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## STRATEGIC IMPACT OF MOBILITY ON ORGANIZATIONS

**Purpose.** The current rapid social and economic developments show mobility as the most important factor of economic growth, social and cultural progress. Mobile technology has undergone a sea change over the past ten years. The evolution of mobility is about creating better ways to change the world. It will increasingly shape our lives and thinking in ways we cannot fully anticipate. Mobile revolution is a global reality which creates new opportunities and challenges for all companies in the world. **Methodology.** Proposed methodological approach is based on a comprehensive assessment of the strategic impact of mobility on the organization as a major tool to improve competitiveness and efficiency of the company. During the research have been used both qualitative and quantitative methods. As a result, the article provides bridges between the field of mobility, organization science, information systems, and certain aspects of philosophy. **Findings.** This research provides a glimpse into the fast-evolving world of mobile technology and maybe even faster evolving world of organizations. The research is designed to understand the strategic impact of mobility on organizations, and evaluate the benefits of integration of these new technologies into the company. The research comprised of an extensive literature review, observation of existing practices, and semi-structured interviews geared toward understanding the strategic impact of mobility on organization and its employees. **Originality.** The research findings suggest three main strategic implications of mobility: improve working process; increase internal communication and knowledge sharing; and enhance sales and marketing effectiveness. **Practical value.** The use of mobile technology and its impact on organizational change and strategy, stability and development of competitive advantage allow the company to ensure the effectiveness of its business. Mobility can dramatically transform the company by finding their feet in almost every sector and it has a profound impact on both customers as well as employees. Mobility solutions are growing across business portfolios of company and driving by the need to increase productivity. They improve decision making, with increased near real-time access through mobile channels that help to improve internal employee interaction, customer collaboration, network building and information sharing.

*Keyword:* mobility; mobile technology; mobile applications; mobile devices; strategic impact organizational value; intangible benefit; enterprise mobility; constant connectivity

## Introduction

Game-changing mobile technology is a key for modern computer-based information systems that can revolutionize business in the future. This status quo is not surprising. Mobility is all around us. It has penetrated into every aspect of our work and life. More and more companies implement and incorporate the latest technology into their operations to enhance or balance their business demands and opportunities, and to increase their productivity and profitability.

Mobility is gaining importance and popularity in organizations (Andersen et al., 2003). It is changing the way businesses operate and people work, and how information systems support business processes, decision-making and competitive advantage. They not only have become an expected component of the information technology

infrastructure, but also have begun playing a key role in virtualizing and accelerating the business and thus transforming the entire enterprise and its ecosystem.

Bellotti and Bly (1996) indicate that mobility is very important for communication and for use of common resources. It facilitates awareness and informal cooperation, and creates new looks, abilities and knowledge. Mobility is highlighted as one of the key means of stabilizing and keeping up the company activity.

The strategic importance of mobility cannot be underestimated. Mobile technology becomes a fundamental player in all levels of the organization. This fast development of technologies can radically change the capabilities of information systems and opening new possibilities for business. Therefore, we believe that this new phenomenon needs to be better understood and analyzed.

### Purpose

New technology is a critical resource for creating organizational value. It has the potential to dramatically change the nature of products, processes, companies, industries, and even competition itself. Therefore, we can sight that these technologies serve as powerful strategic marketing tools for organizations.

Organizations must often consider both the costs and benefits of implementing new technology in the workplace. Costs and benefits can be either tangible or intangible. The tangible benefits are those benefits that can be measured and quantified in financial terms, such as cost savings (Mukhopadhyay et al., 1995), productivity (Hitt and Brynjolfsson, 1996), market share (Banker and Kauffman, 1988; Barua et al., 1995), and profitability (Jarvenpaa and Ives, 1990; Brown et al., 1995). While the intangible benefits on business processes and relationships include better customer satisfaction that are not so easily measured (Quinn and Baily, 1994; Anderson et al., 2003). The article focuses on studying intangible benefits of mobility to illustrate their strategic impact on the organization.

