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Redefining the IT strategy;
the shift to user centric computing

How IT strategies need to be redefined to accommodate consumerisation, and the opportunity to drive innovation and competitive advantage within the enterprise.

The key findings from a major Dimension Data and Ovum study

A Definition of End-User Computing (EUC)

There is a **major transformation in the enterprise**: from desktop computing to user-centric computing. This model allows users to be placed at the centre providing them with access to applications and data from a number of devices.

We define **End User Computing** as the **integrated management** and the **secure delivery of application services to any user end-point**, whether that's a smartphone, tablet, laptop, desktop, or even machines in future.

More importantly, the location of the originating service is transparent to end-users, whose concern is instant access to their data and applications.

This fundamentally changes the way users consume information. It also provides a unique set of challenges for IT management since it represents a shift away from traditional Infrastructure Management and End User Support paradigms.

Catalyst

Somewhat worryingly for enterprises, a significant proportion of the workforce are "doing IT" for themselves – often using their own devices, self-provisioned tools, and cloud services to get the job done. This situation has arisen as a result of under investment in the end-user computing environment and, in Ovum's opinion, overly restrictive IT policies in many instances. Organisations must address this important aspect of enterprise IT or risk losing control and ownership of their digital business assets.

Ovum believes that factors affecting the end-user computing environment extend beyond enterprise mobility: there is a fundamental shift from the desktop-only environment towards a device-agnostic, more user-centred one.

This shift also changes from being technology-focused to a more outcome-focused approach.

- **enables** and **supports** the changing work styles being demanded by all employees to work anywhere and everywhere

- **allows the introduction** of new technology consumption models to support initiatives such BYO-X as smart devices proliferate across organisations.

- **allows for more efficient** operating models such as self-service to be deployed across the organisation.

Organisations are steadily moving towards a model where employees are able to use any sanctioned device to access applications and data from any location; increasing engagement and improving productivity as a result. While IT strategy may be to improve enterprise mobility, the realisation should always be to strive for better business outcomes.

Ovum view

A consensus is forming: future competitive advantage will be created through data and analytics; business models will be shaped by cloud; and engagement will be powered by mobile and social technologies. Continued growth in the use of employee-owned devices and self-selected applications is changing the face of the end-user computing environment, yet many organisations continue with outmoded, desktop-only computing strategies that were conceived over a decade ago.

Marshall McLuhan, an eminent Canadian philosopher of communication theory, once said:

'We become what we behold. We shape our tools, and thereafter our tools shape us.'

If we apply this to the enterprise, then we see that over time the tools used by the workforce do indeed shape the processes and products of the organisations that employ them.

Findings from a survey by Ovum, commissioned by Dimension Data, of 100 UK IT decision-makers support the Ovum view that workforce engagement must be a top priority if organisations are to flourish, and that those organisations adopting a more progressive end-user computing environment are more likely to succeed than those that are not. A key attribute of the customer-adaptive enterprise is an engaged workforce; one that is well-equipped and well-trained. There is little doubt in the minds of IT management that an engaged workforce contributes significantly to business agility, process innovation, and customer satisfaction.

Key research findings

- **Customer-adaptive organisations** place great focus on business innovation and employee engagement in order to maintain high levels of customer satisfaction. In addition, high-performing organisations pay close attention to all aspects of the mobile workspace, especially in the context of the end-user computing environment. Having a progressive end-user computing strategy is an important enabler of business innovation.

- **There is little doubt** that a well-equipped, well-trained workforce is more productive than one that is not. Moreover, adopting a progressive end-user computing environment not only improves productivity, it reduces employee stress and improves work-life balance too.

- **The combination** of mobile devices and cloud services presents a real opportunity to fundamentally re-think business processes, and to alter the way work gets done. In addition, communication and collaboration can be extended well beyond the traditional desk-based employee and the corporate network.

- **Good customer service** starts with a well-trained, well-motivated, and well-equipped workforce. And in the digital age, being well informed and well-connected are of paramount importance, whether one is desk-based or mobile.

- **A consensus is forming**: future competitive advantage will be created through data and analytics; business models will be shaped by cloud; and customer and employee engagement will be powered by mobile and social technologies.

