Are Mobile Applications Helping Your Business Processes?

There is a lot of attention paid to the impact of Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) on the enterprise and IT, especially regarding requirements for safeguarding customer and corporate information while supporting a constantly changing variety of tablets and smartphones.

BYOD does indeed represent a challenge, and opportunities. What might get overlooked is *how the applications running on mobile devices can impact your information and document processes*.
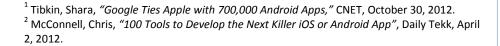
The ease of downloading free or low cost mobile apps, not to mention the addition of mobile extensions to popular enterprise applications, has resulted in an explosion in mobile functionality. The Apple Store and Google Play each offer about 700,000 mobile apps for iOS and Android platforms.[1]

Just as important is the growing number of mobile apps developed or adapted for use by individuals in Lines of Business and functional areas beyond the view of IT. Development tools for mobile applications are widely available from sources like Apple's iOS Developer Program, Android's Developer and salesforce.com's ISVforce; there are also Do-It-Yourself (DIY) tools that require little or no coding.[2]

This fundamental change in the application development landscape has far-reaching implications for IT—and the enterprise information and document processes fundamental to business success.

Mobile Apps Are, Well, Everywhere

Historically, IT exercised substantial control over the deployment and use of enterprise applications that enable critical business processes, such as those from SAP, Oracle, Microsoft, IBM, etc. This is still largely true, and today includes the mobile apps designed and sanctioned by the vendor to enable workers to leverage such enterprise applications from wherever they are: SAP 's BusinessObjects Mobile; Microsoft

Tracey J Rothenberger is Senior Vice President and Chief Information and Process Improvement Officer, Ricoh Americas Corporation

About Tracey

Tracey J Rothenberger was named Senior Vice President and Chief Information and Process Improvement Officer for Ricoh Americas Corporation (RAC) in November 2010.

Prior to his added responsibilities as Chief Information and Process Improvement Officer, Tracey has served as the Senior Vice President and CIO for RAC since their acquisition of IKON Office Solutions in November 2008.

Tracey joined IKON in 1999. In 2001 he was promoted to Vice President of IT Infrastructure to establish and lead IKON's centralized IT infrastructure organization.

Contact Tracey at Tracey.Rothenberger@ricoh-usa.com.

---

[1] Tibkin, Shara, *"Google Ties Apple with 700,000 Android Apps,"* CNET, October 30, 2012.
[2] McConnell, Chris, *"100 Tools to Develop the Next Killer iOS or Android App"*, Daily Tekk, April 2, 2012.

RICOH
imagine. change.

FROM THE DESK OF.....
PERSPECTIVES OF RICOH THOUGHT LEADERS

Managed
Document
Services™
MPS and Beyond

Dynamics NAV Mobile Sales and Service; and Oracle Business Intelligence Mobile.

But mobile device users now have easy access to a rapidly growing array of applications to enhance both their personal and work lives. Mobile apps can be downloaded, many for free, from application market places like the Apple Store, Google Play and salesforce.com's AppExchange as well as from public and private companies looking to extend their products and services, and social media sites like Facebook's App Center.

Mobile Apps for Productivity, Collaboration and Access

Type of App	Examples
Productivity (general office)	• Apple's Pages, Keynote and Numbers • Documents To Go by DataViz, Quickoffice Pro from Mobile Systems • Omni Group's OmniGraffle, SillyCube's Smart Diagram Pro for the Android platform. • Yuri Selukoff's GoodReader, Unidocs Inc.'s ezPDF Reader
Collaboration (file sharing, calendars, task lists)	• Dropbox and Box.net clients • SouthLabs SharePoint Mobile Client, SharePlus-SharePoint Client for Android
Remote access to a workstation or server	• Wyse Technology's Inc. Pocket-Cloud Remote RDP/VNC (Windows or Mac OS) • RealVNC Ltd.'s VNCViewer (Mac OS X, Windows or Linux servers running VNC-compatible server software • Better Terminal Emulator from MagicAndroidApps can bring a Linux terminal to your mobile device.

Source: Sullivan, Dan, ""Tablets and Smartphones in the Enterprise: Risks and Management Concerns," SearchConsumerization.com e-publication, TechTarget, 2012.

Unless your enterprise policies expressly prohibit their use, workers can and will use mobile apps in their roles within business processes: to improve their business productivity, better collaborate with colleagues

"BYOD does indeed represent a challenge, and opportunities. What might get overlooked is how the applications running on mobile devices can impact your information and document processes."

and increasingly, remotely access workstations or servers for the right information at the right time.

The iOS and Android operating systems for smartphones and tablets are becoming attractive and powerful development platforms for new applications. This availability, more open environment, and supporting DIY development eco-systems are empowering application developers almost anywhere within the enterprise, outside traditional software development business units, and importantly, outside the view of IT.

