8 Factors To Consider When Creating Your Enterprise Mobility Plan

This paper examines the opportunities and challenges that mobile devices can bring to organisations and proposes that an architectural, ordered approach will be needed to deliver long-term mobility solutions that will keep pace with user expectations, device capabilities and web/cloud services.

WHAT IS ENTERPRISE MOBILITY?

IN A NUTSHELL

Employing a range of mobile devices across an organisation to improve bespoke business processes each harnessing different device capabilities, web services and corporate application systems.

WHAT WE SUGGEST

You will need a clear strategy, focused on outcomes and some sort of architecture to provide order for long-term management and cost effective delivery.

IN DETAIL

When most people think about apps for mobile devices the focus is generally on consumer-focused apps. These apps are built to service specific needs of (usually) large numbers of people. Their focus is horizontal. One app solves a generic problem for lots of people. The most successful, and the ones which get the most attention, are installed by millions, or hundreds of millions of people. There is understandably a lot of focus on these apps because many of them become household names.

Likewise, within an Enterprise there are usually one or more 'hero' or cornerstone apps, which are most often aimed at the organisation's customers. These apps are usually the ones that organisations rightly start their mobility journey with. They potentially are or will become one of the main touch points with their customers and lavishing time, attention, design and development expertise on these apps is money well spent.

But it is important to differentiate between the exercise of building and deploying these cornerstone apps and the exercise of deploying mobility throughout the Enterprise. The Enterprise Mobility we're discussing here is more concerned with how mobility will affect almost every business process and how to put yourself in the best position to make mobility a differentiator that delivers commercial advantage. We will argue that this requires a multi-layered strategy, long-term thinking and, regardless of specific products, an ordered architecture that provides structure in which to develop, deploy and control as many apps as needed to maximise the business value.

For without such an approach it will be totally impractical to meet the differing mobility needs of different groups throughout an organisation, many of which will be relatively small and highly specific. Broadly based multi-purpose apps will not be able to effectively link to the internal business systems and workflows, nor will they have the capacity to change in an agile manner and harness the changes in devices and web/cloud services. The larger the organisation, the quicker they will realise that the security, integration, robust availability, auditability and business intelligence offered by the abstracted architectural layer are fundamental to a wide ranging enterprise solution.

IN A NUTSHELL

Your mobility strategy needs to be all about giving you competitive advantage. It is a business strategy not a technology one.
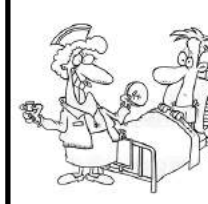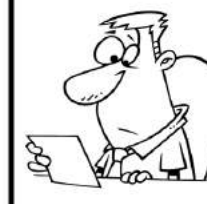
WHAT WE SUGGEST

Focus first on the business process efficiencies and customer service improvements you could make with mobility, don't be side tracked by what the underlying systems and core applications currently call for.

IN DETAIL

Although organisations share a general range of business fundamentals (eg finance, inventory and HR systems) it is a fact that most have their own quite specific methods of working that are unique to their business – often conferring their own specific competitive advantage (perceived or real).

Consider also every business process in an organisation that involves people in situations away from their desks (and that includes office workers) has the potential to be improved and enhanced by being able to use mobile devices. There is a business efficiency and service revolution based on mobility beginning to sweep through businesses that is both exciting but challenging because of the demand of chaotic response times and potential for spiralling costs.

So, Enterprise Mobility in most medium to large organisations will end up being concerned with the provision of many bespoke apps throughout an organisation with each one serving specific user activities by enhancing a selection of organisation specific business processes. Enterprises should look for those business processes where, by using a mobile device to provide and/or capture information and cut out intermediate processes they could save 30 minutes, an hour, two hours a day for a user as well as decrease processing times, increasing information accuracy and integrity or improve customer service.

