Mobility: Happier Workers for a More Productive Enterprise

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Introduction

For all types of businesses, whatever the sector, staying competitive also means increasing productivity and efficiency of workflows.

But workers need the right tools and support if they are to be expected to hit their new targets, and, with 74% of employees saying they miss out on key information[1], it is clear that improving communications should be at the top of the corporate agenda. For this reason, more and more businesses are reassessing their communications solutions to ensure they truly support all their departments and workers. Among the key reasons businesses are increasing their investment in deskless worker technology are productivity (33%) and employee experience (23%)[2]: an inextricably linked duo.

Stumbling blocks

Up to 80% of workers do not sit behind a desk[3]. This staggering proportion should serve as a stark reminder to all businesses investing in collaboration tools and remote communication systems to improve worker productivity. It will be impossible to reach their efficiency objectives and support their people, unless they first acknowledge that most workers are mobile rather than desk-based and need access to information and collaboration tools while on the move.

Ironically, although the Covid-19 pandemic triggered a rush to provide desk-based workers with new tools to work from home, the same was not the case for frontline workers who were not provided with new technology to carry out their work (65%), and continue to be dissatisfied with the tech tools available to them[4]. Frontline workers are still overlooked when it comes to introducing and improving collaboration tools, despite their number and importance to key business processes and the economy as a whole.

In addition to technology challenges, some typical productivity killers to look out for are:

- **Poor communication**

  Communication in the workplace is essential to productivity. Research estimates an average loss of $62.4 mil per year per company because of inadequate communication between employees[5]. Similarly, another survey found that poor workplace communication may be the cause of a range of business problems, including a failure to complete projects (44%), low employee morale (31%), missed performance goals (25%), and even missed sales opportunities (18%)[6].

  Add to this that 86% of employees and executives point the finger at a lack of effective collaboration and communication as the leading causes of workplace failures[7]. It is clear we are looking at the weakest link.

- **Demotivation**

  61% of mobile workers say they have considered quitting because they are unhappy with their work environment[8]. According to recent reports, this demotivation costs as much as $7 trillion in lost productivity[9]. Demotivated employees are mostly indifferent to the organization they work for, and therefore do not invest their best ideas in the business. Demotivation is also a key reason for high staff turnover with the knock-on expense of hiring new staff and training them.

EFFECTS OF DEMOTIVATION ON EMPLOYEES[10]

- Decline in mood **(62%)**
- Reduced productivity **(49%)**
- Decline in mental health **(48%)**
- Lower work quality **(39%)**

- **Lack of Visibility**

  Remote and mobile workers often work alone in large, distributed environments, making it difficult for desk-based colleagues to reach them. This impacts planning and resource management but can make workers feel that they are less likely to have their work acknowledged. Some may even feel that they are being passed up for promotion because their activities aren't easily visible to senior management.

  Worse still, if isolated workers do not have access to tools to report possible issues and malfunctions, these are more likely to snowball into more significant problems further down the line. More importantly, frontline workers may feel unsafe if they have to work night shifts alone or in other high-risk environments and therefore need access to a range of safety-enhancing mobile tools for help quickly when needed.

Mobility for productivity

It is safe to say that the majority of employees need to be able to work from anywhere to carry out their jobs efficiently. Enterprise mobility solutions do just that, enabling workers to communicate and stay connected with the rest of the team wherever they work.

A connected workforce

Even when working remotely, desk workers, only need a laptop and internet connection to access information and contact colleagues. Frontline and mobile workers, on the other hand, need to be mobile on-premises at all times, and therefore require appropriate systems to access and contribute to information and stay in communication with their co-workers.

57% of enterprises have invested in mobile technology or mobile security in the last year.[11]

Flying high with more information

A leading air transportation company equipped its mechanics with a handheld device so they could order parts and call up information wherever they are working.

This led to planes getting serviced and moving more rapidly. Pilots were also provided with iPads to stay connected wherever they are in the world, improving quality of life and work satisfaction.

