



Why Consumer Phones Aren't a Fit for Your Enterprise

A Frost & Sullivan White Paper

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INTRODUCTION

Frost & Sullivan research shows that enabling mobility across the enterprise is a key driver of IT investment for companies of all types and sizes, which are providing smartphones and apps for their end users in record numbers.

But when it comes to their mobile strategies, not all businesses are created equal: in service industries like healthcare and retail, manufacturing firms, and transport and logistics organizations, it can be a costly mistake to rely on consumer-grade devices, rather than hardware that is purpose-built for the enterprise. Frost & Sullivan strongly recommends that companies purchase, deploy and support mobile devices among their employees whenever possible. Purpose-built phones offer better Wi-Fi connectivity within a corporate building or campus, longer and more versatile battery life, tested integration with enterprise applications, lower TCO and many other features that support enterprise workers in an always-on world. As they think about how to make the transition, IT managers should consider a number of factors in any new smartphones they deploy.

This paper will outline the data behind the increasingly mobile workplace; highlight the risks and rewards of BYOT, COPE and company-owned devices; emphasize the need to arm employees with enterprise-grade smartphones as soon as possible; and offer recommendations for deploying mobile phones for maximum success.



THE STATE OF MOBILITY IN THE “RUGGED” ENTERPRISE

A 2017 survey of almost 2,000 IT decision makers around the world reveals that more than one-third of all employees routinely use a smartphone for business. Among those companies, 63% provide smartphones to employees who need them for work.

But that leaves 37% of organizations allowing their employees to use their personal devices at work (bring your own device (BYOD))—and that can pose significant risks and increase costs for those businesses and their end users. While allowing employees to use their own cellphones to get business done may seem advantageous, it can impede security and business performance—and it can cost more in the long run once you factor in support, risk management and lost productivity.

The trouble gets even worse when you consider that less than half of all respondents say they fully enforce BYOD policies among their employees, leaving the majority open to significant threats, including cyber-security, data loss and ownership issues around intellectual property and other company resources. And 45% of organizations expect

BYOD use to increase over the next two years—primarily because as the world continues to move to a mobile-first environment, many companies simply do not have the policies or budget in place to support their employees' need to stay connected to apps, services, data and one another from anywhere.

For some business models, BYOD is not an option. Company-owned devices are the only choice when heightened security, sharing of devices and in-building use is important. And yet, many such organizations deploy consumer smartphones to increase employee satisfaction and user adoption. That leaves IT faced with a dilemma: ensure security, privacy and operability or meet the (presumed) desires of the end user.

The good news is, with the best purpose-built phones, companies no longer have to make that choice.

WHY CONSUMER PHONES DON'T CUT IT

It's a virtual certainty that if employees are using their personal devices for work, they're using consumer technology. But even those companies that pay for and provide mobile phones to the employees who need them typically rely on consumer devices—be they Apple, Android or even Windows-based.

If you use consumer phones in your business, you're probably supporting multiple operating systems—and that can get expensive. Frost & Sullivan research shows that while 80% of organizations support Android OS, 57% support Apple and 30% support Windows Mobile. That's a lot of software to manage.

Unfortunately, consumer phones are typically a compromised choice for many businesses, regardless of size or industry. Let's look at some of the reasons consumer tech doesn't meet the needs that enterprises demand:



They're not built for constant use. Most of us have had to replace our personal phones at least once. Now imagine if you have to use the device in a harsher environment—out in the field, in a hospital, on the manufacturing floor or in a busy retail environment. Consumer devices can't handle that kind of wear: they're easily cracked or broken, are not fully waterproof and can be damaged by cleaning solvents. They also don't test application integrations or offer support for enterprise software tools. But one of the biggest issues is the notoriously poor battery life, which becomes a problem for workers on eight-, 10- or even 12-hour shifts. (Even with a juice pack, consumer phones won't run for 12 hours.) That leaves companies having to purchase and support more devices—sometimes giving two phones to every employee, so they'll always have one for their shifts.



They don't perform well with poor network quality and coverage. Even in the best regions, cellular coverage within corporate campuses and throughout retail locations can be spotty, at best; it's often much worse in healthcare and manufacturing environments, where there's interference from machinery, medical equipment or other wireless devices. The problem has only gotten worse as more companies embrace the Internet of Things and the number of connected endpoints has exploded. As a result of these and other factors, in many workplaces, smartphones are limited to Wi-Fi connectivity for data and voice. But because Wi-Fi isn't always optimized for voice connectivity, users are likely to experience dropped calls, latency and jitter if they are using a phone that isn't designed to handle voice over Wi-Fi.



They can't support complex management needs. Consumer phones are meant to handle consumer use, and their support structure is set up to do the same. Employees can't visit an Apple store every time their iPhone doesn't do what they need it to, but MIS can't get the training and certifications they need to support the devices in-house. Android devices are more open, but neither platform is designed to handle software upgrades, application alerts, data management or other common enterprise IT issues. And forget about advanced security and compliance—they simply don't exist on consumer devices.

PURPOSE-BUILT PHONES ARE A SMART CHOICE FOR BUSINESS

As business leaders think about how to best implement a mobile strategy for 2018 and beyond, Frost & Sullivan strongly encourages them to consider deploying purpose-built phones in the enterprise. These devices are designed, built and supported solely with enterprise users in mind. As a result, the phones address all of the challenges presented by consumer phones above, offer additional benefits, and are usually more cost-effective and productivity-enhancing than their consumer counterparts in the long term.