activity app	activity app 2	activity app 3	activity app 4	activity app 5	activity app 6
community care	clinical nurse	doctor	patient liason	rostering staff	exec manager
use cases					
• Job sheet and reporting • 500 staff	• e - medication • 280 nurses	• e - Records • 90 doctors	• case notes • 25 staff	• dispatch • 5 staff	• real time dashboard • 15 managers
business benefits					
• 2 hours / day • $3.01m p/a	• 1 hour / day • $875k p/a	• 1 hour / day • $450k p/a	• 4 hours / week • $65k p/a	• 2 hours / week • $10k p/a	• 3 hours / week • $90k p/a
accrued benefit					
• $3.01m p/a	• 3.975m p/a	• 4.425m p/a	• 4.49m p/a	• 4.50m p/a	• 4.59m p/a

And there are a vast number of these processes and activities everywhere you look. Multiply any one of these by the number of users affected and you soon have a compelling case to provide an app – provided it doesn't take too long to develop/deploy and it can be maintained and improved as economically as possible.

These apps are activity-oriented apps. And they are best achieved by modelling the interactions that make sense and add value to each user group in the context of their mobile workday. You don't need to deliver a whole application system to the vast majority of users, indeed in most cases it would be inappropriate.

To remain focused on the outcomes sought means accepting that the business systems which have for years dictated how things were done, are now relegated to both the source and repository of the organisations information assets. How they are updated and maintained and how they are embellished with additional information from devices and other services is now the domain of the mobility strategy.

So, look to each user group in turn and the efficiencies to be gained from their activity-oriented app/s. Moving systematically through the organisation allows you to carry forward the knowledge gained, shortening development times and compounding the benefits and returns from each as you go.

HANDLING DIFFERING RATES OF TECHNOLOGY CHANGE WITHOUT LIMITING OPPORTUNITY

IN A NUTSHELL

Realise that most technology decisions across the enterprise will impact a mobility strategy. And any strategy needs to cope with the very different timeframes and different speeds of review for each technology class.

WHAT WE SUGGEST

Choose a strategy that accommodates change and can capitalise on the benefits offered by individual technology improvements.

IN DETAIL

When viewed strategically Enterprise Mobility is a wide subject. It ranges from device selection and management policies through to the service architectures controlling access to corporate systems.

Device policy, plan management and optimisation, and mobile device fleet management services are important decisions for any Enterprise. But they are decisions that can and should be taken separately from the decisions regarding the app development and deployment architecture, and separate again from the decisions regarding the service architecture of how your apps will connect to core business applications.

The requirement for each of these technology areas to be abstracted from each other is fundamental to an Enterprise Mobility strategy, as decisions and changes around each, occur at different rates. For example the cadence of change for devices is going to be much more rapid than the cadence of change in app development environments, which in turn should be more rapid than changes in the service architectures that you use to integrate into your corporate systems.

If you don't ensure that decisions you make about devices and plans are abstracted from that of the apps you provide and the way they link into your back-end systems, then you risk limiting your ability to embrace new technologies or changing device strategies. Effectively locking you in to a very narrow path.

Rate Of Change
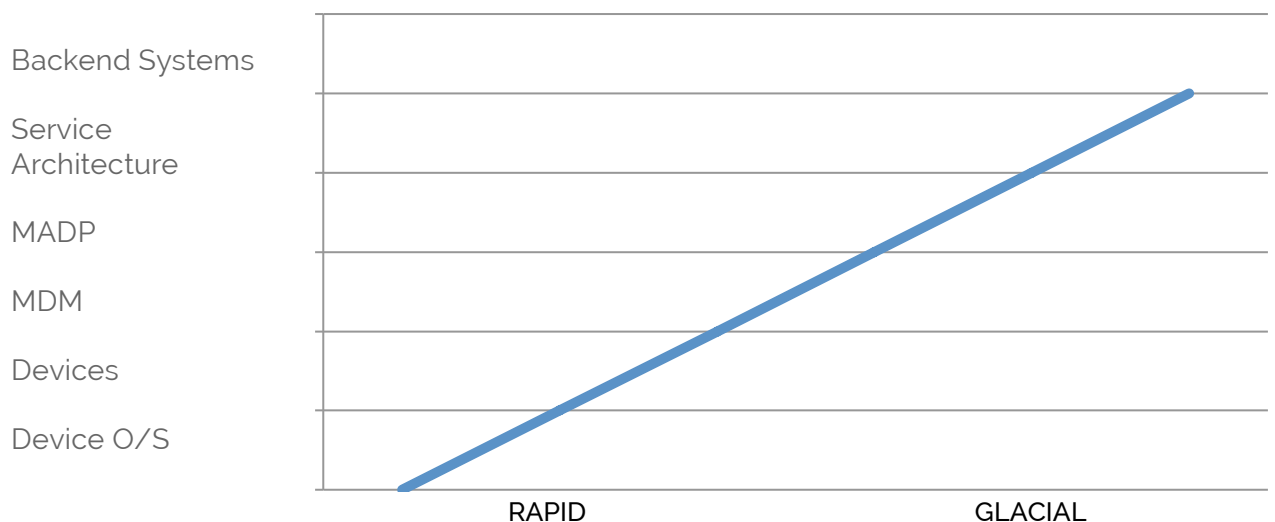
HORIZONTAL PRODUCTIVITY APPS