"As the mobile applications market moves toward $25 billion per year, according to a MarketsandMarkets report, non-traditional development opportunities are emerging in a number of forms. Programs now allow everyday consumers to build apps through HTML, drag-and-drop platforms, customize templates and simply drop an SDK".[3]

What effect does this new development landscape and easily available applications have on enterprise processes?

Lower Barriers to Entry Mean a Balancing Act

Mobile apps are smaller in scope, more tightly focused, and this can be beneficial when they are developed, or adapted for use, by those who are closest to a business problem. Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) within Lines of Business and functional groups have the specialized knowledge of how document and information processes could work best in their areas of expertise.

SMEs can address specific productivity issues in these processes by developing a targeted mobile app, or cobbling together solutions from available apps—and do it far more quickly than software development teams grappling with legacy applications, ancillary processes, and the foundational infrastructure required for major enterprise applications.

One example might be an SME in Finance who, using HTML, strings together a snapshot function on his smartphone, OCR software, and a local database for the capture and recognition of invoice numbers and dates. This app is not meant to replace the enterprise accounting system—he's just trying make the process more convenient for him. The application is focused on saving the end user time (and reducing error) in capturing information.

> *"SMEs can address specific productivity issues in these processes by developing a targeted mobile app, or cobbling together solutions from available apps—and do it more far more quickly than software development teams grappling with legacy applications."*

---

[3] Donnelly, Brady, "*6 Tools to Build a Mobile App on the Cheap*," Mashable, May 9, 2012.

RICOH
imagine. change.

FROM THE DESK OF.....
PERSPECTIVES OF RICOH THOUGHT LEADERS

Managed
Document
Services™
MPS and Beyond

This solution developed by the SME might indeed be a time-saver of interest to his colleagues or even other departments. How is this recognized and "approved"? And if so, how is it propagated? At the same time, what impact might this tool have on the AP process as a whole? How does the captured information make its way consistently and securely into the enterprise accounting system? Certainly in this example there are risk and compliance issues that would need to be addressed.

The adoption of mobile applications for use by individuals within the enterprise can present a constant balancing act between information security and increased productivity, between an individual short cut and broader corporate usefulness.

You can make similar observations about generally available, personal productivity applications—for example CallFlakes for the Android. CallFlakes automatically offers the user specific follow-up options at the end of a phone call: send a Text, set a Reminder, send an Email, set a Meeting, Share, Call and Web-search.[4] One can see how this personal productivity tool would be compelling to today's iWorker.

But how does data resulting from say an enterprise Salespersons' use of CallFlakes find its way into an established Sales Force Automation (SFA) process? There is now a gap in the enterprise information capture process, where valuable sales pipeline information can get lost. The balancing act is deciding whether to enforce a different sales call capture solution (restricting the use of CallFlakes or similar apps and insisting on a corporate solution), or integrating this information with an existing SFA system, both systematically and through training.

Setting Guidelines for Mobile Apps in the Enterprise

By setting clear guidelines, you can help reap the potential benefits mobile applications represent to business processes while limiting your risks and costs. The rules for what can and can't be done with mobile devices in the enterprise are typically defined in a BYOD policy. But a BYOD policy needs to be informed by a broader, enterprise "consumerization strategy" – not just what devices will be supported.

Do you encourage the use of mobile apps from outside IT and traditional vendors to solve LoB productivity issues? How open are you to allowing "outside" apps to alter/augment your business

[4] Broida, Rick, "*The five best productivity apps of 2012,*" PCworld.com, Dec 26, 2012.

"The adoption of mobile applications for use by individuals within the enterprise can present a constant balancing act between information security and increased productivity, between an individual short cut and broader corporate usefulness."

RICOH
imagine. change.

processes, and by how much? How do you recognize innovation resulting from mobile applications and how do you incorporate a/or propagate throughout the organization? The answers to these questions help define your consumerization strategy.

IT must play a key role not only in setting and enforcing guidelines, but in *helping the enterprise fully understand the potential ramifications for its business critical processes*. In regards to information security, IT must explain clearly how what appears to be a minor vulnerability or infraction can snowball into disastrous consequences for the enterprise. IT can help formulate the guidelines but also help make end-users appreciate the guideline's intent and consequences. It is one thing to explain how protecting information is important—but quite another to demonstrate the very real impact on the business in terms of the bottom line.

Similarly, IT can educate employees and management about the implications and potential benefits of enhancing business processes. It is important for IT to help the organization understand the very real costs for integrating mobile apps into business processes, and avoid disruption and costs when change goes awry because it has not been well-managed.

