Mobility Management Seller's Guide

By Kevin Casey

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About
the Author

KEVIN CASEY writes about technology and business for a wide variety of publications and companies. He won an Azbee Award, given by the American Society of Business Publication Editors, for his InformationWeek.com story, "Are You Too Old for IT?" He's a former community choice honoree in the Small Business Influencer Awards.

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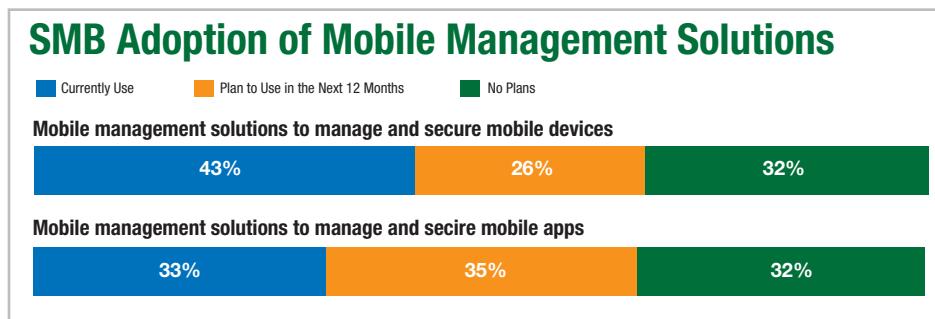@kevinrcasey

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THE IPHONE RECENTLY CELEBRATED ITS 10TH BIRTHDAY. THE REVOLUTIONARY DEVICE WAS ANNOUNCED IN JANUARY 2007, but it didn't hit store shelves — and subsequently become semi-permanently attached to millions of hands worldwide — until June 29 that year. The rest, as they say, is history.

Among the smartphone's mammoth impacts: IT has never been the same. The iPhone helped supercharge the mobility boom, bringing hundreds of millions of new devices, both company-owned and personal, onto the corporate network. And not just iPhones, of course: It might have been mobile's brightest superstar of the last decade, but today's employees tote all manner of other devices running iOS, Android, and now Windows 10, from phones to tablets to so-called "laptop replacements" such as Microsoft's Surface. And the last 10 years were just a beginning, as the rise of the Internet of Things (IoT) and an onslaught of new connected devices is sure to usher in the next phase of the mobile boom that the iPhone kicked into high gear.

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SMB Adoption of Mobile Management Solutions

■ Currently Use   ■ Plan to Use in the Next 12 Months   ■ No Plans

Mobile management solutions to manage and secure mobile devices

43%	26%	32%

Mobile management solutions to manage and secire mobile apps

33%	35%	32%

Figures do not total 100% due to rounding
Source: SMB Group

We could write a book on mobile's impacts in the workplace. But in this report, we're focused on a particular outcome of ubiquitous mobile devices in the workplace: The rise of mobility management platforms, from mobile device management (MDM) to the recently popular term enterprise mobility management (EMM). No matter what you call them, these platforms began popping up in response to an apparent and even urgent business need generated by the mobile era: IT teams must have efficient, effective tools for managing and securing the ever-increasing number and types of devices hitting their networks, as well as for managing and securing the correspondingly massive amounts of data these devices create and access, both on and off the company network. (For simplicity, we'll primarily use "mobility management" as an umbrella term for MDM, EMM and related acronyms, as well as other areas related to enabling a productive mobile workforce.)

In this Report, we'll first look at the state of mobility management and what's happening in 2017 and beyond. In doing so, we'll examine some of the crucial areas of opportunity and investment for channel partners — where do companies need the most help now and in the future? We'll also share some advice here for partners just getting started with mobility management. Finally, we'll look more specifically at the small and midsize business (SMB) market and how partners can best sell to this significant and diverse segment.

State of Mobility Management 2017: Opportunities Abound for Partners

The iPhone's birthday is a reminder of just how much has changed in a decade. When it comes to mobility management, we've come a long way in a relatively short period of time.