IN A NUTSHELL
Mass-market productivity apps shouldn't drive your mobility strategy – they don't confer competitive advantage.

WHAT WE SUGGEST
Choose your productivity apps so that they fit in well with your main mobility strategy.

IN DETAIL
In every organisation there will always remain a clear need for horizontal productivity apps. Examples include email, calendar, document sharing, note taking, business card reading, some location services, etc. These are generally what you could regard as "bread and butter" functions that are in most cases not specifically related to the core business workflow of an organisation.

Horizontal productivity apps are an important part of the Enterprise Mobility mix and such decisions do have implications, so while some may be 'cooler' than others remember they are support applications to the main operational processes. The main criteria for choice should be the fitness for purpose and the ability of each one to work with the other choices and alongside the core business processes you're seeking to improve.

ACTIVITY-ORIENTED APPLICATIONS

IN A NUTSHELL

Provide apps that improve how a user can perform an activity more efficiently or effectively. Focus on activity improvement.

WHAT WE SUGGEST

Look at the specific interactions in each department or user group that will save time if mobilised. Be explicit about the time savings or service improvements when implementing activity-oriented apps.

IN DETAIL

Being able to closely model a user's activities, and directly support and enhance those activities with just the right combination of information and resources when and where they need them, can make for powerful productivity gains.

This approach also demands agility but it means development can be iterative. There is no need to attempt as a single 'waterfall' development effort, every mobile activity that user would engage in. It affords an organisation the opportunity to begin with a task or two that can be rolled out extremely quickly, gather feedback and support, make adjustments just as quickly and then in collaboration with users determine their next task that would benefit from a similar treatment.

This approach has proven to quickly engage users, building a groundswell of support amongst user groups and departments, reducing user resistance, increasing adoption and therefore providing more certainty in project success.

START WITH THE USER!

IN A NUTSHELL
Systems-led or systems-tethered mobility is starting from the wrong place. Mobility is about business change by improving the way users perform their activities. So focus on the users and their activities first.

WHAT WE SUGGEST
Your thinking needs to change from system to user/activity. The core business systems are resources. This is an IT culture change.

IN DETAIL
IT needs to release some of its control and accept that user groups are now well versed in the capabilities of horizontal productivity apps and devices. And have a far more intimate understanding of what combination of capabilities would add significant value to their work day.

The organisation needs to accept that the long-standing investment in core business applications made solely with a PC/laptop as the intended access device, can no longer be the determinate of how users (especially mobile users) complete activities.

Instead what organisations should be seeking is every improvement in information capture, in contextual data and in workflows that the mobile device environment makes possible for users. This level of business change can only come when the artificial boundaries created by core business applications are broken down. Instead, look first at the outcomes required from each activity and then at the various sources available (including the core business applications) to apply innovation to the activity and enhance the outcome.

Providing the environment for this to occur is as much a cultural change as a technology one and those organisations successfully making the change have 'lines of business' managers taking a far more active role in driving mobility initiatives than in any previous technology adoption.

