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Throughout evolution the environment has smoothed objects and surfaces to make them perform better: a rounded rock allows the river to flow more efficiently, a bird's form is highly evolved and aerodynamic. As the understanding of fluid motion developed and mankind strove to move faster it was found that small adjustments in shape and texture produced disproportionate benefits.

But, while it is true for the physical world, could it also be true for organisations? For example, who knows what percentage of any business is actively and efficiently directed towards its core purpose? How much more profitable and effective would the organisation be if that proportion could be increased – even by a tiny amount?

That's the central idea behind the Logicalis vision of the aerodynamic organisation; used to conceptualise and prioritise business areas where IT innovation will yield its fastest and most effective return on investment.

Think about your own organisation. Are you able to achieve optimum productivity through the effective use of all available resources? Are you truly able to use all available business data as a competitive game-changer? Do your people make every decision count? Do you have the corporate nervous system necessary to put the people who know in touch with the people who need to know?

These questions highlight potential sources of aerodynamic drag. In this paper we discuss why mobility and bring-your-own-device (BYOD), allied with collaboration, has emerged as today's engine of business growth and transformation. And how it can help reduce wasteful inefficiencies, improve the flow of business data and processes, and make people and assets more productive.

Prospering in a Difficult-to-Call Economic Environment

In 2008 the world entered what's now becoming an unprecedentedly long period of economic instability. Managers in the private and public sectors have had to learn the hard way how to do more with less (what many are calling the new normal). That's because finance and people resources, once seen as all-but-unlimited, are now harder

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to come by and keep. And, as we write, there's no sign of an end in sight.

In this difficult-to-call environment, the IBM Global CEO Survey¹ published in 2011 noted that nearly 80 per cent of respondents believed complexity in their businesses would rise significantly over the next five years. Tellingly, at the time, less than half felt their organisations were structurally ready to meet that challenge.

A year later the IBM Global CEO Survey² published in 2012 showed a positive shift in attitude. While complexity was still a significant issue, light at the end of the tunnel was expressed in terms of "a new connected era that is fundamentally changing how people engage". Of most interest, for the first time since the IBM Global CEO Survey started in 2004, technology topped the list of external forces impacting organisations. The 2012 survey reported: "Above any other external factor – even the economy – CEOs expect technology to drive the most change in their organisations over the next three to five years."

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That's a view shared by Logicalis.

Powerful new technology-driven opportunities now exist. For the aerodynamic organisation the effects must be dual-purpose: realising operational improvements and cost savings right now, while driving business transformation for sustainable longer-term gains. We primarily see those opportunities in the following areas:

- Improving the customer experience
- Creating innovative service delivery models
- Speeding up new product and service development cycles
- Driving deeper business insights and better informed decision-making

Highly interdependent, mobility and collaboration technologies are crucial to achieving this dual-purpose effect. Understanding the nature of those technologies and their relevance to the lasting creation of the aerodynamic organisation is key in becoming more efficient.

Achieving agility through mobility

¹ Capitalizing on Complexity: Insights from the 2010 IBM Global CEO Study

² Leading Through Connections: Insights from the 2011 IBM Global CEO study

“Mobility is the new face of engagement,” says Forrester in a 2012 report³. The trend today is towards a BYOD environment. Once seen as anarchical, it has matured into the recognition that a corporate technology straitjacket is no longer the way to get the best out of people. The pressure from an increasingly digitally-savvy workforce is to be connected to their personal and business lives simultaneously. That comes not from a wish to while away their working hours, but from the belief that nine-to-five and fixed desks are, for them, rapidly becoming ancient history.

In the same report Forrester states: “200 million of the 350 million employees who will use mobile devices for work in 2016 will use their own devices rather than devices provided by their employers.” The BYOD paradigm shift is in recognising the person as the thing that’s mobile, not just the device. The issue is about extending access to desktops and corporate data to people on the move using whatever device. The challenge is in keeping those mobile digital warriors connected, while keeping the security of the enterprise protected.

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The rise of BYOD leads neatly onto the topic of flexible working, which carries with it enormous benefits. For example, a case study published on one major British company’s website⁴ records that around 80 per cent of its people have embraced flexible working, including 14,500 permanent home workers of which 1,120 are outside the UK. Less office space has yielded savings of £100 million per annum, with one-off capital receipts of £500 million from 4,000 building disposals.