It might help to think not just about the devices themselves but what we *do* with them, both in the office and everywhere else, to gain a sharper perspective. It also helps to remember that the term "mobile device" no longer simply means smartphones and tablets.

"To understand the state of EMM, we need to understand the state of computing," says Sean Ginevan, senior director of strategy at EMM provider MobileIron. "Modern computing has three characteristics. First, data lives everywhere. We create 2.5 quintillion bytes of data each day. Ninety percent of our data was created in the past

two years. Second, choice is central. This is highlighted by the 2.8 million and 2.2 million apps available in Google Play and the Apple App Store, respectively. Third, everything computes. A modern luxury car has more than 100 CPUs."

The big issues in mobility management exist largely in those characteristics Ginevan defines: explosive growth in data, applications and even what we think of as a computer or mobile device.

Share of Web Traffic by Device

Laptops & Desktops: 45%

Tablet Devices: 5%

Mobile Phones: 50%
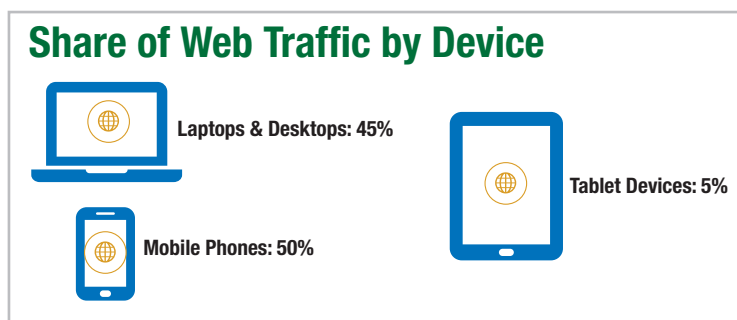
Source: StatCounter, January 2017

Melanie Seekins, chair of the board of directors at the Mobile Resource Group, the certifying body of the Credentialed Mobile Device Security Professional, notes that mobility management platforms themselves have become quite mature, arming IT pros with the tools they need to keep tabs on a company's potentially massive fleet of devices. But that doesn't mean the salad days are here. Instead, we're entering the next phases — and corresponding challenges — of mobility management.

Seekins and Ginevan see more than a few things happening right now in mobility management. These current and near-term trends point to plenty of opportunities for channel partners to offer compelling solutions to their clients' mobility management needs. Let's take a closer look:

- **Applications: Where do we go next?** "A lot of [organizations] today have a [mobility management solution]. It's just: Now that you've got it, what do you do with it?" Seekins says. "Trying to figure that out has been a pain point for most companies. It's all part of this whole digital transformation that people have been talking about it — what do we do with these devices now that we have them?" Seekins sees companies struggling to ensure their employees can be at their most productive on their mobile devices because their applications and underlying business processes have not kept up with the times.

  Organizations are now negotiating a considerable gap between the ideals of the mobile workforce — greater productivity, anywhere-anytime access, potential cost efficiencies and so on — and the realities of their legacy applications and business processes.

  "It has to do with how we [modernize] the processes that we've been using internally: How do we take a .NET web page and put it on a mobile device so that everyone can consume it when they're out in the field or out on the factory floor or in a retail setting?" Seekins says.

Employees increasingly expect the same user experience from their business apps as they do from the personal apps they use, for example; mobility management platforms themselves won't do that work for you.

Seekins puts the current challenge another way: "If you're trying to take everything [your employees] do on a laptop and muscle it on to a mobile device, [and] you built everything for Microsoft, it doesn't always translate to the mobile platforms [namely iOS and Android]," she says. In this scenario, even mobile workers running Windows 10 and the Edge browser experience hiccups with legacy apps. For many companies, this old world-new world phase of the mobile era and mobility management means complex decisions about what to modernize for mobile and what to scrap and replace altogether.

■ **Security: It's a brave new world.** Mobile security is one of the reasons mobility management platforms were built in the first place. The mobile era has dramatically altered the old perimeter-and-endpoint security paradigm. But the reality is these platforms haven't magically secured the mobile workforce; the threat landscape changes minute by minute. Moreover, merely deploying a mobility management platform doesn't instill the mindset and processes needed for a strong security posture in the mobile-first age.

