

# Mobilization of the Enterprise

Jack Rogers – December 2012



## Tablets in the Enterprise — the current state of play

It is plain to see that tablet use is on the rise. The iPad has rocketed to unprecedented heights in its first 30 months [55 million sold between 2010 launch and April 2012<sup>1</sup>]. Along with the accompanying explosion in app and software development, the marketplace has seen a plethora of devices from other vendors joining in the tablet race. But just how far into the world of the enterprise has the tablet device penetrated?

Enterprises have adopted, and still are adopting, tablets at varying rates, with some choosing to roll them out across departments, while others restrict tablet use to executives only or decide not to deploy them entirely. This leaves the business either devoid of mobile devices and their accompanying features, or leaves the way clear for the BYOD (Bring Your Own Device) trend to take precedent. There are numerous concerns being taken into account when IT decision makers are evaluating tablet use for enterprise.

### Concerns

- **Security** — of vital, and often confidential, corporate content
- **Regulatory** — coupled with Security these two elements make up the most common cause for concern. [74% of research respondents concerned about Security and Regulatory elements of mobile technology deployment<sup>2</sup>]
- **Cost** — of deployment, purchasing, support, training, software/apps (procurement and updating)
- **Adoption levels** — some staff may be unwilling to use a tablet.
- **Compatibility** — with other existing systems
- **Corporate vs Personal use** — of hardware and software

In addition to these factors, there is the over-arching question as to whether the tablet is a replacement for the laptop and/or smartphone, or a complimentary device bridging the chasm between the two.

## The Cook-Dine-Snack Principle



### Cook

The laptop possesses all the functionality needed for creating content, for doing intricate design work, for building that 5,000-line spreadsheet, for putting those important slides together. It is the kitchen where the majority of the creation is done.



### Dine

The tablet is ideal for consuming and working with content. While piecing together a 65-slide presentation from scratch may not be practical, it is perfect for making changes to documents while on the go — swap slides around, add extra imagery in, amend the numbers in the finance spreadsheet — these are all easily accomplished on an iPad or similar device.



### Snack

Unfortunately the screen on most smartphones just isn't big enough to make meaningful content creation and amendment feasible. Yes, it's fine to look over your slides quickly on your phone, or to check your emails, but you wouldn't, for example, want to present any slides to a customer/partner on your 4inch iPhone screen. So the phone is best reserved for light 'snacking' on content/data.

### Benefits:

- **Increased efficiency** — mobility for employees working away from the office enables them to take advantage of those 5–10 minute pockets of otherwise lost time
- **Customer perception** — to be seen as investing in and using the latest hardware and software portrays a positive appearance
- **Collaboration** — between employees and external team members can be greatly enhanced
- **Portability** — convenient size and longer battery life versus a heavier, bulkier laptop
- **Connectivity** — ability to connect to 3G/4G/LTE networks frees tablets from Wi-Fi
- **Instant-on** — no waiting to start-up like a desktop or laptop
- **User friendly** — simple touch interface also makes tablet uptake and training very straightforward

In time, the tablet may well become a complete replacement for the laptop. However, I think it much more likely that the three device types will continue in parallel for some time. Each device holds the answer(s) to different sets of requirements dependent on industry, the business in question and individual preference.

**More portable than a laptop, more functional than a smartphone, the tablet is the ideal middle-ground for mobile workers.**

## What are we using tablets for?

We are seeing increasing tablet uptake across numerous sectors. From small business to global enterprises; from education and healthcare to government and public utilities — here are just a few examples of the opportunities that tablets and tablet apps are opening up in the workplace:



**Retail** — Some stores have created custom apps for use on the shop floor, for staff to help customers pick out clothes, even going as far as augmented reality apps that supply more info on items caught in the iPad camera. Staff can also use tablets to search for items out of stock, or even as cash register interfaces. With the influx of consumer-grade tablets (at costs of a few hundred dollars), the potential costs of cash registers (a few thousand dollars) could be greatly reduced.



**Sales** — Tablets are fast becoming the presentation medium of choice for Sales professionals in the field. Presentations, product photos/details/brochures or completely customized apps can easily be shared with customers/prospects even on a single tablet device. Especially as many of these important sales documents can be tweaked on the move, last minute, via the tablet in order to tailor to the needs of a specific customer. There are also examples of sales teams using customized apps with Google Map capability to let the salesperson know if the building they are in contains any of their customers.



