

BYOD a top transformational trend for 2014

A recent survey conducted by global consulting firm Frost & Sullivan identified 'bring your own device' (BYOD) as one of the top ten transformational IT trends for 2014. The survey, which was conducted in 2013, found that 70% of organisations offered at least some BYOD service - 40% allowing some access to corporate applications and 30% allowing access to the internet only.



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"This trend is most notable amongst millennials or generations Y and Z; people born after the early 1980's," says Kay Vittee, CEO of Quest Staffing Solutions. "Along with this generation's widely known characteristics of increased use and familiarity with technology and their focus on work-life balance, employers will need to develop BYOD plans and policies to attract these young men and women into their workplace."

The same survey also identified the main challenges BYOD faces, revealing that concerns around security and corporate policy are the greatest.

BYOD offers undeniable benefits as an enhanced attraction and retention tool for HR as well as offering increased productivity, greater mobility and better job satisfaction, but it presents some challenges too.

Challenges for HR

"Although the challenges are more obvious for IT due to the security and support issues of multiple personal devices, there are also serious challenges for HR," says Vittee. "These challenges include the protection and management of company information stored on the personal device especially regarding syncing or pairing the personal device to other devices and the retrieval and deletion of data on personal devices in the case of employment termination."

Joint HR and IT policies governing internet and email usage and data protection are common, but BYOD policies are new to most organisations.

Advice on how to approach the development of a BYOD policy for an organisation can include the following:

- Get to know your staff's preferred technology and using this knowledge establish a list of the devices that you will allow and cater for. Ensure that this list is available to new and current employees so they are informed as and when they purchase personal devices.
- Set up guidelines regarding the use and storing of company data on personal devices, be sure to include if and when sharing of this data, either via syncing or pairing with other devices is permitted, as well as the use of cloud storage.
- Work with your IT department to develop preferences and practices regarding security and support of personal devices.
- Ensure to redress all existing HR policies and practices in light of the BYOD services to be offered, these policies could include email and internet usage, calculation of time worked, intellectual capital or data security as well as induction material and exit/termination processes.
- Set guidelines that clearly stipulate the IT and productivity concerns of a device used for both personal and professional purposes.
- Address the company's access to personal data stored on the device and the security of such as well as accountability in the case of this data being lost or deleted.
- Company compensation for the use of personal devices must also be stipulated.

Technology is always evolving and improving, so any BYOD policy has to be as dynamic.

"BYOD is set to become more and more important in the attraction and retention of employees," concludes Vittee. "With generation Y soon to make up the majority of our workforce, accommodating their preferred way of work is vital in ensuring maximum productivity and performance."

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