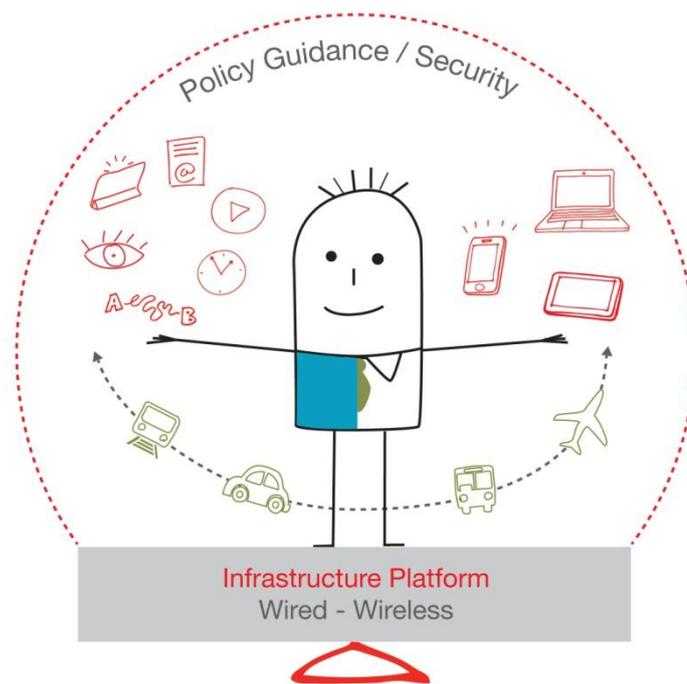
Meanwhile, the company’s home workers take 20 per cent fewer sick days, while their productivity is estimated at between 15 and 30 per cent greater than office-based counterparts. Flexible working also means 97 per cent of women taking maternity leave return to work there, compared to a UK national average of 40 per cent, saving the company over £5 million in training and recruitment costs. Also, in one year alone the company eliminated 717,000 face-to-face meetings, removing the need for some 1.4 million return journeys and saving 53,000 metric tonnes of CO₂.

³ Mobile is the New Face of Engagement: Forrester Information Workplace Report 2012

⁴ http://www.btconferencing.co.uk/case-studies/the-conference-powered-agile-enterprise_en-gb.pdf

Those are statistics that no organisation can afford to ignore. Implicit in them is the powerful treble of raising staff morale, enhancing the customer experience, and improving shareholder returns, all at the same time. But how does one achieve such levels of mobility and flexibility at maximum speed, yet without shedding technological tears along the way?

Mobility Working - Improving Productivity



For BYOD to be truly successful, employees' mobile devices must go beyond being just another way to access messages and email. This adds complexity for the IT department, as a user's personality will dictate the non-company applications that they adopt. For example, there are over 500,000 apps available to download to an iPhone, which will have to sit happily alongside corporate software.

Thus, for any organisation to create a BYOD environment and ethos, there are six prerequisite enabling factors, as follows:

1. **Implement security policies:** Discipline is essential and, if an organisation has not established specific BYOD policies for its employees, they cannot be said to be breaking any rules. So a company should review its IT security policy and specifically address non-company owned mobile assets.
2. **Prepare your wireless network:** Assess and where necessary upgrade the wireless network to ensure it is capable of supporting the additional coverage and bandwidth requirements of employee-owned mobile devices. Future trends in wireless with emerging standards must be incorporated in this preparation.
3. **Assess your access arrangements:** Keeping a BYOD employee engaged includes ensuring that remote access is secure, appropriate, available and – most importantly – cost effective when outside the range of the corporate wireless network.
4. **Monitor and manage activity:** Design and implement a mobile device management strategy to provide complete provisioning, configuration, monitoring and reporting services for the connection of non-company owned mobile devices.
5. **Make your infrastructure BYOD-friendly:** The IT infrastructure must incorporate and integrate BYOD tools to make it fit for the future, including real time collaborative applications delivered over a secure and robust fixed/mobile network platform. This must include quality of service controls for appropriate prioritisation of critical wireless traffic as it crosses into the fixed network.
6. **Finally, and vitally, the BYOD environment needs to be context aware:** This means building extra intelligence into the infrastructure so that it can recognise when users move between fixed, mobile, and wireless domains. With that information it can restrict access as appropriate to safeguard data and assure security policy compliance. For example, it might be fine for a doctor to view and amend sensitive case notes at the patient's bedside, but one might not want that to happen in the coffee shop.