This is not up to IT alone; Legal and HR must also engage in developing strategies and policies related to mobile applications. Legal can provide guidance on compliance with country or even state-specific regulations on personal information. There are also questions of ownership and liability that only Legal can address. The role of HR is also key, since they are responsible for how employees are being recruited and trained upon on-boarding.

In the end, it's important that IT's role be supportive—not just ensuring employees are clear on the importance of protecting corporate information and workflows, but also encouraging them to leverage mobile tools so they may realize the benefits in productivity and agility they offer both to the individual and the enterprise.

Taking a Proactive Role

Tools like Mobile Device Management (MDM) software help IT better manage and automate management of mobile apps. Driven by concern for information security, some businesses are using MDM platforms to protect sensitive information from inappropriate access

Intel: Aligning BYOD with Information Security Policy

- *"We worked with Intel Legal and HR for more than a year to define and implement a personal device policy that meets Intel's information security requirements;*

- *"We used social media to engage in dialogue with employees over a period of six months to understand their work and support needs;*

- *"We developed technical solutions, such as new authentication methods and device management policies, that help safeguard corporate data and intellectual property;*

- *"We provided training to users about information security and to IT Service Desk about our personal device policy".*

-- "Maintaining Information Security while Allowing Personal Hand-held Devices in the Enterprise," an IT@Intel White Paper, November 2010.

FROM THE DESK OF.....
PERSPECTIVES OF RICOH THOUGHT LEADERS

Managed
Document
Services™
MPS and Beyond

or loss—or ensure that corporate systems do not become infected from malware on mobile devices.

MDMs can also help IT gain more visibility into the use and potential benefits of mobile apps. The idea is not to use MDMs just to enforce information security but as a tool to gain an understanding that can help guide future mobile app use.

According to Mark Jordan, senior product manager for SAP's MDM platform, companies need to take a longer view when implementing an MDM:

"The next stage in evolution is broader," Jordan said. "Not just device management, but application management. Who is writing them, how do they work with my device, how to support and integrate parts to that," he said.[5]

You want to be able to look for where mobile apps are adding value, increasing productivity—whether the information comes from an MDM system or feedback from users that can alert you to opportunities for business process improvements, and potential solutions evolving from a mobile app. If that do-it-yourself AP invoice capture app is working well and the risk is low, propagate it, rather than investing in a comparable enterprise software module.

Having helped establish clear policies, and with tools like MDM systems to better support and gain visibility on mobile app usage, the role of IT can shift from policing what users can and can't use to becoming an innovative partner with end-users, enabling them to achieve greater productivity augmenting business processes with timely and agile mobile applications.

Conclusion

The changed landscape of application development, access and deployment has altered the nature of enterprise applications and more importantly, information and document processes. There are definitely challenges to adopting what is more productive without too much risk – both to information but also to maintaining processes in the direction the enterprise wants to go.

"Information from MDMs can alert you to opportunities for business process improvements, and potential solutions evolving from a mobile app."

---

[5] *DeLoach, Pamela, "As More Workers Roam, Pundits Tout Mobile Device Management Strategy,"SearchSAP, TechTarget, August 13, 2012.*

RICOH
imagine. change.

The trend toward mobility is irreversible, and the potential benefits are many. Productivity and growth will accrue to the organization that can encourage innovation, recognize the benefits and adopt these new applications, thereby empowering their people and processes.

Ricoh Company, Ltd.

Ricoh is a global technology company specializing in office imaging equipment, production and print solutions, document management systems and IT services. Headquartered in Tokyo, Ricoh Group operates in more than 200 countries and regions. In the financial year ending March 2012, Ricoh Group had worldwide sales of 1,903 billion yen (approx. 23 billion USD).

The majority of the company's revenue comes from products, solutions and services that improve the interaction between people and information. Ricoh also produces award-winning cameras and specialized industrial products. It is known for the quality of its technology, the exceptional standard of its customer service and sustainability initiatives.

Under its corporate tagline, imagine.change. Ricoh helps companies transform the way they work and harness the collective imagination of their employees.

Ricoh's Managed Document Services (MDS)

Ricoh's MDS approach is an extension and evolution of MPS, which addresses the three fundamental functions relating to the entire document management ecosystem of input, throughput, and output. Ricoh's MDS aims to streamline core business processes by focusing on process, people, and technology and innovation to create a state of continuous improvement. Ricoh aims to help organizations better manage and leverage information for improved business outcomes through a flexible, partnership-led approach. Services management is the fundamental pillar to govern the print and document services program, aided with expert consultancy as well as proven project and change management methodologies. Ricoh is recognized today by both IDC and Gartner as a leader in the industry.

www.ricoh.com
www.ricoh.com/mds/

RICOH
imagine. change.