

THE SMARTER WORKPLACE



AN INVESTIGATION INTO SMARTER WORKING
AND HOW BUSINESS CAN BENEFIT FROM IT

THUS
a Cable&Wireless Worldwide business

KEY FINDINGS

Smarter Working makes people more productive

Smarter Working gives your team access to information anywhere and the ability to communicate and collaborate everywhere, which makes them more productive.

Smarter Working reduces costs

Using cloud computing to access apps and products reduces the costs of traditional infrastructure as well as bringing many other savings.

Smarter Working is better for businesses and better for people

Smarter Working methods give people the opportunity to create a better work/life balance which leads to increased productivity, greater efficiency and happier staff.

IT departments need to embrace Smarter Working, not resist it

Top-down control of online usage is unenforceable and counterproductive. IT departments need to embrace the new applications and ensure their network connection has the bandwidth, security and flexibility to support them now and as their business grows.



WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING?

IT investment is down

For most businesses, the last 18 months has been a period of muddling through, cutting costs, stretching budgets and down-staffing. There's been less investment in new technology unless essential.

Now, IT departments need to take the lead and become business heroes. Here's why:

Under-resourced, digital-savvy employees have taken the initiative

They have individually, and often unofficially, turned to a huge variety of business apps to help them work better. However, the typical company response is to simply shut down use of online applications and software. Whilst workers want to install software that they believe will help them do their jobs, the IT department generally wants to remove them. That's because, without appropriate bandwidth, unmonitored app downloads can slow down the network. In addition, IT departments – and therefore the company – can lose control over what is being used.

Clamping down on apps makes company staff less productive

Worse, they feel restricted and not trusted. As the digital networking generation moves into the workplace and tries to bring digital networking into businesses, this will only create further conflict.

Disruptive events are having a big impact on businesses

Last winter's 'big freeze' has shown that many companies can't maintain business as usual in the face of sustained disruption. For small organisations especially, the absence of just a few employees can have a disproportionate impact on operations and revenue. Making sure you can carry on as normal if staff can't reach the office is critical to prevent your business prospects clouding over.

Which means that right now IT has the opportunity to shine

With digital business apps and products available on-demand via cloud computing, both individuals and departments can become interconnected and suddenly everyone has the chance to collaborate. This applies not just within a company, but also to clients, suppliers and partners. As more people become involved in a process, they to work together, reducing errors and improving communication right across the board.

Smart companies will embrace cloud-based applications, not resist them. And this is happening already. Cloud computing markets are rising from \$36 billion in 2008 to an expected \$160.2 billion by 2015.*

So right now, IT departments have the opportunity to be the heroes of businesses.

* Source: (<http://www.researchandmarkets.com/>) – market growth in cloud computing



AN INTRODUCTION TO SMARTER WORKING

What is it?

When you're facing a demanding business environment, working more flexibly and productively is absolutely central to your continued survival and success. That's especially true if you're trying to do more, but with lower budgets and fewer employees. That's where smarter working comes in. It's about allowing your people to access all of your resources (such as business

information, customer data, applications or services) from any of your locations or from home. It's giving them the means to work effectively wherever they are. It's about promoting a 'Let's Work' culture – which can only be good for business!"



AN INTRODUCTION TO **SMARTER WORKING** continued

So what's needed for Smart Working?

Firstly, a reliable, secure, flexible network connection :

If you are a single site business that runs mission critical, bandwidth hungry services and applications you might want to consider a dedicated Internet access connection that provides the flexibility to scale bandwidth as needs change, and for more rapid growth, one that offers an easy migration path. By adding in a secure remote access method, you can easily and securely connect your people who work remotely or in the field.

Alternatively if you are a multi-site business that needs to support different types of traffic (voice/data/Internet/video) and various applications you may want to either consider making the investment in a data network connection or look at upgrading your current infrastructure. Have you noticed that your network connection doesn't quite work the same as when it was first installed? Instead of prioritising the traditional voice/data/Internet traffic, are you faced with the demands of prioritising new applications? Chances are you've now got more users, more applications, more services, bigger files and more people that need to connect remotely. If all this sounds familiar, it's worth considering your options and researching the various data connectivity services which are now available. Look for a provider that doesn't charge connection or installation fees, and one that provides very clear promises on service availability and performance.