The world has entered a new age defined by enterprise mobility and constant connectivity. To accelerate business processes and increase productivity, it is necessary to mobilize the enterprise – enabling the employees and customers to transact business at any time, from anywhere, on any device. To obtain the greatest business benefits from this technology, the organization should use a more individualized approach that enables workers to achieve the optimal connectivity state.

As has been previously reported, mobility is one of the most important market and technological trend within information and communication technology. It changes and improves many aspects of economy, lifestyle and culture. This technology is transforming how companies “do business” and how they interact with employees, customers, and suppliers.

Today, almost every company uses at least one mobile application or device, which means they increase organizational expectations for connectivity to work “anywhere, anytime”. And that’s why it is hard to imagine life without the convenience and efficiencies of mobile technologies.

However, mobility also changes the traditional spatial and temporal boundaries between work and

non-work, resulting in more permeable boundaries in which work is completed during personal time and non-work is conducted on-line during working hours. Added to this, some argue that mobility has become an expression of human desire to expand power and control over our circumstances and to mold the world around us to suit our individual and collective needs. Thus, it is not so much the mobile capabilities of technology that are changing the way we work, but the capacity for ubiquitous and constant connectivity.

Mobility is exploding for one simple and powerful reason → it makes our personal and professional lives more convenient and efficient. Equipped with powerful mobile devices and compelling applications, mobile workers are enabling a wave of disruptive innovation that’s transforming how business is run. Employees are purchasing mobile devices and requesting access to enterprise-information systems. Consumers, meanwhile, expect 24-hour customer experiences and detailed product information at their fingertips.

From an organizational perspective, mobility enables users to engage with customers, suppliers and colleagues at any time and from anywhere. This technology thus appears to offer “organizational nirvana” where executives can manage their work to make better use of downtime and increase their availability, with the promise of increased value and productivity for the company. For IT leaders, as SAP, the challenges are not only to respond to the growth in new technology capabilities, but also user demands for organizational support to enable them to “use technology on a more continual, natural, dynamic and often invisible basis.”

### Methodology

The methodology used in the article begins with the study from various books and papers around mobility, connectivity and design of information system. As the aim of this research is to study the strategic and organizational impact of mobility, a qualitative approach was regarded as most appropriate, since the main research problem involves lots of data that cannot be quantified. Thus, in the article has been used qualitative investigation techniques including literature review, observation of existing practices, and semi-structured interviews.

## Findings

The global objective for mobility is to maximize the overall benefits to the organization. During this research has been identified five main objectives – maximize customer service, maximize company image, maximize employee satisfaction, maximize efficiency, and maximize effectiveness. According to the research, these objectives are the fundamental reasons for implementing and adapting mobility in organization (Fig. 1).

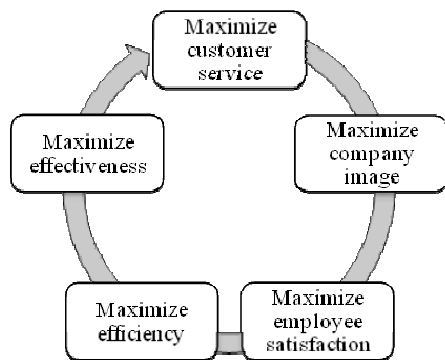


Fig. 1. Main Objectives

The first main objective identified is to maximize customer service, which is one of the key strategic focuses of the organization. Equipped with mobile devices, employees are able to have access to product information and the Internet whenever the need arises. They can verify or search for information easily at the customers' sites and answer questions on the spot, and also learn their comments, complaints and suggestions regarding the company's products. Thus, they can be more responsive to customers in responding to their questions, handling their requests, and following up with customers. These allow them to provide better customer service. This finding is in line with the literature discussed in the theoretical part where improved customer service quality is found to be one of the main intangible benefits brought about by technologies. Also, Jarvenpaa et al. (2003) discuss this benefit. He argues that mobility can provide users with more "freedom" and new methods to interact with customers that allow them to serve customers better.

