

# Business mobility is essential to the hybrid work model

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It was not that long ago when a new employee would be issued a traditional laptop and spend their first day in the office getting setup on the device. That first day was also set aside for issuing a traditional Photo ID card with a lanyard, maybe a physical key to their workspace and finally a tour to meet people or teams they will be working with.



Enterprise Mobility has rapidly changed, and it impacts not only that first day but every working day. In today's world, many new starters are remotely interviewed, hired, onboarded and work with teams from many different locations, dynamically changing teams and people they interact with, depending on projects or priorities.

Covid-19 is not the only culprit and over the past several years, mobility has caught the eye of many enterprises looking to increase productivity, communication culture, collaboration, engagement and customer service, amongst others.

As globalisation and technology continue to grow, so too will the amount of globally mobile employees. According to Strategy Analytics, the globally mobile workforce is set to increase to [1.87 billion people by 2022](#), which is about 42.5% of the global workforce.

Striving toward workplace mobility is a strategy that companies pursue for a host of business reasons, including an empowered, productive workforce and access to talent. With this paradigm and the generational shift, enterprise mobility becomes essential to the management of a much more independent and self-motivated workforce.

A workforce can only enjoy the benefits of working from anywhere if it has the same access to systems as it would if it were working from the office. For this to occur, there must be synchronicity between devices, systems, and platforms. In an office-based culture, face-to-face interactions were what Bill Gates recently referred to as the former gold standard. In a mobile workforce, the new gold standard is synchronicity.

Andre Sharpe, Managing Director - IWG Technologies at IWG plc. (Regus and SPACES in South Africa) shares he's

insight into the key end user devices and innovations that are necessary to make a hybrid model work and to empower mobility:

## **“Bring your own device” (BYOD) strategy**

BYOD – At the centre of employee mobility is the “Bring Your Own Device” strategy. This has become the standard as employees like to select the device they will use and blend personal and work tasks on the same device (especially calendars and communication apps).

BYOD allows the employee to have access to their work applications on multiple devices of choice (Mobile Phone, Tablet, PC, Smart TV), However, moving away from enterprise issued devices comes with IT security and risks to manage (secure access to applications, digital locks, personal data, company information). Properly managed, these risks can be mitigated.

With BYOD in hand – employees can be pointed to a range of company supported applications to collaborate. These are Third Party Apps that are easily downloaded via App stores (removing the traditional install and config tasks from Enterprise IT). Furthermore, IT can also support devices remotely allowing employees to raise support tickets via their mobile applications.

## **Collaboration tools/apps**

Interactive platforms like Microsoft Teams, Google Meet are part of a wider ecosystem of software (word processing, spreadsheets, presentations, file storage) while more specialised applications like Slack, WhatsApp, Telegram, Miro, Monday, Trello can coexist and support specific types of collaboration. New generation users expect to have a range of “mobile first” collaboration and communication tools integrated into their way of working.

Plastic ID cards and physical keys are being replaced with digital locks and mobile badges. There are many providers that offer mobile solutions. These can be remotely issued and managed proving to be more secure than physical keys and can't be lost or used by unauthorised people.

## **Workspace/flex space**

Covid transformed the way we all work over night and mobility remains at the forefront of a successful business model. We have adapted and transformed our end user and enterprise applications to include provisioning memberships and managing home, hub, hot-desk and meeting room spaces for the new Hybrid workforce.

The population has had a massive crash course in modern technology, making these new skills and experiences the true engine of change. The pandemic has amplified several trends already prevalent in the workplace: the growth of a dispersed workforce, increased digital engagement and the rise of the subscription economy. Together they are steering in a new era of a rapidly emerging work environments that promotes business agility and growth through a mix of on-site and remote employees, modern digital experiences an on-demand access to the right communication tools.

According to “Insight 2020 Intelligent Technology Pulse”: The Impact of COVID-19 on Business Readiness,” enterprise IT professionals understand we have the technology to work from virtually anywhere. They note, rather than threaten business continuity, remote work is essential to promoting it, and further believe flexible work environments will play a more central role moving forward. As one respondent put it, “remote workers are going to be the new norm for our company.”

Employees can set schedules, indicate when working from home office or when in-person collaboration is best. The power of these solutions are based on flexibility where schedules can be changed on a daily basis if needed. Integration with Enterprise systems like Outlook where space management – the where/how employees and teams work - is part of a seamless workflow.

Flexible, easy to secure spaces are an important part of Enterprise Mobility. Companies are looking to exit a good

percentage of their corporate offices and offer a more flexible 'hub and spoke' workspace architecture alongside a Hybrid model that offers employees the option to work from home, at the office, or from satellite coworking hubs that bridge the two.

## HR systems

Managing employee onboarding, personal data, payroll, benefits, holiday approvals, other workflow approvals, contracts, time tracking, wellness and organisational structure are all part of advanced HR third party Mobility Apps.

Additionally, part of a more modern HR approach is a move away from "annual reviews" to a more dynamic, "mobile first" way of providing quick feedback, guidance on a more real-time basis, so employees and managers always know where they stand vs waiting until their formal review.

The onboarding, full lifecycle and performance management of an Employee is readily available, and it allows interaction from both directions – Not only one way as it has been done before. Employees can centralise information and personalise it at their level.

## Travel and expense

At the core of Enterprise mobility is travel. While Covid put an abrupt stop to business travel – it will slowly return but take a different form. Managing corporate travel expenses will come with different considerations such as health compliance, justifications, and enterprise rules. Mobile applications that help simplify this process, will play a key role.

Having the right end user tools to search, discover and set up work patterns will be as imperative as the right environment to allow for this synchronicity businesses are looking at to make this transformation a successful one.

## About IWG

IWG is the global operator of leading workspace providers. Our companies help more than 2.5 million people and their businesses to work more productively. We do so by providing a choice of professional, inspiring and collaborative workspaces, communities and services.

Digitalisation and new technologies are transforming the world of work. People want the personal productivity benefits of living and working how and where they want. Businesses want the financial and strategic benefits. Our customers are start-ups, small and medium-sized enterprises, and large multinationals. With unique business goals, people and aspirations. They want workspaces and communities to match their needs. They want choice.

Through our companies we provide that choice, and serve the whole world of work: Regus, Spaces, No18, Basepoint, Open Office and Signature. We create personal, financial and strategic value for businesses of every size. From some of the most exciting companies and well-known organisations on the planet, to individuals and the next generation of industry leaders. All of them harness the power of flexible working to increase their productivity, efficiency, agility, and market proximity.

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