'Continued **growth in the use of employee-owned devices** and **self-selected applications** is **changing the face of the end-user computing environment**, yet many organisations continue with outmoded, desktop-only computing strategies that were conceived over a decade ago.'

Business innovation is a
key attribute of a customer-
adaptive enterprise

**There's no disagreement: Having
an end-user computing strategy
is an important enabler of
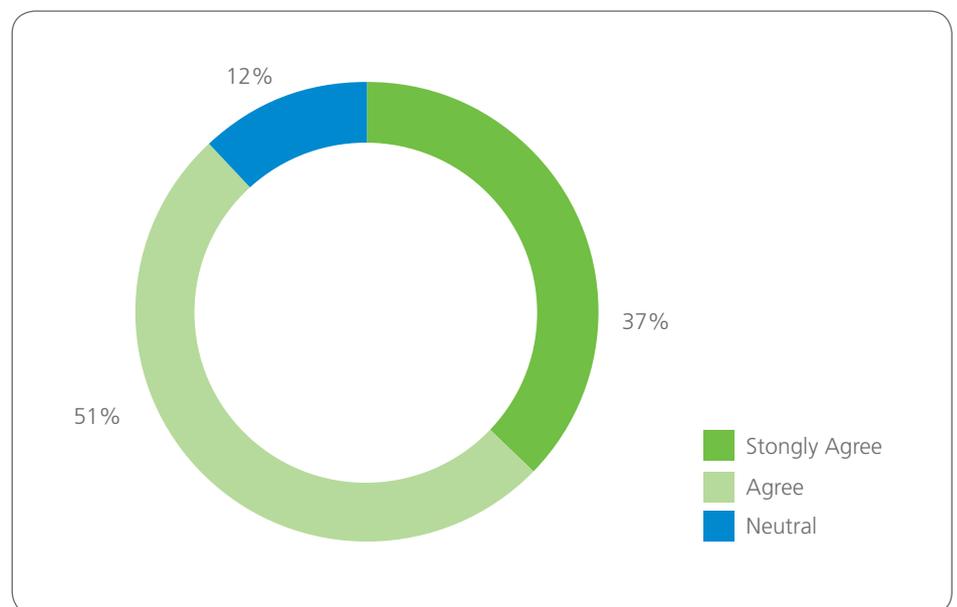business innovation**

Business innovation can only be cultivated
if the workforce is engaged and aligned
with organisational goals and objectives.
Moreover, employees are known to
disengage with the business (and its
customers) if they feel ill-equipped and/or
untrained. Most business managers know
this, and yet other matters are constantly
pushed to the top of the agenda and given
priority. Ovum believes the time has come
to refocus on employee-centric issues,
particularly employee-centric business
processes and their relationship with the
end-user computing environment.

Adopting a progressive
end-user computing strategy
has a positive effect on the
productivity and contribution
of the workforce

Just about everyone aggress that a
well-trained, well-equipped workforce is
important to the success of the company
as they generally factor together to
determine potential productivity. Exploiting
this potential is a matter for process and
staff managers, but if the potential isn't
there in the first place then an organisation
is likely to lose its overall competiveness in
the market.

'A consensus is forming: **future competitive
advantage** will be created through **data and
analytics**; **business models** will be **shaped
by cloud**; and **engagement** will be **powered
by mobile** and **social technologies**.'

Figure 1: The link between end-user computing and business innovation

**In our industry, having a progressive end-user computing strategy is an important
enabler of business innovation.**

12%

37%

51%

- ■ Stongly Agree
- ■ Agree
- ■ Neutral

Source: Ovum

'**Business innovation** can only be cultivated
if the workforce is engaged and aligned with
organisational goals and objectives.'

Modernisation of digital workspace inevitably brings about new ways of thinking and new ways of doing

Over half of UK enterprises are seizing the opportunity to do things differently by using mobile devices

Ovum's survey indicated that 58% of UK enterprises are already reassessing specific business processes and activities to take advantage of developments in mobile devices. (Some examples of business processes might be: reassessing field sales process; reassessing of in-store customer service process; reassessing of specific administrative tasks, such as expense claims). However, a surprising 23% are either adopting a wait-and-see approach or have no foreseeable plans in this regard. Ovum believes that computing device form factors are a significant stimulus when it comes to business innovation and process improvement, and that further developments in this area – including "wearables" – will further extend the envelope of the end-user computing environment.

