

Case Study 4

Is BYOD Good for Business

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Case Summary and Key Issues

Bringing your personal device to work can increase productivity which might lead to BYOD becoming the new norm in workplaces. But half of all enterprises don't believe so. Although BYOD might increase employee satisfaction and job productivity, it can cause many problems if not taken care of properly.

Managing a wide variety of employee owned devices is costly and time consuming for companies to manage. The control IT departments have over devices is greatly decreased if BYOD is implemented. They can't control programs being installed and security of devices increasing risks of hacking or breaches. BYOD may not even increase productivity. Employees may engage in time wasting activities such as browsing social media or watching Youtube videos. BYOD also requires major IT resources to be managed successfully. With many different types of operating systems available, it is difficult to roll out software upgrades or bug fixes. With a variety of devices and operating systems, providing tech support to employees would also be difficult. When mobile devices come into play, companies have to be ready to provide a layer of variety and complexity in their tech support, which is not required when using PCs which have similar specs and operating systems. Security might also be compromised with mobile devices. If a device is lost or stolen, companies have to make sure that any important data is not accessible to anyone who is not authorized to do so. To avoid this, companies use encryption to protect data on remote or stolen devices.

Case Study Questions

Advantages and Disadvantages of Personal Mobile Devices

Advantages:

Personal mobile devices **increase productivity**. They allow employees to communicate faster with colleagues or employers which leads to faster and efficient flow of information. Their small size and handiness also benefits employees as they can be taken with ease.

Employee satisfaction is also increased by using mobile devices. Employees are accustomed to using their own mobile devices and by using them, they can be more efficient. This leads to less frustration and more satisfaction in the workplace.

Disadvantages:

Personal mobile devices can also **decrease productivity**. Employees may lose focus and might get distracted by social media apps like Facebook and Twitter or watch Youtube videos.

Personal mobile devices may also compromise **security**. With a wide variety of devices and operating systems being available, monitoring can be difficult by IT departments. Personal mobile devices are also very easy to be lost or stolen. If a device containing important information is lost or stolen, other parties may get access to this information. Effective

encryption systems are required to prevent this. Rolling out security updates is also slower if a company is dealing with a wide variety of devices and operating systems.

Cost is also another major drawback of BYOD. IT departments have to be prepared to provide complex tech support to employees when dealing with many different mobile devices. Implementing this can cause a firm a lot of money.

Management, Organization and Technology Factors in Allowing for Personal Mobile Devices

If the use of personal devices is decreasing an organization's level of **productivity**, they should not be allowed. Personal devices should be used as a means of faster communication and efficient workflow and not for the browsing of social media or entertainment.

Security should also be monitored during the use of personal mobile devices. If there is a risk of information being lost or stolen, the use of personal mobile devices should not be allowed.

Cost is also a major factor. Companies should be able to manage and support personal mobile devices that are being used by employees. If it is using an unhealthy amount of monetary resources from the company, personal mobile devices should not be used.

How Companies Dealt With Challenges of BYOD

Intel was successful in implementing the BYOD system. Intel did this by establishing guidelines to make sure its employees knew what information they are able to access while managing the employees' personal devices. This removed any doubts employers had in their minds regarding their personal information being accessed by Intel. Intel also quickly responds to any questions their employees have about the new BYOD system and also allows them to choose between different levels of security.

SAP, a vendor of enterprise software, also implemented BYOD successfully. They specialized a mobile platform for work-related apps which allowed employees to work from anywhere on their mobile devices. They also created a security system which decommissions a device in one minute of it being stolen or lost.

Swiss Re implemented BYOD by managing a system called Enterprise Mobility Management (EMM) which could support multiple operating systems.

Blackstone has switched to BYOD by limiting its employees to only using Apple products. Apple devices require little maintenance and are easier to manage. Employees were easily satisfied with this system due to the popularity of Apple products.

Will Allowing Employees to use Their Own Smartphone Save Money?

Yes implementing BYOD will save a company a lot of money. This is because the company will no longer be responsible for providing or repairing employee's devices. Employees will themselves be responsible for that. However, they will have to introduce a system to manage the employees' personal devices to make them productive. Companies will also have to establish bigger IT departments which results in higher wages.

Research and Commentary

Keeping in mind the pros and cons of BYOD, it is clear that the most important reason companies want to implement BYOD is increased productivity. However, security risks, high cost and managing difficulties make BYOD not so easy to adapt. But what companies have to realize is that in this age of growing technology, it is important to switch to BYOD. Companies have to be more efficient and reliable than their competitors which can be achieved through BYOD. Companies have to invest money, time and different resources to overcome the side effects of BYOD to implement an effective system. Businesses flourish through a system like natural selection. The one's which are not successful will die out. And to make sure this does not happen, companies have to introduce the correct and effective use of BYOD.

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