

BRAVE NEW WORLD

HARNESSING THE POWER
OF THE DIGITAL WORKPLACE

A WHITEPAPER FROM SEQUEL GROUP

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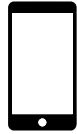
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“Trends come and go, but to even the biggest cynic, the argument for the digital workspace is hard to resist”

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Setting the scene – the digital explosion

If you've ever misplaced – or even lost – your smartphone, you'll be familiar with the swell of panic that comes from realising your digital life hangs in the balance.

If you've been through that experience, you're not alone: a 2014 survey by Bank of America suggested that 47 per cent of people thought they couldn't make it through the day without their mobile device.

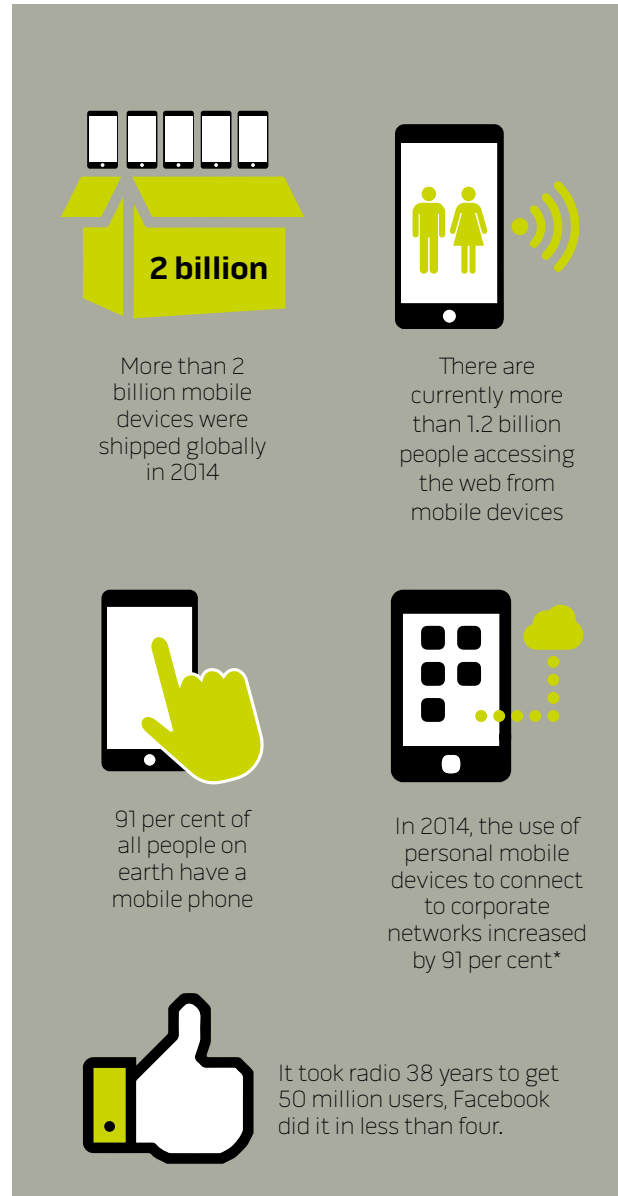
Over the past decade, the way we communicate and share information in our everyday lives has been transformed. Last year, a report by GSMA Intelligence confirmed there are now more active mobile devices on the planet than people, at 7.2 billion.

Here are just some of the numbers behind the phenomenal boom in digital communication:

- More than 2 billion mobile devices were shipped globally in 2014
- There are currently more than 1.2 billion people accessing the web from mobile devices
- 91 per cent of all people on earth have a mobile phone
- In 2014, the use of personal mobile devices to connect to corporate networks increased by 91 per cent*
- It took radio 38 years to get 50 million users, Facebook did it in less than four.

*(all statistics from Super Monitoring 2013 apart from *Check Point 2014)*

47 per cent of people thought they couldn't make it through the day without their mobile.



The Facebook statistic is as important as any, because it illustrates that this revolution is more than just technological. It reflects a complete shift in the way we expect to interact with people and share information in the digital age.

Of course this offers a huge opportunity for organisations, but also a huge challenge. If we now expect social media, mobile services, and instant sharing in our daily lives, it stands to reason that the same should be true at work. Employees can quite honestly ask, 'why, when I have total communications freedom outside work, do I return to the digital world of 2005 when I enter the office?'

