

## Mobile Working: key to efficiency & sustainability?

A diverse set of maturing technologies has the potential to transform the way business services are delivered and workforces organised, reducing costs and increasing productivity. Should it be on your agenda for 2010?

### What is it?

Mobile Working combines technology and organisational change to deliver highly efficient, flexible and sustainable working models. Moving beyond home working or working “on the move”, it moves integrated service delivery closer to your customers.

### Why is it important?

Mobile working models will drive business benefit in five major areas:

- customer: integrated services delivered face-to-face or from any convenient location
- resourcing: more use of partner and “portfolio”<sup>1</sup> workers alongside your core team
- productivity: boosted by cutting out travel and “back office” downtime
- cost savings: reduced full-time staff and office space requirements
- carbon footprint: cutting unnecessary travel and energy-consuming office space.

### Technology

Mobile Working exploits a range of technologies. Most have been around for a while but are now mature and reaching key levels of penetration and integration:

- universal connectivity (3G+ and community WiMAX networks)
- personalised security (two-factor authentication and single sign-on across multiple devices & applications)

- multi-platform applications (personalised portals running on most portable devices)
- collaboration tools (personal video & teleconferencing, on-line meetings, intranets, corporate social networks).

### What do you need to think about?

A Mobile Working strategy must be planned as a business wide change programme. Not doing so risks take-up being driven by those few individuals who it suits to move to the new way of working.

Changes to business processes will be required to fully exploit the Mobile Working model. E.g. what information services will be needed when work is done away from “old” office infrastructure? More services can be delivered by partners using secure “portals” on their own portable devices.

Application design may need to be tailored to suit service in the field rather than from behind a desk e.g. information capture at “point of service” regardless of location.

You’ll need to develop new staff support, communication and management systems – based on intranets and corporate social networks - that rely less on face to face discussions and meetings.

### The Bottom Line

As businesses strive to improve services whilst reducing costs, Mobile Working has a key role to play. The technology is ready, but the change needs planned strategically.

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<sup>1</sup> Self-employed free-lancers, highly experienced but often working for more than one organisation

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