Business models and their processes are already being reshaped by cloud technologies

55% of organisations are already reassessing specific business processes and activities to take advantage of developments in cloud services, and a further 29% plan to do so within the next 24 months. Inter-company collaboration lends itself, of course, so cloud-based solutions, and is the primary reasons why leading vendors in this domain have adopted "cloud-first" strategies.
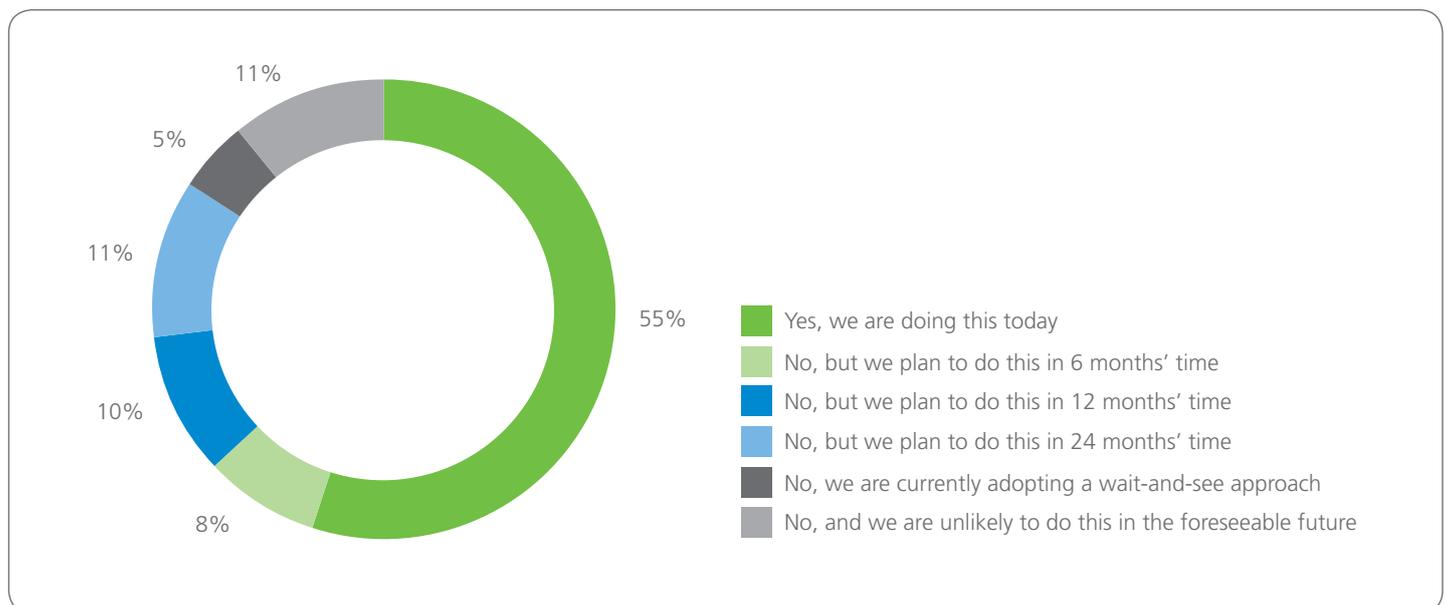
The confluence of new mobile devices, new cloud services, and new social collaboration models presents a fertile plain on which new business processes can be built and existing ones augmented.

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Figure 2: Enhancing business processes through Cloud

Is your organisation reassessing specific business processes and activities to take advantage of cloud service developments?

- 55% — Yes, we are doing this today
- 8% — No, but we plan to do this in 6 months' time
- 10% — No, but we plan to do this in 12 months' time
- 11% — No, but we plan to do this in 24 months' time
- 5% — No, we are currently adopting a wait-and-see approach
- 11% — No, and we are unlikely to do this in the foreseeable future

Source: Ovum

Customer service, competitive advantage, and business profitability are inextricably linked with workforce agility

'**78% of IT management** believe that **good customer service starts** with a **responsive and flexible workforce**.'