"When it comes to security, just 'good enough' is not good enough. Especially in highly-regulated and security-conscious industries like health care and financial services, security incidents can have huge monetary penalties or worse, they can damage a brand," Ginevan says. "The channel can help enterprises ensure that they are using state-of-the-art technology and implementing common-sense approaches to security where protection is built in by design — not an afterthought."

Half-Dozen Headaches

According to the Techaisle SMB Mobility Adoption & Trends Study, the top six sources of mobility security risk for SMBs are:

1 General malware infection

2 User neglect/irresponsibility

3 User mishap

4 Loss/theft of inadequately secured devices

5 Device hacking/other attacks

6 Lack of user knowledge/awareness

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Seekins notes a related issue, one where trusted partners can play a key role: The pressing need for better security as part of a mobility management solution has attracted plenty of snake-oil salesmen, making it hard for organizations to sort credible, effective security solutions from the empty promises.

"There's not enough education in this space about who's telling the truth and who's just trying to sell you something" that you might not actually need, Seekins says.

Partners can play a particularly useful role in helping their clients identify and adopt strong solutions while avoiding, as Seekins says, the snake oil. And this is an area of ongoing concern (read: recurring revenue stream) — it's not as if we're going to wake up one day and declare "all secure" on the mobile front.

■ **Cloud security:** As a separate but related category, Ginevan sees a significant opportunity for partners in helping clients understand and manage cloud security as a corollary to their mobility management and security strategies.

"Cloud services like Office 365 and Salesforce drive today's businesses but the security for these systems with regard to mobile isn't well understood," Ginevan says. "Mobile apps cache large volumes of critical data to improve performance when a device is offline, which is a big challenge both for IP data loss and for regulatory compliance. The channel can help enterprises ensure that only trusted users on trusted devices using trusted apps can get to enterprise data in cloud services."

■ **Networks need upgrades:** As mobility management tools themselves have matured, Seekins notes a continuing problem in the underlying infrastructure. In many offices, the network wasn't built to handle the high-volume traffic of a mobile workforce, which might have doubled or even tripled the number of devices a typical employee uses at work. Seekins also points out that "at work" does not necessarily mean "in the office" in the mobile age: You must consider external traffic from, say, a field employee accessing data from one of the company's critical apps.

"Learning how to deal with that and size it properly is extremely beneficial," Seekins says, and an area where partners can shoulder the load. It's also a need that will grow with an increasing number of connected devices, 5G and other developments. "That's a big, big opportunity. It's one of those [areas] that we don't realize is a problem until it's too late."

■ **Mobile devices and OSes continue to evolve:** Seekins points out an ongoing need in mobility management: Mobile devices, apps, and the underlying operating systems aren't static. She notes that [iOS 11 is coming](#), for example, and adds that Apple continues to push the iPad Pro as a potential laptop replacement. [Android O](#) is coming, too. And while many reports indicate significant Windows 10 adoption in Microsoft shops, that migration is still very much in progress. Bottom line: Mobility management is not a one-off proposition, and that's good news for partners that can help their clients navigate significant new changes in the marketplace and how they affect employees, processes, and so on.

Share of Mobile Web by Mobile OS

Android: 71.6%

Apple IoS: 19.6%

Other Mobile Operating Systems: 8.8%
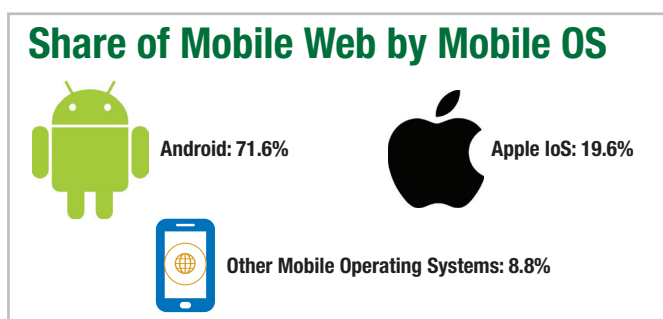
Source: StatCounter, January 2017

■ **Expanding "mobility management" to include IoT:** Both Ginevan and Seekins point to IoT as the next major phase of mobility management. Mobility management is no longer just about smartphones and tablets. Many organizations will expect their mobility management platforms to absorb the impacts of IoT and a massive number of new connected devices.