Secondly, an innovative application services provider:

A company such as Huddle gives you simple, secure online workspaces containing powerful project and collaboration tools. Huddle is hosted, there's no software to download and it's free to get started. The Huddle service lets you manage projects, share and store files securely online, create and edit documents online, hold group discussions and have an unlimited number of users at no extra cost. With this sort of collaboration opportunity, your team can work better together, however far apart their physical locations might be.



SMARTER WORKING GIVES BUSINESSES MORE FOR LESS

Information anywhere

Smarter Working means connecting all your people, in offices, on the road and at home and giving them a simple workplace online. So they can work effectively, collectively and securely, accessing your resources wherever they are. With remote access technology well established and many homes already broadband-enabled, giving employees access to centralised applications and networks is simple.

Empowering employees to use familiar digital business software in the workplace helps them become more efficient. Digital business software and networks includes Salesforce.com for CRM, Eloqua for automated marketing, Huddle for collaboration, Yammer for internal conversations, Delicious for sharing bookmarks and relevant content, Twitter and Wikis for information sharing. Other names include:

- DropBox
- MailBigFile
- Yousendit
- Box
- Sugar CRM

Reduced costs and infrastructure

Smarter Working offers a whole range of cost savings. Because your staff can work together even when they're in different locations, you can cut down on travel expenditure and 'dead' time on the move. You can also centralize some of your functions at one site, such as IT servers and support staff, internet access, customer services and order management.

Don't think cost - think investment. It's easy to view connectivity as a straight cost, but think about the Return on Investment (ROI) Smarter Working can provide. For example a Dedicated Internet access connection from THUS is ideal for businesses that run critical services and applications that need the flexibility to scale up their bandwidth easily as their needs change. Coupled with the right secure remote access method - this means that staff can connect from anywhere which will lead to a reduction in travel costs and an increase in productivity.

By allowing staff to work collaboratively, 58% of SMEs reported an improvement in productivity for flexible working.*

SMARTER WORKING GIVES BUSINESSES MORE FOR LESS continued

Communicate everywhere

During a major disruption like a national sporting event, snowfall or an outbreak of illness, your staff's ability to work remotely can make the difference between your company surviving and going under. And just think how much more nimble that can make your business when there aren't any major disruptions or distractions going on.

Because your employees can access all of your resources, wherever they're currently working, they can be much more responsive to your customers. And with solutions such as VideoConference and TeleConference, you can cut down on travel expenditure to meetings.

Communications are driven by services such as:

- Skype
- Webex
- Gotomeeting
- MSN
- Email
- SMS
- VideoConference
- TeleConference
- Huddle Web Conferencing

Work/Life balance

A new, digitally-savvy generation is entering the workplace. For these people the idea of life without a mobile phone is inconceivable, not having access to the internet is unbearable and the thought of buying a photo album may have never crossed their minds. New tools have enabled this generation to forge identities online and participate in a constant stream of communication. These tools have also changed the way in which they consume information. Today's graduates are used to flexibility, openness and collaboration - when they walk through the doors of their new office, they may be in for a shock.

So how you allow them to work for your business – and give them freedom to use the communications skills they have grown up with - could make a huge difference to your profitability. They will want to transform current social networking skills into digital business networking skills. And with staff less tied to traditional workplaces, hours and activities, the opportunities for greater home working, part-time working and job sharing are vast. Also, there is simply the opportunity for more efficient use of time by enabling staff to be functional wherever they go. Providing your employees with the tools to work flexibly and manage their workload effectively means they'll be happier, healthier and much more productive.

Your staff are likely to already be connected via a whole array of general and specialist digital networks including:

- Facebook
- LinkedIn
- Xing
- Flickr
- Slideshare
- Foursquare
- Gowalla
- Buzz
- Twitter
- StumbleUpon
- Delicious
- Digg
- Technorati
- Wikis
- Ning



STRATEGY, THEN TECHNOLOGY

Define your objectives

Yes, there's a bewildering array of services out there. But rather than becoming bogged down by all the available technology, be clear about what your business objectives are now, and what they might be in the future. Then make sure the apps, products and services you choose will support them.

