

Is your business ready to embrace the Bring Your Own Device revolution?

10 points to consider.



The world of work is changing.

Employees now expect to work very differently to a generation ago. Their personal devices (mobile phones, tablets and laptops) often have more power and a greater personalised user experience than their work equivalent. It's only natural therefore that they want to use these same devices at work. Which is great for your business, helping increase productivity.

However, employees expect the same access to systems and applications that they use on their business-provided devices. If these are not managed correctly trying to get this access can cause a security headache for an IT department. With the right networking infrastructure and policies, your business can turn this challenge into an opportunity.

Points to consider – a starter for 10.

1 Recognising the BYOD revolution.

Every business is unique. It is down to the needs and working style of your business as to whether all or some personal devices are permitted to access business applications. However, recent research suggests that 77% of employees are currently using their own devices for work related activities already¹. Only a portion of those businesses have a formal BYOD policy in place, so the rest are connecting to the network without the control of the IT department. Your business will need to consider how to deal with this trend securely – putting in place and communicating a formal BYOD policy is crucial otherwise you'll risk damaging your network without one.

2 How do your employees prefer to work?

Employees may be more productive if they're allowed to work remotely or whilst on the move. Research suggests that staff who use their personal devices for both work and personal use put in an extra 240 hours work per year versus those who do not².

If your business has already, or is looking to roll out flexible working practices then allowing the use of personal devices needs to be considered. Employees can still work when there is extreme weather, whilst travelling and even if personal circumstances keep them from the office. You'll save money on travel expenses too, which also helps you reduce your carbon footprint. Plus you'll be able to attract and retain the best talent.

3 Your network.

You will want to ensure that your employees and guests receive the same quality and uninterrupted network access whether on a Wired, Wireless, VPN or WAN connection. Your network needs to be fast and robust to support this way of working, so it's a good opportunity to review your existing network infrastructure and whether this is suitable or needs upgrading.

4 Keeping your business safe and secure.

As well as speed, you'll want to protect your business from any malicious attacks or viruses. So your network review could also consider security to ensure any potential risk is mitigated.

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5 Choosing smartphones and other devices?

Many businesses are allowing employees to choose their favourite device whilst others are leveraging buying power with favoured vendors to offer a choice of approved devices. You may want to alter the level of support you provide if something goes wrong, or you might want to pass on some of this responsibility to the user. Of course, all of this will affect the business case for rolling out your BYOD policy and the potential cost savings.

6 Visibility of connected devices.

To enforce your BYOD policy, you need to know what devices are accessing business applications at any time. It's essential to ensure your IT department have the systems in place to give them full visibility. Having a single interface which monitors and reports on what, when, who and how, will provide you with complete control and visibility.

7 Access all areas?

Determining which business applications are accessible via devices and deciding which ones to block needs to be considered. Will you allow access to just email, or full access to your CRM system and intranet? Requirements will vary for each of your employees, your business need and the device being used – it's crucial that any BYOD policy can allow for this flexibility when setting rules for your business.

8 Setting rules.

Ensure you have a clearly defined policy that sets expectations and the rules around support, acceptable use, privacy and any expense reimbursement. It's also crucial to review the legal implications for your business. Consider the regulatory and corporate policies your business must adhere to, as well as other laws and regulations affecting your business. Your HR department might also want to consider making your BYOD policy part of its 'new joiner' training so that they are aware from day one.

9 Desktop Virtualisation.

It gives the device of choice the same look and feel as a normal desktop. More importantly it saves on IT resource as applications and systems are located centrally rather than on each individual PC. It could save money and time when rolling out upgrades and fixing problems.

10 Communicating your BYOD policy.

Whether new or existing employees, you'll be able to attract and retain the best talent as flexible working becomes an important decision when people are looking for new employment. Communicating the contents and benefits of your BYOD policy to your employees and making them aware of what they can or cannot do, and what they are responsible for is key.

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The business benefits.

BYOD can help achieve many benefits for your business. This way of working will enable you to:

- Increase your employee productivity
- Improve your business continuity
- Help attract and retain the best talent
- Lower operating costs
- Improve customer care.

Our solutions.

1. A Business Ready Network.

Providing a scalable, fixed and mobile infrastructure that supports your business and IT strategy.

2. End-to-end security.

With a range of devices and connections, your business will need network and access security that protects your information and infrastructure. BT and Cisco provide end-to-end security covering your IT and complete network including office locations and remote access.

3. A unified user access policy.

Cisco's Identity Services Engine (ISE) is unique as it sets a unified access policy across all of your networks, whether wired, wireless, VPN or WAN. This policy puts the control back in the hands of the IT Manager who can determine which device has access and the level of that access.

Why BT - our credentials and approach.

BT can provide all the support needed to implement BYOD.

- In the Ireland, BT hold more Cisco certification than any other partner. We are also the only partner to be accredited with both Cisco Master Security Specialisation and Identity Services Engine (ISE) accreditations. This means that we are uniquely placed to supply and install everything you need to get your business ready for BYOD
- BT is the largest Cisco partner in Europe – which means that we have the most qualified technical and sales staff that understand Cisco technology and can recommend and design the best solutions to fit your unique business needs
- We have a reputation for technical excellence and delivery
- We offer leased payment/staged payment options to offset the cost, so you don't have to pay outright.

BYOD is a revolution that is happening. We are working with businesses to help them plan and implement BYOD – talk to us today to find out how we could help with yours.

Terms and conditions

1. A recent survey conducted by HR software vendor, Software Advice. 2. Source: The iPass Global Mobile Workforce Report.

Offices Worldwide

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