"As IoT security becomes more defined, businesses are looking to their IT teams for their mobile expertise and to EMM tools to secure and manage these new connected devices," Ginevan says. "Channel partners can leverage EMM's track record of building commercial software that can already do life cycle management, gateway inventory, configuration and update, certificate-based identity and authentication, and network access control. These technologies are directly usable in the current IoT environment."

■ **Identifying future use cases:** Seekins sees an ongoing area of need — and corresponding opportunity for partners — to continue identifying new mobility use cases and their impacts on mobility management. The eventual upgrade to 5G wireless networks, for example, will carry implications for IT departments, and what those are might vary between companies and industries. In another vein, connected cars and the potential proliferation of self-driving vehicles would be another area that could impact mobility management in unforeseen ways.

■ **BONUS: For the mobility management greenhorns:** Partners in the beginning stages of investigating the mobility management market may understandably feel overwhelmed by the array of platforms and business needs out there. Where do you get started? Ginevan advises asking: "What are my customers' mobility needs?" Indeed, beginning with an existing client (or several of them) may be a good way of testing approaches and business models that make sense for your company.

Seekins offers this wisdom when getting started with mobility management: Don't oversell your capabilities — it's a recipe for failure, one with potentially damaging consequences for your credibility as a technology expert. She also advises that channel partners themselves partner where appropriate to expand their mobility capabilities more rapidly.

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Selling to SMBs

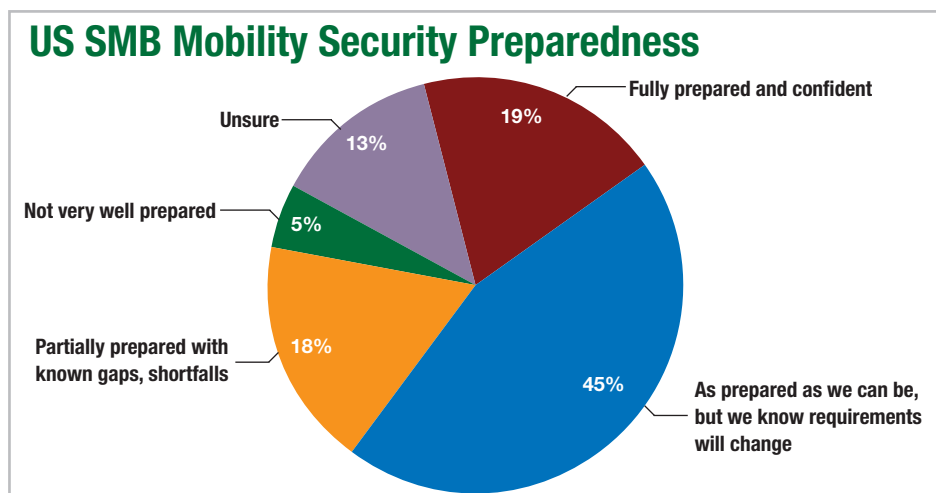Here's some good news for SMB-focused partners: Much of what you just read is squarely in the SMB market's wheelhouse. Techaisle principal analyst Anurag Agrawal, who researches both the SMB technology market and the channel providers that often serve those SMBs' IT needs, similarly lists areas like mobile security, applications and productivity, and IoT as some of the key trends and opportunities in this segment.