PACKING THE RIGHT BAG FOR THE JOB

IN A NUTSHELL

Don't try to boil the ocean. Providing light, easy-to-use apps which require little or no training to use and which can be easily improved through input from the users will provide the greatest business value to your organisation.

WHAT WE SUGGEST

Pack light. Be responsive. Ensure you can absorb change and make improvements quickly and delight your users.

IN DETAIL

This concept of 'packing the right bag' is an analogy that simply demonstrates the benefits of, and need for, activity-focused apps.

Now, think of the 'systems-oriented' approach as someone providing you a massive bag containing everything that you could possibly ever need in your work day – in short, the entire system. Its not going to be particularly user friendly, its not customised for specific mobile activities and its going to be hard to find what you need. So yes you can theoretically lug it around, but you're going to struggle with it and eventually leave it behind as its just too hard to deal with.

Think then of the ability to quickly and intelligently combine a slew of resources (both in-house and third party) as needed, to serve very clear identifiable activities. Interactions are the building blocks to support activities and the more common interactions can be built once and deployed across many apps.

So 'packing the right bag' refers to the ability to quickly respond to users and user groups with just that combination of interactions needed, and avoid anything that's superfluous to the job at hand.

SEIZING THE REAL OPPORTUNITY: GOING BEYOND JUST EXTENDING AN EXISTING SYSTEM TO MOBILE

IN A NUTSHELL

You are missing the greater opportunity of the mobile revolution if you limit yourself to just extending out your existing systems as a stand alone project for specific devices.

WHAT WE SUGGEST

Think afresh about how you take advantage of the three great changes to be harnessed:

1) ever-smarter devices
2) ever-expanding wealth of new web & cloud services,
3) tech-savvy users (or prosumers)

IN DETAIL

There are three major new capabilities that any mobilisation exercise needs to consider.

Really smart devices that are getting smarter by the month
The radical change to the end-user computing device from a laptop or desktop computer to a smartphone or tablet (or something you'll wear), throws open another very important opportunity that should not be overlooked.   These are increasingly feature-rich devices. They have touch screens on which you can draw, cameras, GPS, accelerometers, scanners. They're also small and light, and in one form or another are likely to be with the user almost all of the time.
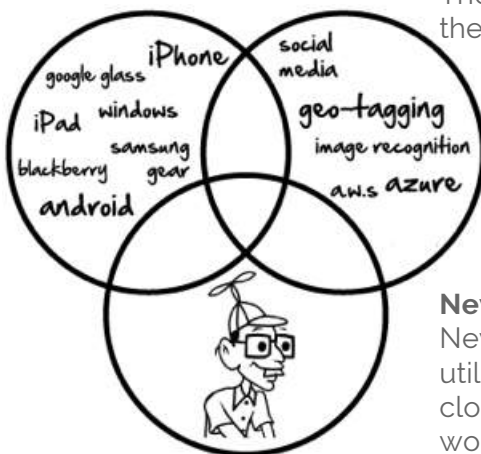
New web/cloud services constantly emerging
New web services are emerging everyday and many employees already utilise them as standalone productivity apps. Things like traffic feeds, road closures, weather, route planning can all add massive value to an employees work day but especially when such services can be tightly integrated as part of a user's activity-focused app.

In a similar way, cloud services based around highly flexible computing power are now emerging. Services such as image recognition, speech recognition or OCR can be closely coupled within enterprise apps.   The important point is that none of the existing core application systems have been designed with any of these factors in mind. Therefore taking full advantage of such developments is always going to be problematic when you start from a point of 'extend this existing system' to a mobile form factor.

Tech-savvy users
Finally the organisation needs to accept that todays business users are well versed with the capabilities of devices and are constantly trolling the world of available services, blurring the traditional lines between personal and work. In response to this change, Forrester has stated that a central IT Department's responsibility must shift from 'doing' to 'setting the rules' and articulating the means of integration and data management necessary to protect the business, then auditing and governing compliance with these rules.

HOW THE BLINK MOBILITY PLATFORM DELIVERS ON THE PROMISE OF ENTERPRISE MOBILITY

IN A NUTSHELL

Think beyond your cornerstone app. Recognise that enterprise mobility is a journey that will impact most if not all parts of your organisation and you'll need the tools that are going to stay the distance. Particularly when the ground moves around you.