For starters, purpose-built phones offer reliable network connectivity—not just to a cellular network, which many employees won't have access to while on the job, but to the all-important corporate Wi-Fi. Most consumer smartphones support Wi-Fi, but it is typically optimized for data, not voice, and lacks basic assurances like echo cancellation and noise suppression in SIP calls. That leads to glitchy calls that are simply unacceptable in a workplace environment, especially when decisions are mission-critical. Furthermore, most enterprise users roam the corporate building as they carry on their conversations; the phones need to seamlessly hand off the call from one wireless access point (AP) to the next. Unlike consumer phones, which look for new APs only when the current one is weak, a voice-optimized device will constantly seek the strongest connection available on the network. That ensures higher voice quality that consumer phones simply cannot match. And purpose-built phones offer secure messaging that is compliant with all government, industry and company-specific regulations.



Purpose-built phones also deliver excellent integration with a company's existing network, data and software infrastructure, ensuring employees can access all the information, applications and communications tools they need to get their jobs done from anywhere, any time. An open platform allows IT to deliver seamless integration with enterprise software, as well as develop apps specific to the devices and their company's unique needs. And because this can all be delivered on the company's premises or via the cloud, businesses can deploy their mobile technology in the way that suits them best, ensuring total control over their data. They offer industry-compliant application delivery and can serve as a consolidation point for all enterprise communications. Even leading consumer phone

companies don't invest the necessary time and money to ensure their mobile devices are optimized across the enterprise platform and app environment.

Purpose-built phones have excellent battery life, allowing employees to use them for an entire shift without downtime. Companies that run multiple shifts and need employees to share devices can do that, too; these devices make it easy to swap out batteries without losing any work, data or, in some cases, even current conversations—one new model keeps a charge for up to a minute while the user swaps in a new battery.

Finally, purpose-built phones may not be as sleek and sexy as newer consumer models, but they get the job done—and the best ones are approaching consumer phone look and feel. These devices are designed and tested to withstand brutal conditions and can be dropped, slammed against surfaces, dropped in water, cleaned with anti-bacterial solvents and otherwise put to the test. They'll pass with flying colors (and if they don't, their performance is usually guaranteed with replacements for manufacturing defects). When the devices do need to be upgraded or replaced, costs are generally much lower than they are with consumer devices, since purpose-built phones are purchased and paid for like any other IT investment.

USE CASES: HEALTHCARE, RETAIL, HOSPITALITY, INDUSTRIAL



- **Healthcare** caregivers work in unique environments, in which they need access to their phones while maintaining excellent care and safety of their patients. Using purpose-built phones allows caregivers to reduce infection by regularly cleaning their devices with hospital-grade cleansers, share devices among users as shifts change, leverage barcode scanners for dispensing medications, and access leading EHR, nurse call, alarm and secure messaging solutions. Large, high-quality screens make it easy to review patient data, while slim, lightweight devices let employees carry the phone during procedures and patient interactions.



- **Retail** employees must balance specific job tasks—check-out, inventory, price checks—with personal customer service. Purpose-built phones with built-in barcode scanners let employees manage inventory without a second device, while Bluetooth connections deliver easy access to POS card readers, making it easy to get work done from the customer floor. Support for leading inventory, logistics and store management applications and APIs for integration to existing in-house tools ensures employees can use existing back-office software. The devices are rugged enough to be dropped repeatedly during use, and long battery life gets them through an entire workday.



- **Hospitality** workers are always on the go, and their phones need to reflect the fact that more automation means higher productivity and lower costs. Purpose-built phones are lightweight enough to carry discretely during the workday but robust enough to withstand dropping and heavy use by multiple employees. Integration into workflow tools and checklists lets employees use standard industry applications, while support for Bluetooth headsets makes hands-free talking a breeze. Advanced devices may even be programmed to allow card key access via the phone to certain employees.



- **Industrial** environments are particularly tough on devices, and smartphones are no exception—dust, concrete floors, heavy machinery and safety equipment all take their toll. Purpose-built phones are exceptionally rugged—they are waterproof, dustproof and drop-tested, and can withstand even the harshest production floor. Designed to operate in loud environments (with noise canceling, echo canceling and louder ringtones), the devices support leading workflow management apps, as well as audio and video conferencing to make communication easier.



BEST PRACTICES FOR DEPLOYING PURPOSE-BUILT PHONES

Once you've decided to invest in purpose-built phones to enable secure, reliable and consistent mobility in your business, consider what matters when selecting a provider. Excellent voice quality is table stakes, of course, but that requires paying attention to connectivity (especially how the phones handle Wi-Fi access and hand-offs). Look for durability—including waterproofing—that will deliver reliability over the long haul in a tough business environment. Make sure your chosen provider has relationships with relevant partners so that you can be sure to get integrated support and testing for the applications you use most—including UC telephony (including Microsoft Skype for Business) and industry apps.



CONCLUSION

Frost & Sullivan research shows that when it comes to their mobile strategy, most companies are still relying on consumer devices—often brought into the organization by the employees—rather than solutions that are specifically designed and built for the enterprise. That's a risky decision, one that increases security threats to the organization, lowers productivity, impacts support and ultimately leads to higher total cost of ownership. Purpose-built phones deliver better call quality through improved Wi-Fi connectivity, stronger battery life and availability, better reliability, proactive integration with enterprise applications, advanced management and control functions, and enterprise-grade support services. Deploying these devices ensures your employees will have access to the apps and data they need, and be as productive as possible in any environment; allows you to easily share phones among employees across shifts for better ROI; and gives you complete control over company data, devices and applications.

NEXT STEPS 



Schedule a meeting with our global team to experience our thought leadership and to integrate your ideas, opportunities and challenges into the discussion.



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