Providing transparent mobility with location-independent services ensures anytime, anywhere communications for optimum

productivity. Home workers become more efficient while still feeling an intrinsic part of the office-based team. Field workers no longer have to travel into a central office to collect work and access their business applications. Managers are freed from their desks and can spend much more time out with their staff. Everyone wins.

The complementary role of collaborative technology

Old-fashioned hierarchical organisational models with their cascaded communications mechanisms make for snail's pace decision-making, the perpetuation of divisionalised thinking, and inflexible slow-to-react management structures. The aerodynamic organisation may seek to replace them with horizontally-aligned teams – empowered by mobility and collaborative technologies – working towards company-wide goals, and releasing the power of information previously held in inaccessible silos.

Wonderful though that sounds, the range of collaborative technologies is vast. It extends to audio and video conferencing, web conferencing, and multicast communications, the simplicity of instant messaging and the complexity of social networks, as well as a rich multimedia combination of any of those modes. It's also got to operate on any medium, from a high-end video conferencing suite down to the desktop and out to video-enabled mobile devices like smart phones and tablets. In addition, it must integrate all content, not just desktop software but corporate data and business applications.

The collaborative potential is huge. Already we're seeing video-enabled supply chains accelerating time to market through speedier decision-making and remote product assessment and design. Internal communication is being transformed with senior managers able to interact in real time with distributed teams right across the globe. Video conferencing is bringing images to all devices – fixed and mobile – enriching communications and encouraging people to talk to each other no matter where they are.

Against that background, the need for business agility has driven growth in virtualisation technologies. The many weeks required to source, configure, test and connect a physical server precludes the possibility of delivering rapidly-scalable services. Small wonder then that the idea of running virtual machines as partitions of larger servers in the data centre is now commonplace rather than the preserve of the

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mainframe – providing the ability to spin-up a new server to meet changing service demands in minutes; hours at most.

Vital to the aerodynamic organisation, that flexibility is essential in managing the current difficult-to-call commercial and economic environment. Companies that have embraced such virtualised architectures are much better positioned to ride out market changes and move rapidly to take advantage of short-window opportunities.

The ascent of virtual desktop architectures is the last side of the mobility coin. With office software and business applications running on virtual servers in the data centre such things as version control, software licensing, anti-virus updates, and a whole host of other administrative tasks, have to be done once only and in one place. It makes the organisation more agile and enables mobility because people are not tied to their desktops. Everything they want can be available nearly anywhere and at any time from any device.

With open standards mobility and collaboration really are interdependent. While it's perfectly feasible to pursue mobility and collaboration as separate strategies, infrastructure is the key. Recognising that makes the benefits of being an aerodynamic organisation more easily achievable

Conclusion

There's a common myth – thought to date back to the last years of the 19th century – that humans only ever use 10 per cent of their brains. Scientifically proven to be untrue, it's nevertheless powerful enough to persist in the minds of most people. Following this analogy, if the same were true of the alignment of a business to its core activity, small changes could produce enormous gains.

In closing, let's not miss the point we made earlier: with open standards mobility and collaboration really are interdependent. While it's perfectly feasible to pursue mobility and collaboration as separate strategies, infrastructure is the key. Recognising that makes the benefits of being an aerodynamic organisation more easily achievable.

Using mobility and collaboration to achieve low aerodynamic drag starts with putting your organisation into the equivalent of a wind tunnel to visualise people, information, and process flows. The objective is to use the technology to smooth away any flaws interrupting those flows and arrive at streamlined working models – where everything and everybody operates and co-operates smoothly towards the achievement of common goals.

About Logicalis

Logicalis is an international IT solutions and managed services provider with a breadth of knowledge and expertise in communications and collaboration; business analytics; data centre and cloud services; and managed services.

Logicalis Group employs over 2,500 people worldwide, including highly trained service specialists who design, specify, deploy and manage complex ICT infrastructures to meet the needs of over 6,000 corporate and public sector customers. To achieve this, Logicalis maintains strong partnerships with technology leaders such as Cisco, HP, IBM and Microsoft.

The Logicalis Group has annualised revenues of over \$1 billion, from operations in the UK, US, Germany, South America and Asia Pacific, and is fast establishing itself as one of the leading IT and Communications solution integrators, specialising in the areas of advanced technologies and services.

The Logicalis Group is a division of Datatec Limited, listed on the Johannesburg and London AIM Stock Exchanges, with revenues of approximately \$5 billion.

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