Get a good provider

There's no need to try and work it all out yourself. Find suppliers that will take the time to get under the skin of your business, and who can then advise you on which services will help you achieve your goals. Make sure your provider offers a wide range of solutions too, so that you're not shoehorned into services that aren't completely suitable for you.

Make sure it's scalable

Since few organizations have cash to burn, it's extremely important that your data services can scale up with your business. The option to upgrade capacity at short notice means you only pay for what you're using now, rather than needing to have extra bandwidth just in case you require it at some point in the future.

SMARTER WORKING IN ACTION

A week in the life of a Smarter Worker

Theory is all very well. But what would smarter working actually look like in practice? Here's a snapshot of one person's working week, using smarter working. THUS have fully put into practice the ethos they preach: colleagues right across the company have the capability to work from various locations. So how does this service mobility enable our colleagues to deliver on a day-to-day basis, no matter where they are?

Steve Willmore is Head of Marketing at THUS. During a typically busy working week he shows how technology helps him to get his job done, wherever it takes him.

MONDAY - working from home

Demon Homeworker broadband lets me work from home in Colchester over a high-performance connection. With Secure Identity Access, a two-step network authentication access system, I can easily and securely log in to all the corporate systems and applications just as if I'm sitting at my office desk. Getting rid of the commute isn't just good for me; it also means I start work earlier because I cut out the time walking to the train station. After a pretty constructive day, I catch an evening flight to Glasgow for the company conference, where I can prepare my presentation for tomorrow and use my BlackBerry to check up on emails at either end.

TUESDAY - up to Glasgow

Like most business hotels, the conference venue has WiFi, so I can keep on top of my emails in between sessions rather than having to tackle everything in the evening. Using my laptop and Secure Identity Access to get onto the corporate network, I can quickly deal with requests for the latest budget figures and this year's marketing strategy presentation.

WEDNESDAY - in Glasgow

Today I'm in the Glasgow office, and with our high-speed WAN it's just like being at my usual desk. After a full day's work I head to the airport and I'm annoyed to find my flight is delayed! It's not wasted time though – the airport WiFi and my laptop mean I can use the wait to prepare a presentation I need for Friday.

THURSDAY - down to London

Although it's the first time I've been into our London office this week, I've barely missed a beat. Today's a full day of face-to-face and 'virtual' meetings using our audio conferencing system which is so easy to use, it's second nature within the company. This means we don't have to travel as much, we can get things done and make decisions much faster.

FRIDAY - out and about in London

This morning I give the presentation I prepared on Wednesday evening to our marketing agency at their West London offices. Later in the meeting I have to duck out to join a THUS-hosted web conference about our product portfolio, which I log onto using my laptop's wireless access and Secure Identity Access. Salesforce.com provides me with quick access to see what percentage of customers are using which products, which is vital for creating context with the sales people in the web conference. On the train back to London I'm back on the laptop, keeping in touch with the team on Yammer, replying to some emails and getting some documents from the company systems. I give the OK to some marketing collateral awaiting approval before arriving back at the office for the afternoon.



SUMMARY: KEY BENEFITS OF SMARTER WORKING

Access to information anywhere

IT departments can open up new ways of working and collaborating by allowing apps, social networks, cloud computing, remote working and online business tools.

Reduced cost and simpler infrastructure

High-speed networks create multiple opportunities to outsource services and replace expensive, in-house systems with low-or-no-cost web-based alternatives.

The ability to communicate everywhere

Secure online workspaces foster collaboration and communication, making it easy to work with and respond to customers, colleagues and suppliers, wherever your workforce is based.

A better work/life balance for your staff

By empowering employees to use the technology they want, companies create trust, improve morale and encourage initiative in the workforce. This allows them to be more productive without being tied to a traditional workplace.



FIND OUT MORE

To find out more about THUS, visit www.thus.net or call **0808 202 3193** to speak to a THUS representative about Smarter Working and how it could help your business.

Find out what applications are being used by your employees and what they'd like to use to help them in their work.

www.unblockyourpipes.com

This paper is sponsored by THUS

THUS, a Cable&Wireless Worldwide business provides telecommunication services (data/Internet/voice/IP voice) to business customers across the UK. Services that connect your people allowing them to effectively communicate and collaborate, using the UK's most extensive next-generation network for business customers only.

