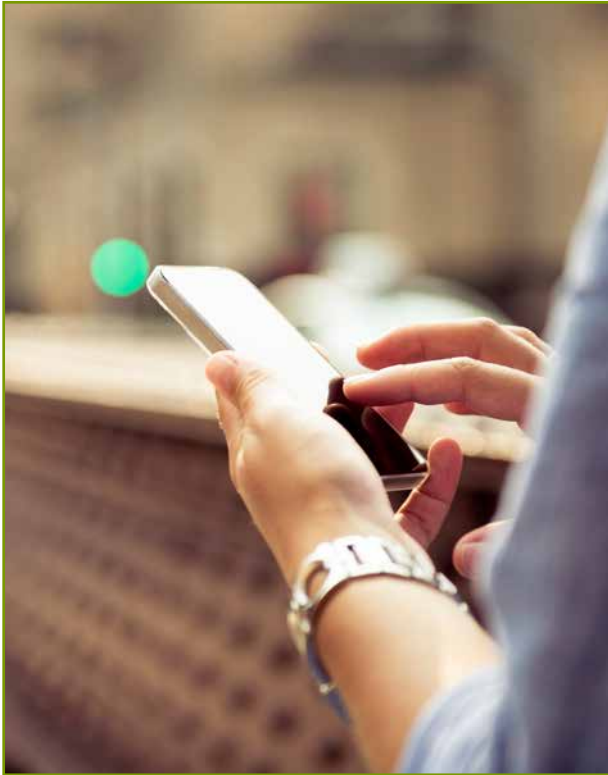
BYOD has been talked about as the next big change in business for the last 5-8 years but it has not really taken off in Europe, and now it is being predicted that 25% of BYOD programmes will fail by 2016. So with talk of BYOD 2.0, the next wave of its maturity, is it time to re-evaluate whether it is the right solution to the problem, and are there other options that should be considered?

The first wave of BYOD had its origins in the growth of personal tablets and smart phones, especially Apple devices. Senior executives started to bring these devices into the workplace demanding that they be able to use them in the corporate environment. BYOD came to the fore when senior management and sales executives realised their potential of using them for collaboration, information sharing, enterprise social networking and, with the rise in the availability of cloud-based productivity applications, that it gave them the ability to by-pass IT to get the tools they wanted. They argued they could be more productive using their own smartphone, tablet and/or laptop, and that message appealed to the CEOs. Corporate IT functions were too slow to recognise these changing behaviour patterns and trends and the consequence of allowing it. In the 'instant, now' culture, where pace is a priority for customer satisfaction and competitiveness, there was strong rationale for saying yes, despite any misgivings from IT or other parts of the business. IT had to comply with allowing personal devices onto the corporate network.

Current research is showing that the BYOD trends in Europe and the rest of the world are on different tracks. There is evidence that in Europe the adoption of BYOD is stagnating, with the proportion of CIOs planning to implement BYOD remaining almost static for the last two years, with 40-50% having no plans to in the future. European employees have not bought into BYOD as much as those in America have; they are more cautious and challenging of the benefits to them – there is still a cultural expectation that your employer, not you, should provide the tools for you to do your job.



Further, the success of those companies that are offering BYOD needs to be looked at in more detail, as it is not untypical for adoption rates to be 5% or under. So whilst figures for Transport for London show a 500% increase since 2010 it is only 2% of the workforce, and it is now starting to plateau out. Camden Council's adoption rate has reached an underwhelming 4% of the workforce. Also there are further tax, regulatory and cultural challenges for those pan-European organisations attempting to offer BYOD across multiple countries. Another new and interesting development is the IBM-Apple partnership, whereby IBM will help usher iOS devices and exclusive vertical-industry apps into the enterprise.



It is clear that the European business climate is not favouring outright BYOD. The general sense is that BYOD is in its early infancy and while some are enthusiastic about the trend it's clear that it's not without its difficulties.