That's where the digital workplace comes in.

There's growing evidence that getting the digital workplace right improves productivity, which in turn drives business performance. It's estimated that shifting information from older technology like email to newer elements of the digital workplace – such as an enterprise social network (ESN) – can increase productivity by between 10 and 25 per cent, depending on which survey you believe.

1.2 Introducing the digital workplace

The following definition from Deloitte provides a useful starting point for understanding what the digital workplace is, and how companies and workers can benefit:

"The digital workplace encompasses all the technologies people use to get work done in today's workplace... It ranges from your HR applications and core business applications to

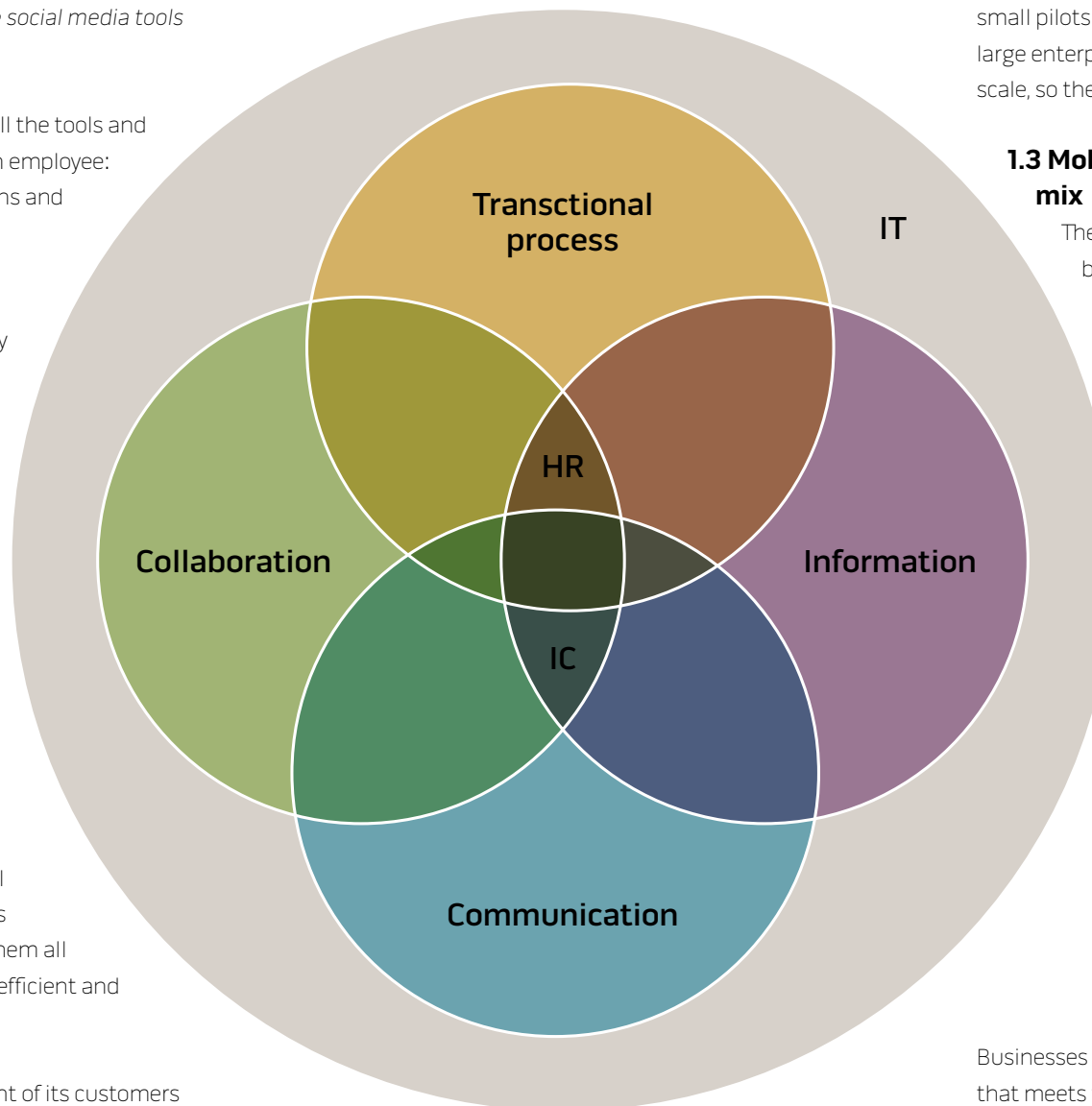
email, instant messaging and enterprise social media tools and virtual meeting tools.”

