Taking Mobility to the Bank

Business mobility makes big strides in the financial services industry and brings promising benefits despite security concerns.

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The momentum of financial services business mobility only continues to intensify: Nearly six out of 10 companies (54 percent) say mobility is a critical or high priority in the next 12 months[1], and the average spend on mobility initiatives has increased.

Not only has mobility arrived but it's now a prerequisite for success. And the financial services consumer base has a noticeable thirst for mobile convenience and capability. For instance, mobile payments are experiencing phenomenal growth, with US mobile payments anticipated to grow from $52 billion in 2014 to $142 billion by 2019.[2] And mobile channel accounts for 35 percent of all bank interactions.[3] Plus, CIOs understand they must find ways to use mobility to meet the business's demands for improved productivity, agility and IT flexibility.

What drives financial services IT leaders to embark on mobility?

Create a more flexible work environment	**56%**
Improve operational efficiency	**54%**
Increase user productivity	**54%**
Improve external customer/client experience/satisfaction	**51%**
Increase revenue/business growth	**49%**
Improve secure access to real-time information	**46%**
Create competitive edge with faster time-to-market	**44%**
Lower costs of doing business	**39%**
Protective sensitive data in a BYO world	**39%**

Source: IDG Research Services, June 2015

The financial services industry needs to align mobility with business needs, including serving emerging markets, providing consistent and responsive customer service via all channels, securing business-sensitive data and ensuring compliance with regulations. In fact, IT leaders asked about the business drivers for mobility initiatives emphasized increasing revenue or business growth, improving the customer experience and creating a competitive edge with shorter time to market.

It's incumbent on financial services IT to support all of that while being resource-efficient. Failing to prioritize mobility and take advantage of the associated opportunity and competitive advantage can result in costly security gaps and breaches as well as failure to comply with industry regulations—not to mention losing customer confidence and market share.

This paper includes the results of a recent IDG Research Services survey of financial services IT leaders. These IT leaders are at various stages of engagement with business mobility initiatives. They shared their thoughts on the benefits of mobility as well as the common challenges they encounter as they work to capitalize on mobility to meet business priorities.

Mobility's Increasing Momentum
The proliferation of devices; generational expectations; and the vast amount and types of data being accessed, downloaded and sent for various reasons are making mobility part of everyday life. As a result, employees and customers expect to be able to work or do business by using mobile technologies.

This push toward a more comprehensive mobile environment is clear when we look at IT spending plans. Four years ago, in a 2011 IDG Research Services mobility study, IT executives from all industries said they were allocating an average of 16 percent of their IT budgets to funding mobile initiatives—including investments in security and data management software, mobile devices and wireless networks. Fast-forward to the June 2015 IDG survey this paper addresses: Businesses have increased these mobile initiative investments by 7 percent.

IT leaders in the financial services sector understand the importance of mobility, with 54 percent regarding it as a high or critical priority. And when compared with other industries included in the research, they are more likely to be piloting mobility initiatives within departments or across the enterprise. These companies also anticipate spending an average of 18 percent of their IT budget on mobility projects and initiatives.

These financial services industry IT leaders started on their mobility initiatives with the following focus points and projects:

- **The customer experience:** enabling mobile access via different devices to business apps and data. More than one-third of financial services IT departments will start with delivering customer-facing mobile applications, much higher than in other industry sectors.
- **Business security:** creating mobile security policies and strategies to protect apps, data and files. More than one-third will start with one of the following: managing compliance and mandate requirements, improving data and/or file sharing security or creating mobile security policies or strategies.
- **Making the IT infrastructure ready for mobility:** deploying technology to support different apps, devices, services and networks.

Of course, there is still plenty to do. Over the next 12 months, enabling mobile access to apps and data will continue to be a top priority, followed by improving data and file sharing security. And financial services respondents are far more likely to allocate mobile initiative budget to software and mobile application development—and significantly less likely to invest in hardware and devices.

Mobility Growing Pains and How to Address Them

Business mobility is maturing, but, understandably, there are barriers to overcome as financial services IT leaders push initiatives forward. The most prominent include the integration of legacy apps and data (indicated by 40 percent of the respondents) and the protection of data and files (37 percent). As with any other evolution, these leaders must embrace proven best practices to overcome the obstacles.

Most financial service IT environments today are heterogeneous and on-premises, with apps that go back to mainframe days. To implement a mobile initiative, IT must ensure that these legacy apps are available to users via newer technologies. Many organizations are addressing this requirement by using virtualized application delivery technology, enabling the applications to be accessed by users via any device, from anywhere.

It's also not surprising to see file and data protection identified as being among the top mobility challenges. The evolving threat landscape and frequency of data breaches in the news are a constant reminder of how important it is to ensure that data is protected.

"As most CIOs know, these days the number of devices accessing the network—including laptops, smartphones and tablets, both personal and company-owned—is growing exponentially. Trying

to manage devices is a losing battle. We see more CIOs taking a different approach: securing and controlling the applications and data that are relevant to the business and the customers and ensuring that the appropriate level of access is granted, given the identity, device and network scenario," says David Moxey, vice president of integrated products at Citrix, a provider of mobility solutions.