Initially, the BYOD idea seemed a good solution to those tech-savvy employees, especially in the early days before the corporate policies had been implemented. But it has become clear that as IT have got to grips with the various challenges, such as security policies etc., there has been a realisation for a number of employees that it is not the panacea they were looking for. The cautious response for BYOD is being driven by employee resistance to giving up control of their device to employers as IT look to deploy BYOD management software that grants space on their personal device not under their control. Suddenly the questions that this raises coincides with a tempering of their enthusiasm for BYOD.

The concerns about personal privacy include how the company will safe guard an employee's personal content, such as photos and files, from being wiped from the device in the event of it being lost; prevent IT from knowing websites visited or applications accessed

when using the device for personal purposes; and applying policies only when the mobile device is used for work purposes, without imposing restrictions on the employee's personal mobile user experience. Organisations have not adequately reassured employees that their personal information will not be accessed by them.

BYOD has highlighted the perpetual problem that IT and the business are not aligned. Revenue focused employees want the tools to do business easier now, not tomorrow, and this is not a strength of IT. Hence with the availability of cloud based solutions and free productivity apps like Drop Box etc., businesses have started 'credit card IT'. The BYOD conversation is part of a wider debate that should be had, and not one just about devices.

The reality is that both the business and IT have not understood, or been prepared for, BYOD. The employees have not considered the corporate risks that their haste for using non-corporate devices and apps have brought. For example, when using DropBox, where is the data held, what is the potential of data leakage? Neither have IT recognised the support BYOD needs, e.g. the need to increase wireless network capacity and how to support employees using BYOD devices.

Another realisation is that BYOD is not suitable for all organisations and, more importantly, for all business functions within an organisation. Data security, compliance and regulation are driving factors in this. In considering BYOD, how many profile their employee base and understand their needs and work patterns? What is the employee ratio of executive and mobile; knowledge; office; task and contractor workers? If the employee has a choice is the case compelling enough for them to embrace BYOD?

A recent study by Forrester Consulting indicated that only a few companies measured or understood the actual business cost model for BYOD, and that even fewer could really articulate the true costs and benefits.. With the typical adoption rate being under 5%, it would be interesting to understand the cost per BYOD employee when the implementation and on-going operational costs are factored in (including infrastructure, establishing use policies, support and security).

Having been instructed to offer BYOD, some in IT believed that it was an opportunity to save budget through reducing equipment costs. Unfortunately there are pros and cons here. On the positive side employee device costs can be reduced along with the associated support costs; the need for expensive corporate device refresh programmes are no longer required; and the device costs for external contractors diminishes. But on the flip side there are new, additional costs - these can include increasing wireless network capacity; the need for mobile device management (MDM) software and other products that are necessary to maintain privacy, security and data protection for the organisation.

In 2013, the BBC's head of IT and strategy, Paul Boyns, said that providing staff with £500 to buy a device to use at work would cost an organisation £700, while the individual would only get £300-worth of benefit. Further, Gartner has identified that the extra management overhead for BYOD has been rated at over \$320 a year per user. The business case for BYOD on its own does not stack up, it has to be part of a wider, more holistic change programme.

There also other new potential financial risks that BYOD brings and which are causing some alarm among the employment law community in relation to issues such as increased access to personal employee information, as well as potential difficulties in retrieving relevant company-owned information in the event of litigation.

Also, as the forthcoming EU Data Protection Regulation comes into force, which will include all the tracked information from Mobile devices and mandatory disclosure of a breach within 24 hours, the penalty of non-compliance is 2% of the company's global revenue.

So the discussion on the next wave of BYOD is an interesting one because the belief that employees just want to use their own devices shows that the real challenge has been poorly understood. BYOD is largely a behavioural driven trend and the reality is that in Europe the business culture is not really behind it. What people want is the ability to access data and applications anywhere, on any device. In reality, the real challenge is delivering data and applications to any device anywhere, anytime, anyhow – they want to be continually connected. Secondary is the device itself and whether it should be personally or corporately owned.

With IT functions increasingly taking back control of mobility and ensuring that it is a key part of the strategy, the BYOD subject warrants further examination to ensure that it is the right route to take as the rationale behind the BYOD trend has changed significantly over the past couple of years. There are other alternatives which are more palatable for the employee such as CYOD (Choose Your Own Device), COPE (Corporate Owned Personal Enabled) or browser based solutions.

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