Having a flexible workforce contributes to the profitability and competitive advantage of most organisations

71% of the respondents to Ovum's survey agree with the statement that it is important from a revenue and/or profitability perspective to have a flexible workforce, able to access applications and data at any time, from any place, using any sanctioned device. In fact, only 8% actively disagreed with this statement. Just as there are businesses where everyone works from a single, fixed location, there are those that do not see the need for a highly mobile workforce when it comes to generating revenue and/or profitability. But these organisations are now in the minority, and in all probability this percentage will continue to shrink over the coming decade as new, as yet unimagined technologies, enter the working environment.

Profitability is not the sole driver of increased enterprise mobility. Over three-quarters of IT managers responding to Ovum's survey agreed with the statement that having a flexible workforce, able to access applications and data at any time, from any place, using any sanctioned device, was important in terms of providing good customers service. A similar percentage also believes that enterprise mobility is an important factor when considering competitive advantage, thereby strengthening the business case for investment in this area of the end-user computing environment.

Most organisations recognise the emergence of new mobile workspaces and the business value of a shift to user-centric computing, but not every company

is a adopting a progressive end-user computing strategy, one that is going to power the next phase of process efficacy, business transformation, and enduring competitive advantage.

Becoming a customer-adaptive enterprise is one way of ensuring company longevity and increased market relevance, and several key attributes of the customer-adaptive enterprise (engaged workforce, collaborative environment, continuous innovation, and connected business processes) are intertwined with the end-user computing environment.

Figure 3: IT management attitudes to customer service

In terms of good customer service, it's important that we have a flexible workforce, able to access applications and data at any time, from any place, using any sanctioned device

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
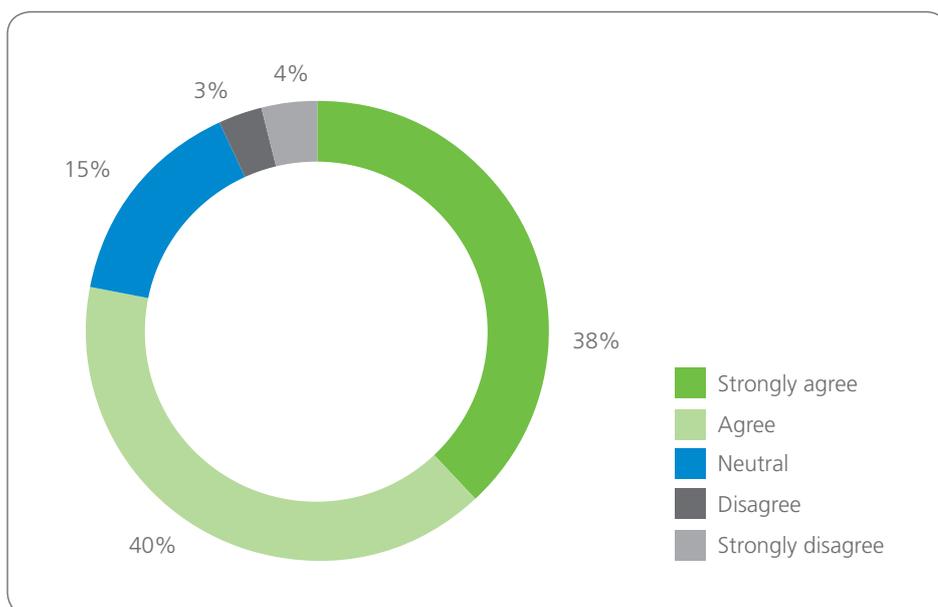
Source: Ovum

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Recommendations

- **Engage the workforce** in matters relating to their digital workspace. Be more flexible when it matters and less prescriptive unless mandatory. Educate and train the workforce in the use of new technology in order to gain competitive advantage. Become a customer-adaptive enterprise.

- **Embrace the opportunities** afforded by developments in new device form factors, computing models, and collaborative working: As an organisation: think differently, act differently, and work differently.

- **Backfill the IT skills shortage** by establishing proactive business relationships with trusted suppliers. Focus on extracting business value from the knowledge and insights of others: peers, subject-matter experts, and communities of practice.

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