So, the digital workplace encompasses all the tools and systems that satisfy the four needs of an employee: information, communication, transactions and collaboration.

Under 'information' you might expect to see a traditional intranet or the company website; 'transactions' include forms and tools for expenses claims or time sheets, and 'communication' is the hold all for everything from the company magazine to health and safety notices. The fourth element, 'collaboration', is critical to the success of modern enterprises and many new tools, including ESNs, enable interdependent working and support each of the four different employee needs, to some extent.

Charles Fenoughty, Digital Director at Sequel Group, said: “Most businesses will already have systems in place to address these needs; the challenge is bringing them all together so they offer a more seamless, efficient and flexible way of working.”

Research from Atos finds that 80 per cent of its customers are currently planning for the digital workplace or running



small pilots. However, it estimates that only 20 per cent of large enterprises have embraced the digital workplace at scale, so there is still a lot of work to be done.

1.3 Mobile as part of the digital workplace mix

The other crucial element to consider is how businesses can harness the power of mobile technology – so pervasive in our personal lives – to make the digital workplace more portable and accessible than ever.

Businesses have been generally slow to match the speed with which mobile technology has shaped our personal lives. But all that is now starting to change:

- According to research from Internet Evolution, 200 million people will make use of a BYOD policy in 2016
- In 2014, the use of personal mobile devices to connect to corporate networks increased by 91 per cent (Check Point 2014)
- Jane McConnell's Digital Workplace Trends 2014 report predicted that 30 to 40 per cent of organisations would be providing mobile services for the workforce by the end of the year.

Businesses need to offer workers a mobile experience that meets the expectation for instant, always-on communication that shapes our lives.

2 DIGITAL WORKPLACE – THE BENEFITS

2.1 Choice, communication and flexibility

The digital workplace is more than a trend; it is a working reality. The tools and systems that support our digital working environment will change, but the need to make it work harder and smarter for businesses will only increase.

Enabling a more seamless digital experience at work is even more urgent now, as more tech-savvy workers enter the world of work. These 'millennials' have grown up in a digital world – a mobile world – and businesses need to reflect that reality.

"Unfortunately, many businesses have been slow to react to and adopt new technology, often citing cost or security concerns as barriers to change," comments Charles Fenoughty. "However, as new technology becomes available and costs come down, these arguments no longer stand up against the compelling case for digital."

Some benefits include:

- A way to reach employees in multiple formats, offering choice
- More scope for interaction and feedback, allowing cross-organisational dialogue to replace top-down communication
- Potential for greater productivity and ultimately employee satisfaction by making it easier to access information while supporting flexible working
- Excellent measurement of results and user data to explain digital behaviour
- Complete flexibility for employees to access information whenever and wherever they need it

- Potential for huge IT savings through the use of cloud technology, saving on licence costs, hardware, maintenance costs, update costs and more
- Potential disaster-recovery improvements through hosting information in the cloud
- Information can be shared more effectively by using shared spaces and documents: this helps with version control and reduces email traffic
- Organisations can introduce shared, secured areas for business partners, improving security and reducing email traffic

2.2 Barriers to change

So, on the one hand you have overwhelming demand for the digital workplace, freedom of sharing information and the need for mobile. On the other, you may well have very real concerns about security, privacy and the protection of data, made even more pertinent by high-profile data leaks, cybercrime and hacking attempts.

Here are a few common concerns when it comes to the digital workplace:

- Viruses and malware can be easily downloaded unintentionally
- Lost data and theft – any data held on mobile devices can be stolen easily unless properly encrypted



3 IN FOCUS: FLEXIBLE COMPUTING

- Surveillance and privacy: the Electronic Frontier Foundation (EFF) rated 39 popular messaging apps and utilities against seven security metrics, with the likes of AIM, BlackBerry Messenger and Snapchat among several scoring just one out of seven
- 82 per cent of security professionals expect mobile security breaches to increase, while 98 per cent have concerns about the impact of a mobile security incident and 95 per cent expect challenges related to BYOD*.