The second main objective is to *enhance company image*. The use of new and innovative IT is important as IT can play a role in "producing new knowledge dissemination platform." Providing mobility can help the organization to be more con-

fidant and knowledgeable, and to provide the most innovative, flexible and powerful products/services for its customers. In addition, using of mobile technology allow employees to be more well-informed about the products that can enhance their professional image, which in turn improves the image of the company. That is also very important.

According to our research, *the maximization of employees' satisfaction* is one of the key drivers of the company's decision to apply this new technology. Mobility allows employees to utilize their time better (e.g., reduce "slack" or "dead" time), and to communicate and cooperate with their colleagues more easily and readily. Thus, employee's satisfaction, performance and productivity can significantly increase. It was surprisingly for us, because in the research literature has not been cited such benefits of mobility.

Other mains reasons for deploying mobility are the *maximization of efficiency and effectiveness* of organization. With the help of mobile devices, employees can be more well-informed about the company's products, which allow them to do their job better. For example, utilizing the multi-media features provided by SAP, employees can improve the quality and effectiveness of company's products demonstrations for customers. Also, efficiency improvements can be obtained by carrying out their job-related tasks in a timelier manner. As Sarker and Wells (2003) argue, "mobility means efficiency". With this new technology, employees are able to "fill" their time, meaning that they can carry out their daily tasks between appointments and scheduled activities, and during any "slack" or "dead time." Thereby, their work efficiency will significantly improved. Moreover, mobility can be a great tool to help employees carry out their job quicker and better, which is in line with the findings reported by Bakos and Treacy (1986).

Thus, mobility allow companies to "do business" in ways that are radically different from what's done today. Mobilization affects people in a number of ways. It affects the way people work and interact with each other, and also on their performance and productivity. Mobility allows people to work actually anywhere and anytime with access to the same resources that they have in the office. That means employees can have more flexible timetable and perform their work as needed, on demand. In such an environment, employees can be more easily rewarded based on pro-

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ductivity, and thus management's focus will move from monitoring attendance to evaluating results – from activity to productivity. This, we think, is the most important points.

With this technology, employees become more independent of physical location, this allow them to interact with their colleagues and customers anywhere and anytime.

Mobility allows employees to maximize the effectiveness of personal and corporate information management, to speed up the communication processes, and to perfect decision making when for working in meetings were examples given by interviewees to illustrate the ways in which the mobility enhanced their job performance.

To summarize, the main objectives identified during the research show that mobility can be used as a way to better achieve company strategies. In our future research, we would like to support this assertion by examples from companies in different industries.

### Originality and practical value

As discussed previously, during the research we found five main objectives that contribute to the general objective of maximizing the company's benefits of using mobility. The key drivers for organization to adopt mobility are to “increase efficiency” and “provide better customer satisfaction”, which are two main measurements of competitive advantages (Sethi and King, 1994).

We want to demonstrate the strategic impacts of mobility on the organization using relationships between these main objectives. Thus, we identified three main strategic implications of mobility that can help to reinforce and achieve company strategy (Fig. 2).

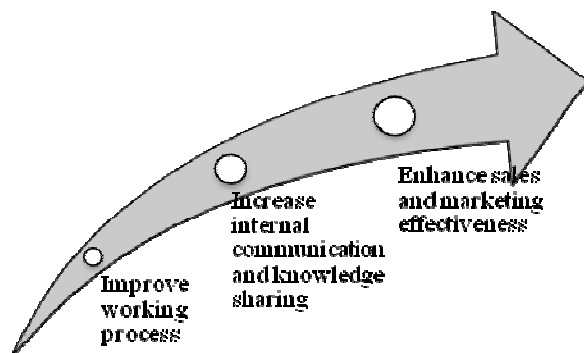


Fig. 2. Main Strategic Implications of Mobility

#### (1) Improve working process

According to Kohli and Devara (2004), information technologies are generally deployed to help improve and rationalize business processes. Mobile technology and mobility are not exclusion. As well, with features such as wireless connection and mobility of devices, mobility provides “real-time availability of information” and “Internet access at anytime, anywhere”. Today, for companies all over the world the information is a key source of competitive advantage, and in this way these features are particularly important when “information is transforming the nature of competition” (Porter and Millar, 1985).

