

The Mobile Business Gets Serious About Mobile Business

Ever since broadband became widely available, and relatively cheap, the boundaries between working from home and the office have blurred. Similarly, public Wi-Fi hotspots have transformed coffee shops into proxy offices. Now, low-priced mobile broadband offers people a connection just about anywhere, allowing roaming executives to stay in constant contact.

The growth of remote working has been rooted in the development of the laptop. Slow, chunky, luggables have progressed into supermodel-slim fashion items with superior performance. However, in 2010, we could see the mobile take over as the primary business tool.

Modern smartphones are technically more than capable of manipulating the major tools of business: text documents, spreadsheets, and presentations. But these tools are designed for the laptop environment; the tiny touchscreens and keyboards of a smartphone do not lend themselves to such a role.

How can the smartphone become the primary business tool if it can't handle these vital tasks?

The reality is that a number of factors are converging that will likely overcome such issues:

Interface: Every generation of mobile device gets one step closer to nailing the interface issue. The iPhone was a quantum leap forward but its keyboard still left users error-prone. Now Google's Nexus One and the Palm Pre are on UK shelves and later this year the BlackBerry Storm 2 arrives, bringing another round of improvements.



Etiquette: As more and more written communication has gone mobile, our etiquette has changed. We are now more accepting of clipped messages and typos, as long as there is a note at the bottom explaining that the message was typed on a smartphone.

Style: There seems to be a move away from text-heavy documents towards more concise, visual communication. With built in video cameras and microphones, smartphones are tailor-made for this type of work.

Accessories: Tiny projectors and virtual keyboards still feel like science fiction, but they are now an established reality and will increasingly be incorporated into smartphones or offered as accessories, overcoming some of the key usability issues.

Applications: We live in an increasingly widgetised world, where the key information and features we need from large-scale software is broken down into mobile-friendly 'apps'. Some of the highest grossing products from the Apple App Store this year were business applications.

With all these changes underway, should you be putting mobile at the core of your business strategy in 2010?

Want to make the most of mobile in your business? Penrillian can help, whether that means developing new applications or mobile extensions for your existing software. Call us today or contact rachel.johnson@penrillian.com to arrange an informal chat.

Read more:

'New Symbian UI in the works' *from Infoworld*

<http://www.infoworld.com/d/mobilize/new-symbian-ui-in-works-compete-iphone-android-152>

'Email Etiquette 2.0' *by Dennis Kennedy*

http://www.denniskennedy.com/blog/2009/07/email_etiquette_20.html

'The 10/20/30 rule of PowerPoint' *by Guy Kawasaki*

http://blog.guykawasaki.com/2005/12/the_102030_rule.html#axzz0dnf2mCCD

'LG's projector-laden eXpo smartphone' *from Engadget*

<http://www.engadget.com/2009/12/06/lgs-projector-laden-expo-smartphone-gets-demonstrated-on-video/>