"SMB mobile assets are sprawling and [these companies] are investing to automate control of these sprawling assets," Agrawal says. "This list includes security solutions (such as MDM, mobile app security, and secure mobile data sharing) that address widespread concern over the exposure that accompanies mobility, as well as methods of automating management (such as mobile network control and EMM) and of deploying infrastructure tuned to the needs of mobile workers (such as Windows-as-a-service and thin clients)."

What Do SMBs Need?

Selling to SMBs does come with some specific considerations. Agrawal says SMB-focused mobility management solutions typically fall into four categories:

1. Management of mobility security. Are you sensing a theme yet? Yeah, security is an enormous concern for mobility management, and that may be especially true in the SMB market. According to Agrawal, nearly 40 percent of small businesses and 80 percent of midmarket firms are aware of at least one mobile security breach within their environments during the past year, and that's likely underreported. "Techaisle believes that additional firms, especially in the small business community, suffered breaches that were not detected," Agrawal says. "Clearly, mobility has an enormous impact on the threat profile of SMBs."

US SMB Mobility Security Preparedness

- Fully prepared and confident — 19%
- Unsure — 13%
- Not very well prepared — 5%
- Partially prepared with known gaps, shortfalls — 18%
- As prepared as we can be, but we know requirements will change — 45%

Source: Techaisle US SMB Mobility Adoption and Trends Study, 2015

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2. Management of mobile devices. This one is fairly self-explanatory: SMBs need help managing that sprawl, as Agrawal puts it, of mobile assets. He notes that for this area to be profitable, partners typically need to take a services-oriented approach: "Supply of the devices themselves is not sufficient." In fact, in many cases, SMBs might be bypassing the channel altogether when it comes to acquiring devices, whether via BYOD, direct purchases or other means.

3. Deployment of the unified workspace. This is "one of the fastest growing areas" in SMB mobility, according to Agrawal. "Anywhere, anytime work also means the availability of an instant workspace, on any device that proves access to corporate data seamlessly. This is being tackled in many different ways — via DaaS, VDI and other native technologies."

4. Implementation of mobile app stores. Agrawal sees a specific need for the implementation and ongoing management of private-label mobile app stores within SMB organizations: These give workers the choice they crave and the ability to self-service to an extent. It's another key mobility management opportunity for SMB-focused partners.

Agrawal notes that for partners to be successful with mobility management in the SMB segment, they will likely need to offer some combination of the above categories, in part to ensure sustainable revenues. For example, while security is a considerable need, offering security solutions alone might not be a viable line of business.

"What is important for channels to understand is that providing end-point device mobility security is not enough in terms of long-term customer relationships and significant services revenue," Agrawal says. "Granted, it contributes to recurring revenue model, but successful partners are gravitating towards services-led models."

He notes a natural progression to including the unified workspace category here: "It is a service which has the ability to include product sales [rather than vice versa]. This is because mobility solutions are not a 'set it and forget it' type of technology. These solutions require continuous tuning and ongoing investment as their scope expands to match the burgeoning requirements of an increasingly complex mobile environment. There is less channel competition with the vendor [than] with product sales."

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Top SMB Mobility Solutions Adoption Benefits

In Techaisle's SMB Mobility Adoption Survey, respondents were asked what they considered to be the greatest benefits of mobility solutions. Their top seven responses:

01 RANK — Increases the efficiency of business processes

02 RANK — Improves the quality of customer interactions

03 RANK — Makes business users more productive

04 RANK — Increases the quantity of customer interactions

05 RANK — Improves staff morale by contributing to better work/life balance

06 RANK — Improves accuracy within tasks in business processes

07 RANK — Increases scope of bringing new potential customers

Source: Techaisle

Partners that have struggled with mobility management in the past may have focused too narrowly on product sales rather than a services-driven model. The latter can offer a better long-term outlook and higher margins. Agrawal closes with this advice:

"To build a mobility portfolio and increase revenue, channel partners have to keep expanding the base, drive increased value through data/app integration and add a central management component to the mobility solution via VDI/DaaS," he says. "They should also investigate IoT as an opportunity area as [the related categories of] IoT, big data and analytics represent an important strategic growth avenue for mobility resellers.