

The BYOD That is Real.



Don MacVittie, 2012-10-09

Not too long ago I wrote about [VDI and BYOD](#), and how their hype cycles were impacting IT. In that article I was pretty dismissive of the corporate-wide democratization of IT through BYOD, and I stand by that. Internally, it is just not a realistic idea unless and until management toolsets converge.

But that's internally. Externally, we have a totally different world. If you run a website-heavy business like banking or sales, you're going to have to deal with the proliferation of Internet enabled phones and tablets. Because they will hit your websites, and customers will expect them to work.



Some companies – media companies tend to do a lot of this, for example – will ask you to download their app to view web pages. That's ridiculous, just display the page. But some companies – again, banks are a good example – have valid reasons to want customers to use an app to access their accounts. The upshot is that any given app will have to support at least two platforms today, and that guarantees nothing a year from now. But it does not change the fact that one way or another, you're going to have to support these devices over the web.

There are plenty of companies out there trying to help you. [Appcelerator](#) offers a cross-platform development environment that translates from javascript into native Objective C or Java, for example. There are UI design tools available on the web that can output both formats but are notoriously short of source code and custom graphics. Still, good for prototyping. And the environments allow you to choose an HTML5 app, a native app, or a hybrid of the two, allowing staff to choose the best solution for the problem at hand.

And then there is the network. It is not just a case of delivering a different format to the device, it is a case of optimizing that content for delivery to devices with smaller memory space, slower networks, and slower CPU speeds. That's worth thinking about. There's also the security factor. mobile devices are far easier to misplace than a desktop, and customers are not likely to admit their device is stolen until they've looked everywhere they might have left it. In the case (again) of financial institutions, if credentials are cached on the device, this is a recipe for disaster. So it is not only picking a platform and an application style, it is coding to the unique characteristics of the mobile world.

Of course optimization is best handled at the network layer by products like our [WebAccelerator](#), because it's what they do and they're very good at optimizing content based upon the target platform. Security, as usual, must be handled in several places. Checking that the device is not in a strange location (as I talked about [here](#)) is a good start, but not allowing username and password to be cached on the device is huge too.

So while you are casting a skeptical look at BYOD inside your organization, pay attention to customers' device preferences. They're hitting the web on mobile devices more and more each month, and their view of your organization will be hugely impacted by how your site and/or apps respond. So invest the time and money, be there for them, so that they'll come back to you.

Or don't. Your competitors would like that.

F5 Networks, Inc. | 401 Elliot Avenue West, Seattle, WA 98119 | 888-882-4447 | f5.com

F5 Networks, Inc.
Corporate Headquarters
info@f5.com

F5 Networks
Asia-Pacific
apacinfo@f5.com

F5 Networks Ltd.
Europe/Middle-East/Africa
emeainfo@f5.com

F5 Networks
Japan K.K.
f5j-info@f5.com

©2016 F5 Networks, Inc. All rights reserved. F5, F5 Networks, and the F5 logo are trademarks of F5 Networks, Inc. in the U.S. and in certain other countries. Other F5 trademarks are identified at f5.com. Any other products, services, or company names referenced herein may be trademarks of their respective owners with no endorsement or affiliation, express or implied, claimed by F5. CS04-00015 0113