(*Check Point Survey 2014)

Thankfully, there are more options available now to keep data safe. But security is about more than just technology, it is also about behaviour change, and empowering employees with knowledge and the awareness needed to help keep themselves - and the business - safe and secure in a digital world.

Next we look at three areas where the digital workplace is evolving: flexible computing, internal communications on mobile, and Bring Your Own Device (BYOD).

“Unfortunately, many businesses have been slow to react to and adopt new technology, often citing cost or security concerns as barriers to change.”

3.1 Virtualisation: anytime, anywhere

Flexible computing sees companies replacing the concept of conventional fixed desktop computing with a virtual computing model. This approach uses virtualised desktops and applications held centrally on a flexible, secure and resilient infrastructure inside the company's firewall.

Simply put, it means you can access your applications from any machine or device, wherever you are. Users have flexibility and choice; companies save money by reducing the cost and complexity of software updates, and the need for one computer for every worker.

The logo for NATS, consisting of the letters 'NATS' in a bold, black, sans-serif font. The 'N' is stylized with a thick, rounded top bar.

UK Air Traffic Control provider NATS is one business to move to this type of computing model in recent times.

NATS' Chief Information Officer (CIO) Gavin Walker explains: “Four years ago, we talked to the business to make sure that our Information Solutions strategy was lined up with the NATS business and the challenges we were facing. We had a simple choice – to upgrade in the same manner we had in the past, or to do something radically different that would make our IS infrastructure future proof.

“Having consulted with people across the business and examined how we could best support them and our business strategy, we chose the latter. And the added bonus? This will be achieved at the same time as reducing our investment and operating costs.”

3.2 Collaboration: new ways of sharing

As part of the changes, NATS introduced Team HUBs, which offer a central area on the network where teams, projects or groups can share and edit documents, arrange meetings and hold mutually important information in one place, so everyone is working from the same documents. This approach also reduces email traffic.

NATS is also introducing External HUBs, which provide similar functionality but allow the business to share information with external suppliers in a safer, easier and more secure way than traditional emails.

Gavin says: “Through these new HUBs (including a new personal space called My HUB) we will be able to take greater care of our information assets, helping everyone in the business to share data appropriately, keep only what we need, find information easily, and be certain they have the latest versions.

“We'll also be introducing Microsoft Lync, which will replace the existing Windows Messenger application. Lync will provide a new instant messaging platform with the ability to share desktops, applications, and more.”

Gavin concludes: “Our whole philosophy is about making your work IT experience and performance better than what you'd expect at home, with choice to match.”

As well as reducing hardware and software costs, this type of model also gives the potential opportunity to introduce, in future, desktop devices that use less power and heat, a move that will reduce CO₂ emissions and energy costs.



3.3 Data access: a new way of working

Businesses are also trying a new approach to file management: using the latest features in Office 365 to share all documents in the cloud. This means that employees' devices are 'locked': they can't save any files on them (on their Desktop or in their My Documents folder, for instance) – everything is saved in the cloud.

This brings benefits in terms of resilience (particularly when it comes to backing up documents), accessibility and consistency, but behaviour change remains an initial challenge as employees may resist changing entrenched ways of working.

Another benefit of the modern digital workplaces is their value in reaching people on the move. Plantronics, for instance, has found that almost 30 per cent of respondents in their research spend up to half of their time working outside of their official office space, so mobile technology needs to be at the heart of any new system.

“...the ability to communicate with people through new touchpoints will bring opportunities and challenges for businesses and their own personal digital workplaces.”

But the latest technological changes don't just relate to mobiles. A Sequel client recently upgraded its intranet from SharePoint 2010 to SharePoint 2013, which enabled it to move its intranet infrastructure to the cloud. This means that the only tools employees need to access their intranet are a web browser and an internet connection.

The team expected people to use the intranet on their smartphones and tablets; what they didn't expect, and were excited to learn, was people were even using their web-enabled TVs and games consoles.

Adds Charles Fenoughty: “As we approach the internet of things and more devices are hooked up to the internet (think heating systems, white goods and cars), the ability to communicate with people through new touchpoints will bring opportunities and challenges for businesses and their own personal digital workplaces.”

4 IN FOCUS: INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS ON MOBILE



4.1 Mobile first

When it comes to internal communication, an increasing amount of companies are exploring 'mobile first' options as they look to adapt to employee lifestyles.