Tackling Security Challenges
In the quest to get IT infrastructure ready for mobile initiatives, security is understandably top-of-mind. When the survey participants were asked which mobility technologies are the most important, their top three were security-related:

- Protection of business-critical apps, data and files

- Securing and optimizing network performance

- Policy management and compliance for systems, user access and data

The security of data and files again topping the list demonstrates that it is both a challenge and a critical item to get right for business mobility to be successful. To overcome this obstacle, financial services organizations can deploy a mix of solutions. For example, they can virtualize and centralize their apps and data as well as their security controls, allowing access to those who need them via thin clients or containerized devices or web browsers. File-sync-and-share solutions as well as encryption and VPNs for data in transit all have roles as well.

The security and optimization of the network is critical to many financial service organizations with multiple office locations. As more users access applications and data remotely from branch offices or mobile devices, it creates a strain on the enterprise network. Success starts with embracing a network solution that optimizes, secures and controls the delivery of all enterprise and cloud applications and services, regardless of the user's access point.

With the third critical area being user access administration and policy management, fostering a culture of security awareness (indicated by 67 percent of the respondents) and keeping with security policies (66 percent) are the most important measures for successfully supporting business mobility initiatives. Technologies that can provide IT with granular control over what data is available to whom and from where are important. Moreover, having end-to-end visibility into traffic and user behavior, with reporting and auditing capabilities, can help IT meet compliance requirements.

A mixture of technologies and tools to protect business-critical apps, data and files can enable enterprises to achieve their security objectives. However, they must perform well and work the way users expect. Security policies often fail due to a cumbersome user experience, so IT leaders should look for solutions that make it easy for users to work consistently across different device environments. This goes hand in hand with fostering a culture of business security awareness, strong governance and security policies—all of which IT leaders in the IDG research deemed important for successfully supporting business mobility initiatives.

Having a comprehensive security and compliance framework gives IT tremendous flexibility, explains Moxey. "Building a mobility strategy on top of a shaky security and compliance foundation quickly exposes weaknesses, due to a constantly changing perimeter made up of thousands of types of devices, each an inviting attack vector that may not be under IT control."

Driving Forces for Mobility
Amid these challenges and the push to capitalize on the mobility momentum, IT leaders find themselves in the driver's seat. Although 75 percent of the financial services respondents **said** they

are the sponsor or champion of mobile initiatives in their organizations, they realize they must work alongside business executives—who are the next-most-common sponsor or champion, at 51 percent—to maximize effectiveness. After all, IT leaders must understand what lines of business hope to accomplish through these efforts.

Fortunately, when mobility is properly implemented, the potential benefits align with these goals:

- **Improving operational productivity.** Mobility empowers team members to work anywhere, anytime and retain and attract top talent across geographical or lifestyle boundaries. A remote/mobile workforce means that the business can reduce investment in facilities and branch offices. Fortunately, when productivity levels are up, employees have increased opportunities to focus on generating new revenue streams for the institution.

- **Enhancing the customer experience.** Consistency and timeliness become commonplace when always-connected mobile technology is leveraged. Always-available and always-secure mobile and web apps mean that customers can conduct business at their convenience without having to physically be in a branch office, and their usage of the apps can provide the business with data to track. Additionally, agents armed with mobile technologies can bring in-home service to customers who may not be able to get to the branch office.

- **Increasing organizational agility.** When armed with a truly mobile infrastructure, financial institutions can increase responsiveness to planned or unplanned disruptions—meaning that work can continue despite interruptions. The business also remains agile enough to respond to various market changes, including seasonal peaks and M&A bringing in temporary or offshore workers; giving them access to apps and data, regardless of where they are and what device they use; and getting them productive immediately. The more agile the organization, the more competitive it can be in meeting market requirements.

Bottom Line

As mobility initiatives expand and evolve, IT leaders need to embrace the opportunity to make a significant difference through a well-crafted, properly deployed, secure business mobility strategy.

As indicated in the research, financial services IT leaders are expecting to reap benefits that correspond to the mobility drivers: More than half anticipate increased user productivity within the next 12 months, followed by improved access to real-time information and increased operational efficiency. These are all aspects that ultimately affect the organization's bottom line. However, they must take the time to understand what the business needs, which happens only when they ask questions.

"Mobility is not going away; in fact, it is a fundamental requirement for nearly all businesses," Moxey says. "But mobility can mean different things to business units. By working together with the business units to understand their needs, financial services IT can successfully deliver the mobility solutions that enable their business and people to work better."

To learn more about how a secure mobility initiative can enhance your organization's business, visit:

http://www.citrix.com/go/mobile-workspaces/mobile-workspaces-infographic.html.

[1]IDG Research Services, June 2015.

[2]Forrester, US Mobile Payments Forecast 2014 to 2019, November 2014.

[3]Pymnts.com, How Much Do Consumers Use Mobile Check Deposit?, February 2015.