WHAT WE SUGGEST

Only a handful of platforms gives you the infrastructure to rapidly **develop**, **deploy**, **control** and **operate** activity-oriented apps that **harness** the best of new technologies and **integrate** cleanly into your corporate systems.

IN DETAIL

As a pure-play cloud-based Enterprise Mobility Platform, BlinkMobile is one of a very select group. A group that understands that enterprise mobility is more than building apps or taking existing systems to a smaller form factor.

develop   deploy

control   solve   integrate

operate   harness
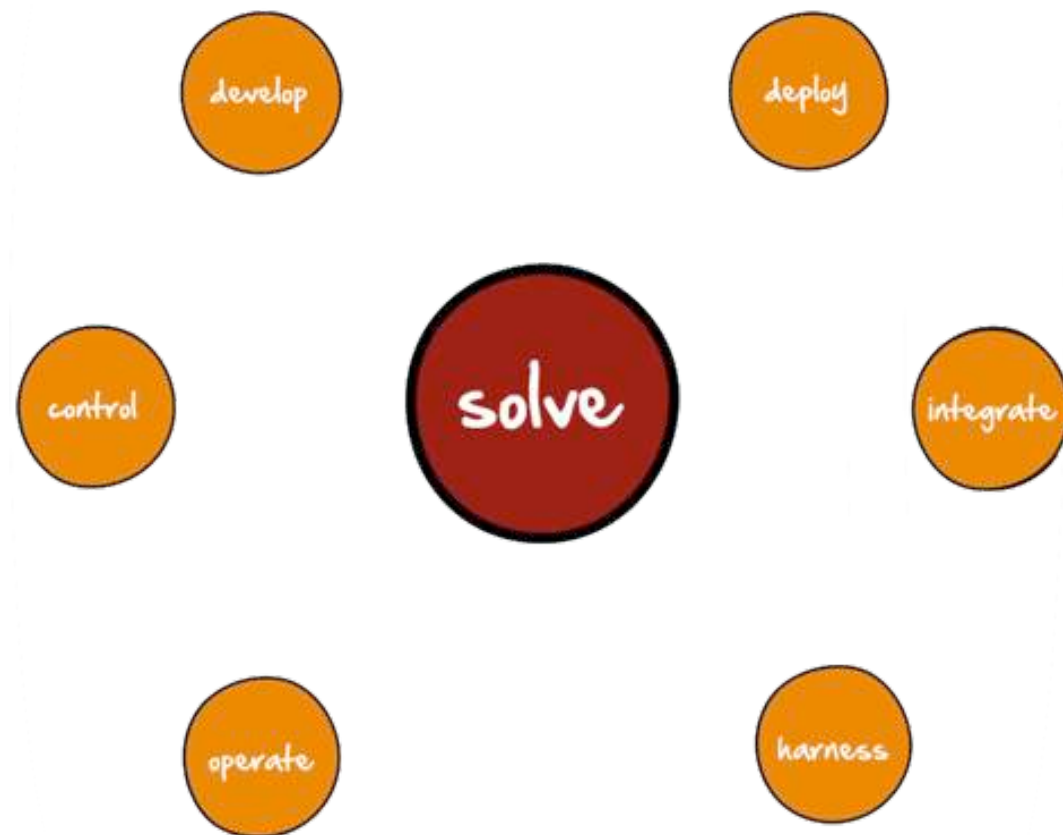
Development is vitally important, but so too is agility and the ability to respond quickly. Being able to start small and scale up is a huge factor and this is where cloud technologies play a major role. But such flexibility can't be at the expense of robust infrastructure, security, reporting and analytics. While open systems and robust middleware allow you to abstract existing technology layers from each other, stay focused on the user and the outcomes sought from each activity, and embrace what's new without breaking what's already in place.

These are the attributes that are quickly forming on the mobility 'wish list' of today's forward-thinking enterprises.

Contact us at sales@blinkmobile.co or visit www.blinkmobile.co for more information