Based on our research, we suggest that mobility can help the organization to improve the working process by enabling activities to be carried out in real-time (such as real time response to customers' queries, and ability to submit customers' product requests on the spot), and to streamline the process by removing redundant procedures (such as by inputting and updating data/information at source, and enabling electronic recording of customer feedback while interacting with customers).

#### (2) Increase internal communication and knowledge sharing

One of the purposes of using mobile strategy is to facilitate communication. Mobility can help to strengthen interpersonal relationships and increase flexibility in coordination (Jarvenpaa et al., 2003). It provides a new medium and channel for communication and knowledge sharing. In our case, the use of mobility software solutions has made it easier for employees to transfer or share information with one another and enabled them to communicate and collaborate better. As mentioned above, satisfying employee demand has been one of the key drivers for the adoption of mobility.

#### (3) Enhance sales and marketing effectiveness

Schlosser (2002) discusses in his research the innovative ways of using technologies. And he approves that these technologies are always shaped by individual needs as users adapted their message contexts, social etiquette, self-impressions, and ways of doing business. The use of mobility can help to shape the company's image with “prestige” and to be “leading edge” (Schlosser, 2002).

Hence, mobility can be used as a sales and marketing tool to enhance company image and to give customers the impression that the company is at the “cutting edge”.

This article provides bridges between the field of mobility, organization science, information systems, and certain aspects of philosophy.

Throughout our research more and more we are coming to the conclusion that mobility is an exciting prospect to consider. The spread of this technology will revolutionize the way companies "do business". To understand the big picture and all the possibilities, it's worth imagining this future state in some detail, and considering the individual impacts that mobility will likely have.

Mobility can transform organization by finding their feet in almost every sector and it has a profound impact on both customers as well as employees. This technology is growing across business portfolios of company and driving by the need to increase productivity. It improves decision making, with increased near real-time access through mobile channels that help to improve internal employee interaction, customer collaboration, network building and information sharing.

### Conclusions

Realizing the importance of enterprise mobility as a strategic priority, any organization should certainly empower its business processes with the enterprise-wide deployment of mobile applications. As predicts SAP Business Analyst: *"Mobility Solutions have the potential to fundamentally transform organization, its business chain and markets. We think that only when location constraints will be obliterated and when mobility will become the key endpoint, company will be able to clarify their vision for the future"*.

"Companies that embrace mobility solutions will see improvements in productivity and operational efficiency that were unimaginable only a few years ago. Today, mobility can't be seen as a luxury anymore, it's a necessity", Head of Business Transformation Services, SAP).

Many companies all over the world are already using mobile applications and devices to deliver increased customer satisfaction and performance; for these companies the future is already here.

"Mobility creates value by allowing mobile access to contextually-relevant information so front-line workers can make informed decisions in their daily interaction with customers, partners and suppliers", Head of Business Transformation Services, SAP).