**The Boardroom** — Paper meeting material for Executives is no longer couriered in giant bundles, it is increasingly being sent to tablets, for the obvious benefits of being more portable, more easily updatable and lighter on both cost and the environment. Executives at firms such as Kraft Foods and JP Morgan & Chase Co also have live operational dashboards running in almost real time on their iPads<sup>®</sup>.



**Field technicians** — Appointment info, diagrams, plans, maintenance schedules, repair instructions — all these can be accessed at the touch of a button (well more likely the touch of a screen actually) via tablets, with up-to-the-minute content updates. Geo-location functionality on tablets and apps can also assist in determining exactly which site the technician is on, and provide the corresponding content.



**Logistics** — In warehouse environments, tablets are being used to record data of items in hard to reach areas. Where previously a worker would stand at a terminal and call out serial numbers of products, the portability of a tablet allows the use of barcode scanning software to collect and upload data to a back-end system. Alternatively, warehouse staff can upload and share pictures or videos of incoming stock in order to validate quality with the purchasing teams.



**Restaurants** — Tablets are being used as interactive menus in some establishments, or as kiosks for self-service ordering. Other firms have provided mobile access for staff schedules, and seen a notable uptake of the functionality since going mobile.



**Cruise ships** — Royal Caribbean have chosen to deploy customer-facing tablets, which feed content directly into the hands of their passengers, enabling them to check daily ship activities, book shore excursions or receive personalized promotions, backed up by a central content repository.



**Airlines** — The portability and ease of use of the iPad and other tablet devices has seen them adopted by numerous airlines. Alaska Airlines, for one, are using iPads to replace the paper books pilots traditionally used for flight and weather information. American Airlines have taken a different angle, and are also using tablets as in flight entertainment devices for customers.



**Healthcare** — Clipboards are evolving into tablets, as doctors access medical information, reports, diagnostics etc. while away from the desk. At least one medical technology company is providing interactive surgical procedures to physicians via tablets, to orient them to the surgery before they step into the operating room.

## (continued) What are we using tablets for?



**Public Services** — Companies with fleets on the roads can use, and are using, tablets to replace the paper documentation that they would previously have required for things like route information and pickup instructions. Paper based maps can be replaced by the far more useful GoogleMaps, and there is the potential for radio communication to be replaced by voice recognition software on tablets.



**Bar / Retail promotion** — customized apps to help customers on the salesfloor or dancefloor to pick a perfume or mix a cocktail for them based on their responses.



**Education** — The University of Southern Mississippi is in the process of bringing in 1000 tablets for professors and students, as are many other educational establishments, a practice which is likely to see increased uptake as new tablet launches enable price erosion on older device models.



**Finance** — USAA allows customers to deposit a cheque by taking a picture and uploading via their mobile app. This saw a massive increase in the uptake of their service, as they expected 22 million mobile contacts in year 3, but actually got 120 million.



**Agriculture** — John Deere have developed an app which offers tracking and mapping of agricultural machines.

**Alfresco can fuel these, and many other potential tablet uses, with the content they need in order to deliver results.**

There are clearly endless potential implementations for tablets within businesses across all sectors, but there is one thing that nearly all of them have in common.

**Regardless of what the end function is, or how the output manifests itself, all of these tablet uses rely upon content.**

In order for the salesperson to collaborate on and finalize their presentation, or for the warehouse operative to be able to share/store/retrieve their product information, they need a platform to house and manage the corresponding data. As we've seen with the rise in BYOD, there are many consumer-level data sharing sites out there, but these aren't going to have the features necessary for the intricate and varying nature of enterprise content management on this sort of scale. What businesses need is a solution that is scalable, customizable and feature-rich enough to meet the sorts of diverse needs we see above, and this solution must of course come with the hygiene factors of security, capacity and compatibility, and without an increase in cost.

**Right now, Alfresco, the world's largest open source content management company, is best placed to answer all of these points for businesses who need a reliable, flexible and, above all, mobile solution.**

## Enterprise mobilization going forwards

There are conflicting perspectives on the implementation of mobile devices within enterprise, with perfectly sound arguments for approaching BYOD in many different ways — prohibited, controlled or completely unrestrained — but whichever way turns out to be best for each particular business, it is important to know that all aspects have been considered. The correct tools need to be in place for employees to get the best out of the mobile revolution — the prediction is that by 2016 smartphones and tablets will be in the pockets of 1 billion people around the world, and that 70% of all tablets used for work will be devices that employees have paid for themselves.<sup>5</sup>

With this increase in tablet and smartphone use, the corresponding acceleration of mobile software and app development and the inevitable increase in mobile data usage — envisioned to reach 10.8 exabytes (10,000,000,000GB) per month by 2016<sup>6</sup> — enterprises are understandably bracing themselves for increased mobile budgets over the coming years — either that or abandon mobilization entirely and risk falling behind competitors. It is therefore paramount that the right investments are made and risks reduced, while ensuring that the mobility, flexibility and, above all, security of employees and their business critical content is not compromised.