Of course mobile won't suit every organisation, and any business needs to assess the demand and viability of electronic communication before pushing ahead, but with security becoming less of an issue, the opportunities are beginning to outweigh the threats.

The use of 'sandboxes' (secure working environments that open in separate locked windows) on company or users' own devices means that intranets and ezines can be easily and securely viewed, but for companies yet to move to this model, there are alternatives.

4.2 Updates on the move

Nationwide Building Society has been trialling its own app, Buzz, with 60 senior managers, using it to deliver news updates, information and the company's social media feeds straight to mobile devices.

"50 per cent of our managers are generally on the move," explains Nationwide's Intranet Innovation and Optimisation Manager Paul Wheeler. "They typically don't have the time to log on to the intranet from their laptop just to read the news. Now they just click on the app from their mobile device."

The Buzz app uses a solution called app:ic, which pulls chosen stories direct from the intranet, so no extra work is needed. Readers can rate articles, with a commenting facility also being considered.

The content on Buzz is a mix of external, internal and confidential information, with much mirrored from the intranet, and the highly-secured app sits fully outside the firewall, so there are no incoming security risks.

Paul says: "We do understand that the traditional working environment is a thing of the past, and we are now working to adapt to that change. We're also in the process of making our intranet fully mobile, at which point employees will be able to build their own profiles, start to follow each other and collaborate like in an internal social network."

5 IN FOCUS: BRING YOUR OWN DEVICE

5.1 The benefits of BYOD

BYOD is a crucial part of offering an 'out of work' user experience internally. It allows employees to see work content as just as flexible and accessible as they've come to expect in their home lives, without needing to carry and check multiple devices.

While, understandably, not all employees have an appetite for merging their private and professional worlds on one device, businesses need to offer choice. Plus, the desire is greater than you might expect. Did you know, for example, that most iPads are bought by people who intend to use them at work, rather than at home?

Many organisations also have people working 'under the radar' using tools, systems and software they have either bought themselves, or downloaded for free (think file sharing platforms like Google Docs). This rising phenomenon of people providing their own systems is called Bring Your Own Services, or BYOS. Some companies find and crack-down on such practices while others realise that employees are solving their own problems since the workplace is failing to keep up with habits and needs.

5.2 BYOD: be aware

Viruses and malware can be easily downloaded unintentionally – it is estimated that around 20 per cent of items in Android's app store contain malicious code. Using a personal device that doesn't have the sophisticated virus control of business-owned equipment can present a valid threat that needs to be addressed.



Use of USB drives also causes security alarm bells to ring, either with the potential to lose them or (as in a recent high-profile case) leave them in public places.

Stefan Stefansson of Apperian, which provides a secure, targeted mobile application management platform and enterprise app store, highlights the questions all companies should ask when creating a BYOD policy: "When considering BYOD, all enterprises need to have in mind how they will ensure personal information on employee devices doesn't get compromised and vice versa.

"To address these concerns, businesses should only implement a solution that secures the enterprise data on the phones without limiting or compromising any functionality on a personal device. If not, you risk upsetting employees and opening yourselves up to security issues.

"Businesses should also be looking at solutions that require authentication, encrypt data, have the ability to disable any business-specific apps and remove any data if the phone is lost or stolen."

6 CONCLUSION

The personalised digital workplace has arrived, and it ranges from the most rudimentary landscapes (think email and an intranet) to ultra-advanced, all-singing, all-dancing architectures that bring together information, communication, transactions and collaboration into seamless digital experiences.

The big question is, what technology does my organisation need in order to harness the benefits of a more connected, flexible, informed and empowered workforce? And, what investments can I make now in order to save costs in the future and create a digital workplace that can flex and change as new technology becomes available?

A one-size-fits-all approach rarely works in this space, and businesses must consider mobile and cloud technology, security, flexible computing, BYOD and BYOS as part of their digital workplace mix.

Mobile technology, in particular, is set to pull down traditional limitations in business communications in the same way that it has in our daily lives. While the hunger for adopting it will vary depending on the nature of your business and employee demand, mobile opens a world of opportunity for forward thinking communicators and their target audience.

With careful planning, research and a focus on addressing the very real security concerns from both the businesses and end users' perspectives, the benefits of the digital workplace are waiting to be realised.

Appendix A: Bibliography/further reading

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