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## СТРАТЕГИЧЕСКОЕ ВЛИЯНИЕ МОБИЛЬНОСТИ НА ОРГАНИЗАЦИИ

**Цель.** Современное мировое экономическое развитие стран и развитие общества свидетельствуют о мобильности как наиболее важном факторе экономического роста культурного и общественного прогресса. За последние десять лет мобильные технологии подверглись кардинальным изменениям. Развитие мобильности является толчком к созданию более эффективных способов изменения мира. Данная технология будет все более и более формировать нашу жизнь и мышление таким образом, который в настоящее время мы не можем в полной мере предвидеть. Мобильная революция является глобальной реальностью, которая создает новые возможности и проблемы для компаний во всём мире. **Методика.** Предложенный методический подход основывается на комплексной оценке стратегического влияния мобильности на организацию как основного инструмента повышения конкурентоспособности и эффективности деятельности. В ходе анализа были использованы качественные и количественные методы оценки. Как результат, данная статья включает анализ взаимосвязи между сферой мобильности, теорией организации и некоторыми аспектами философии. **Результаты.** Представленное исследование дает возможность заглянуть в быстро развивающийся мир мобильных технологий и, возможно, даже в еще более быстрый мир развития организаций. Исследовательские разработки позволяют понять стратегическое влияние мобильности на организацию и оценить преимущества интеграции новых технологий в компанию. Исследование включает обширный литературный анализ, наблюдение существующей практики и полуструктурированные интервью, ориентированные на понимание стратегического воздействия мобильности на организацию и её сотрудников. **Научная новизна.** Результаты исследования позволяют нам выделить три основные стратегические импликации мобильности: улучшение рабочего процесса; увеличение внутренней коммуникации и обмена знаниями, а также повышение продаж и маркетинговой эффективности. **Практическая значимость.** Использование мобильных технологий, их влияние на организационные изменения и реализацию стратегии формирования, обеспечения устойчивости и развития конкурентных преимуществ позволяет компании обеспечить эффективность их бизнеса. Мобильность способна кардинально трансформировать каждый сектор компании и иметь значительное влияние как на структуру организации, так и на ее сотрудников. Данная инновационная технология усовершенствует процесс принятия решений, делая его доступным в реальном времени через мобильные каналы, которые помогают улучшить внутренние взаимодействия между сотрудниками, сотрудничество с клиентами, создание сетей и обмен информацией.

**Ключевые слова:** мобильность; мобильные технологии; мобильные приложения; мобильные устройства; стратегическое влияние; организационные ценности; нематериальные выгоды; мобильность предприятия; непрерывная связь

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## СТРАТЕГІЧНИЙ ВПЛИВ МОБІЛЬНОСТІ НА ОРГАНІЗАЦІЇ

**Мета.** Сучасний світовий економічний розвиток країн та розвиток суспільства свідчать про мобільність як найважливіший фактор економічного зростання, культурного й суспільного прогресу. За останні десять років мобільні технології зазнали кардинальних змін. Розвиток мобільності є поштовхом до створення більш ефективних способів змінення світу. Зазначена технологія буде все більше й більше формувати наше життя та мислення таким чином, який у даний час ми не можемо повною мірою передбачити. Мобільна революція є глобальною реальністю, яка створює нові можливості й проблеми для компаній у всьому світі.

**Методика.** Запропонований методичний підхід ґрунтується на комплексній оцінці стратегічного впливу мобільності на організацію як основного інструменту підвищення конкурентоспроможності й ефективності діяльності підприємства. У ході аналізу були використані якісні та кількісні методи оцінювання. Як результат, дана стаття включає аналіз взаємозв'язку між сферою мобільності, теорією організації й деякими аспектами філософії. **Результати.** Представлене дослідження дає можливість заглянути у світ мобільних технологій, який швидко розвивається, і, можливо, навіть у ще більш швидкий світ розвитку організацій. Дослідницькі розробки дозволяють зрозуміти стратегічний вплив мобільності на організацію та оцінити переваги інтеграції нових технологій у компанію. Дослідження включає загальний літературний аналіз, спостереження існуючої практики й напівструктуровані інтерв'ю, орієнтовані на зрозуміння стратегічного впливу мобільності на організацію та її робітників. **Наукова новизна.** Результати дослідження дозволяють нам виділити три основні стратегічні імплікації мобільності: поліпшення робочого процесу, збільшення внутрішніх комунікацій та обміну знаннями, а також підвищення продаж і маркетингової ефективності. **Практична значимість.** Використання мобільних технологій, а також їх вплив на організаційні зміни й реалізацію стратегії формування, забезпечення стійкості та розвитку конкурентних переваг, дозволяє компанії забезпечити ефективність їх бізнесу. Мобільність здатна кардинально трансформувати кожен сектор компанії й мати величезний вплив як на структуру організації, так і на її співробітників. Дана інноваційна технологія покращить процес прийняття рішень, роблячи його доступним у реальному часі через мобільні канали, які допомагають поліпшити внутрішню взаємодію між співробітниками, співпрацю з клієнтами, створення мереж й обмін інформацією.

*Ключові слова:* мобільність; мобільні технології; мобільні додатки; мобільні пристрої; стратегічний вплив; організаційні цінності; нематеріальні вигоди; мобільність підприємства; безперервний зв'язок

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