

THE MOBILE REVOLUTION

By Ken Moule

Enterprise Mobility is the next frontier in IT service delivery for local government. Over the next few years, we can expect to see progressive councils embrace mobile devices to integrate field crews into the corporate workflow and engage with their citizens.

Mobile computers are part of today's reality. The streets are brimming with members of the general public toting powerful mobile devices, consuming wireless data and plotting their location on mobile maps.

By contrast, the corporate world is dominated by servers and desktops, punctuated with some brave attempts to extend desktop services to road warrior laptops. Why are these worlds so different?

The truth is that much of corporate information technology (IT) is locked in an old world while consumers are riding the latest wave. But change is coming.

It has been an express ride from the valve technology of the 1940s, through to the semi-conductor-based computers of the 1960s.

It was the 'mini-computers' of the 1980s that opened the gate for business computing by pushing down the cost curve.

Things jumped again when the first IBM personal computer (PC) was turned on in 1982. Suddenly the PCs are being chased down by a plethora of clever mobile devices.

By next year we expect the world to have more mobile computers than desktops. Many businesses are struggling to keep up.

The first wave of change was about smaller, faster, cheaper and better graphics. The recent game-changer has been our progress to a more connected world.

All this has made Enterprise Mobility the hot topic in corporate IT. It is now all about integrating mobile workers into the corporate workflow.

The courier business is a great example of integrated business mobility. We have all seen delivery drivers scan a package, collect a signature and go quickly on their way.

Productivity and customer service improvements over traditional paper processes are obvious.



The Hon. David Crisafulli, Queensland Minister for Local Government at the launch of GBM for GraffitiSTOP

GBM for GraffitiSTOP is a great example of an Enterprise Mobility app servicing the community engagement area of local government.

Citizens download the system from the regular online app stores. It runs on the latest generation of mobile devices with wireless data and back-end IT systems. Councils receive consistent map-located graffiti reports directly from the public, ready for instant dispatch to clean-up crews.

At Global GBM, we have been delivering map-enabled mobile data systems into local government for over a decade. We have discovered that local government operating environments place special demands on mobile systems design.

Council assets tend to be in parks and road reserves. They are hard to locate by street address. Mobile maps and map-linked work instructions are essential.

Every council has wireless black spots so any app that needs constant internet connectivity won't cut the mustard.