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MANAGING THE SHIFT TO APPLE AS WE ADOPT REMOTE WORKING

This article was written by Roger Camrass, director of CIONET UK and a visiting professor of the University of Surrey, and is based on the conversations during a virtual meeting on 'Managing the shift to Apple' held in May 2020.

Introduction from JAM's CEO, Dean Hager

We were fortunate to have Dean Hager, CEO of JAMF, attend our virtual session in the UK – all the way from Minneapolis. Just one of the benefits of virtual working! He made some important and challenging statements relating to the current crisis including:

- Whereas technology was just a part of the employee (and customer) experience pre COVID, it is now the entire experience. There was a smooth transition within JAMF because we had no servers or landline phones. Everything resided in the Cloud
- Who would have believed that a total office shut down could be achieved in just 24 hours? I sent an email out to 1,300 staff on Sunday night, and on Monday morning we began full virtual working without interruption to customer services
- The overriding advantage of the Apple environment in a pandemic crisis is 'zero touch' deployment. This has helped countless patients suffering from COVID-19 in hospitals to communicate with their loved ones

What is interesting about Dean himself is his two seminal experiences that have changed his life and propelled him to prominence. The first was the impact that Apple had on his future career path in 1983 when he turned away from following his father as a truck driver. The second was his master's thesis in 1995 on the topical subject of telecommuting. Today he heads a pure-play Apple managed service company supporting 16 million Apple devices, and 35,000 clients with offices across 110 countries.

What has accelerated Apple's growth in the enterprise space?

It is only thirteen years since the first iPhone was launched in June 2007, and just eight years in March 2012 when the iPad was launched. Today over a billion people use the iPhone and iPad for every type of communication, verbal and visual, as well as commercial transactions such as banking and shopping. The adoption of the iPhone

and iPad was marked by a change in demographics, favouring the millennials who live on digital media. Some companies today consider eliminating laptops entirely in favour of tablets and smart phones.

But it was not just the Apple devices that have changed consumer and employee habits across the globe. It is the supporting eco-system of software vendors and media companies that have developed nearly two million applications now available through the Apple iStore. The ease of use of the Apple portfolio (devices and Apps) has accelerated the trend towards 'bring your own everything' (BYOE) that largely displaced Blackberry devices and reduced our enterprise dependence on Windows.

How does the Covid-19 feature into Apple story?

We may well look back on the global move to home working this March as equivalent to the repercussions of 9/11. Both will have profound and lasting consequences for how we plan for business continuity. It may become essential for organisations to own certificates of compliance for pandemic conditions.

Given the high penetration of Apple devices – MAC, iPhone, and iPad into our social and domestic environments, the move to home working has further accelerated BYOE. Some of the longer-term consequences may include:

- End of the fixed landlines and ubiquity of the wireless world. Where offices continue to exist, few if any staff will have permanent workspaces. Instead we expect universal hot desking, and a split between office and home working (around 50:50)
- Many call centre staff will be located now at home rather than in offices. Calls will be routed automatically to free agents. This will enable people with young families to flex office hours to suit parenthood and improve work-life balance.
- Younger staff will demand freedom of choice over device and cloud platform as part of their employment packages. Nobody will tolerate the practice of separate personal and corporate phones or computers. The era of BYOE is now here
- Zero touch deployment of devices and applications will become the norm as staff may join organisations without entering a physical office. Receiving a laptop via a courier will be an essential option for IT deployment

In all these respects Apple offers greater flexibility over traditional PCs and associated operating systems.

Managing a mixed environment

The plurality of devices, platforms and applications places growing emphasis on business risk, compliance, and security for both commercial and public sector organi-

-sations. Delegates at the event argued that the new BYoE era is far reaching and includes the entire information 'supply chain':

- Authentication and permission for individuals (e.g. employees and contractors) to access appropriate data and related applications (e.g. multi-factor ID)
- Devices, both personal and corporate, that provide a secure gateway into corporate systems (from the office or home) as well as social sites
- The network connections that include fixed (e.g. laptop) and mobile/wireless (smart phone) links that operate over public or private facilities
- The applications and related data that are a primary corporate asset and need to be constantly monitored and protected

The shift to Apple does imply a range of new security measures relating to corporate applications and data assets. Managers will need to operate multiple cloud platforms with secure interconnections such as AWS, AZURE, Google and Apple Clouds.

Joining the end user revolution

The advent of COVID has accelerated a revolution in end-user computing, favouring a shift to Apple devices and applications. The conclusions of the event were:

- Embrace the move to BYoE and encourage employees to adopt the devices of their choice- both fixed and mobile. This will improve productivity and loyalty
- Introduce financial incentives to enable individuals to purchase their own equipment – as an employment benefit
- Ensure security by encrypting all data that is available to employees, contractors, and trading partners
- Begin to adopt 5G as the primary network to access corporate applications and provide web front-end interfaces.

About CIONET

CIONET is the leading community of more than 10,000 digital leaders in 20+ countries across Europe, Asia, and the Americas. Through this global presence CIONET orchestrates peer-to-peer interactions focused on the most important business and technology issues of the day. CIONET members join over a thousand international and regional live and virtual events annually, ranging from roundtables, programs for peer-to-peer exchange of expertise, community networking events, to large international gatherings. Its members testify that CIONET is an impartial and value adding platform that helps them use the wisdom of the (IT) crowd, to acquire expertise, advance their professional development, analyse and solve IT issues, and accelerate beneficial outcomes within their organisation.

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