As we see tablet usage expanding away from internet browsing and email management towards more task-based and content-centric activities, many businesses will need a solution that can span all their devices, operating systems and physical locations, delivering a seamless experience in all the real-life examples mentioned previously, plus countless others. Alfresco Mobile is perfectly placed to answer any and all of these needs, with mobile apps available for iPad, iPhone and Android devices, your smartphones and tablets can now be unleashed to realize their full potential, as can your workforce.

## (continued) Enterprise mobilization going forwards

Alfresco is not only a great document management platform, it has the depth of features to enable workflow automation and content collaboration both within the enterprise and externally. Additionally, the open source nature of Alfresco means that the solution can be tailored to work with existing systems or to be the foundation upon which customized apps run. The free Alfresco Mobile app turns mobile devices into productivity tools by enabling access to all your content and process automation.

With Alfresco One, the unique Hybrid ECM approach to document and workflow management, you can sync your on-premise server with your cloud solution, creating the perfect combination for your mobilized workers to use when sharing and collaborating on content beyond the constraints of the firewall.



### Alfresco in the Office —

Full ECM to manage the 80% of content that will never leave the organization. From simple document management through to rigorous records management needed for the control for key critical content.



### Alfresco in the cloud —

Secure, corporately controlled, cloud networks. Invite people from outside the organization to collaborate with your employees in the cloud, but only granting them access to the content that you want them to see.



**Enterprise to Cloud Sync** — Allows employees to select documents and folders to sync with the cloud. Update in the office or in the cloud? Doesn't matter — Alfresco keeps everything synchronized. This keeps company content secure, and enables use in the cloud or behind your firewall — your choice (flexibility of deployment for IT)



**Mobile Access** — Native iOS and Android apps provide secure access to employees through the device of choice. Users can now choose to work through a web browser, via their tablet or on their smart phone.



### Encryption and Security —

Content is encrypted in the cloud and while on the tablet and smartphones reducing the risk should a device be lost or stolen.



**The Alfresco Mobile app is compatible with a multitude of file types**, and popular enterprise documents are easily opened and edited in your favourite tablet apps such as Quickoffice and PDF Expert and can be instantly saved back into Alfresco.



**Alfresco is also open source**, allowing you to easily tailor a solution for your particular needs.



**In regard to cost, Alfresco Mobile is ideal for mobilizing a large workforce**, as the app is free you don't incur additional implementation costs or license fees per user. You can also get started by opening a free 10GB Alfresco in the cloud account from within the Alfresco Mobile app.



### Scalability and flexibility.

No matter if you are using Alfresco in the cloud or Alfresco Enterprise on-premise, choosing Alfresco One future-proofs you so that you can automate any process, inside or outside the enterprise.



**Processes** that once were paper-based can become tablet-based, resulting in both financial and environmental benefits.



**Download the free Alfresco Mobile app** right now for your iPad, iPhone or Android device, and get started with a free 10GB cloud account.

**Speak with one of the Alfresco team about a tailored on-premise, cloud or hybrid solution.**

<sup>1</sup> Gartner, *Tablets And Smartphones Are Changing How Content Is Created, Consumed and Delivered*, April 2012

<sup>2</sup> 451 Research, *451 Enterprise Mobility Snapshot*, July 2012

<sup>3</sup> Forrester Research Inc., *Mobile Is The New Face Of Engagement*, February 2012

<sup>4</sup> Forrester Research Inc., *Case Study: USAA Makes Mobile Remote Deposit A Core Mobile Offering*, November 2011

<sup>5</sup> Forrester Research Inc., *Mobile Is The New Face Of Engagement*, February 2012

<sup>6</sup> Cisco, *Visual Networking Index: Forecast and Methodology*, 2011–2016, May 2012

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Alfresco UK +44 (0)1628 876 500 | Alfresco Americas +1-888-317-3395