24/7 access to information and apps

Consumer mobile devices have already revolutionized our personal lives, giving us the freedom to interact with friends and family via voice or text, anytime, anywhere. Introducing technology solutions for the mobile workforce means providing them with similarly intuitive, easy-to-use tools that can be used on the move, but with added safety and security features and vertical-specific productivity apps and durability to withstand even the toughest of work environments.

Safe and Secure

Cyber security and worker safety are hot topics right now, and enterprise mobility can help with both. Mobile devices introduced in a vast and sometimes dangerous environment, such as factories and industrial plants, should be equipped with man-down alerts triggered by sensors able to, for example, register a sharp fall followed by a period of inactivity, so that an automatic alarm can be sent to alert emergency services.
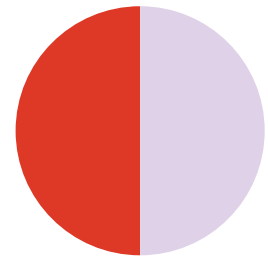
50% of digital leaders worldwide identify one of the biggest threats to their business with data leaks and cyberattacks because of distributed user devices.[12]

When it comes to security, the biggest threat certainly comes from the web. Sensitive business or customer data is particularly at risk when businesses introduce Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) policies that demand employees access work-related documents and accounts from their own consumer-grade devices. Unfortunately, 56% of mobile workers report using their own technology at work to fill gaps their business has not provided for[13]. This exposes the business to a number of threats, especially hacking. Investing in state-of-the-art enterprise mobility solutions that prioritize both physical and cyber security instead protects workers, data, and customers.

Efficient Workflows

By giving frontline workers seamless, speedy and easy access to information, you can reduce frustration for both for workers and customers that, for example, do not have to wait around to find out if an item is available, where to purchase one like it or discover when it will be back in stock.

The introduction of mobility solutions can also simplify processes by giving access to the same platforms and providing accessible information to the whole workforce, whether desk-based or mobile. It can be useful to rationalize workflows by understanding how and where devices are used. A more joined-up approach to information flows contributes to improved business intelligence and better decision-making at every level.

Mobility
in Retail

More and more supermarkets open 24/7, with reduced staff numbers, in order to give night-shift workers or night owls the opportunity to shop when they can and need. Mobility solutions give every worker the possibility to check product availability from the store, even if there's no one working in the warehouse, improving customer experience, even when short of staff.

Mobility in Healthcare

What if a major accident takes place in the middle of the night, with reduced staff working at the local hospital?

The stable connectivity and crystal-clear communication provided by enterprise mobility solutions enable hospital staff to alert colleagues working in other department or specialists on-call fast, thus avoiding potential risks for those in need of treatment.

Satisfaction is part of the package

A postal company found that carriers were dissatisfied with the way their schedules were managed.

They needed a digital way to see their schedules. At the same time, the company also wanted to communicate with them more effectively, encouraging team leads to be in the field rather than the office. Introducing a new, digital mobile system increased employee satisfaction and costs in just 18 months.

Enhanced connectivity, communication, and collaboration

Lone workers do not have to feel alone: with the right mobility solutions they can stay connected with their colleagues, exchange information, report issues, and retrieve important data just as easily as their desk-based counterparts. Thanks to a flawless information exchange, a connected workforce can collaborate better, tackle problems more efficiently, and offer a better customer or patient experience.

A happier workplace is a more productive workplace

A recent report highlighted the clear correlation between worker happiness and having access to the right technology to do their job; specifically, 78% would like technology that helps give them the right information at the right time[14]. Happier workers are also more productive workers, and are up to 13% more productive, according to research by Oxford University's Saïd Business School[15]. Add to this that dealing with frustrated customers and processes that halt and hiccup is no one's favorite pastime, and it becomes clear that providing workers with solutions that help them navigate these challenges plays a key role in making the workplace an overall happier place.

Discover more on how mobility can help your workforce achieve more

SOURCES

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About Spectralink

As an award winner in mobile technology, Spectralink has been transforming the way our customers work and communicate for 30+ years. Through our determination to do extraordinary things, we enable mobile workforces and empower our customers and partners to explore what's next, what's possible. With our enterprise grade, best-in-class mobile solutions, we are with our customers wherever they work, however they need us. Our people, commitment to innovation and our passion are our foundation for success.

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