



Mobile Business Solutions Have Arrived

AFFORDABLE iWay MOBILE SOLUTIONS BRING BUSINESS APPLICATIONS TO THE POINT OF SERVICE

The last 20 years saw dramatic evolution of application development and deployment – from the green-screen era, to the client/server model, and then to the Web. This progression untethered users from mainframe computers but it did nothing to free them from their desks. Despite these advances, however, there were still no computer-based solutions for employees who drove the delivery routes, made sales calls, or serviced equipment in the field. For mobile workers, paper-and-pencil business processes – with slow, error-prone data reentry into company systems – continued to be the backbone of field operations.

Inevitably, large companies with mobile workforces had to “find a way” to computerize their field operations. Industry leaders such as FedEx, United Parcel Service (UPS), and Hertz all achieved unprecedented productivity gains by implementing automated business processes for their roving employees. But this newfound efficiency came at enormous expense – virtually all of the hardware, software, communications, and business processes had to be custom-designed and built from scratch. Today, however, the massive cost barriers faced by these mobile-computing pioneers are gone. Vendors of hardware, software, communications, and applications are vigorously competing to sell mature, affordable, and reliable mobile solutions to small and mid-sized companies in every industry.

Mobile Business Comes of Age

For the first time, mid-size companies in virtually all industries can reinvent the way they conduct business in the field with sophisticated, feature-rich computerized solutions – solutions that are a far cry from yesterday’s primitive mobile systems with simple alerts, e-mail capabilities, and few lines of Web content. Instead, today’s mobile solutions are serious, forms-based business applications that run in clear, readable displays on powerful handheld computers with easy-to-use direct input features and options like wireless connections to back-office applications and data.

These mobile solutions are saving serious dollars for companies that understand their compelling efficiency and cost-savings – and the competitive edge they bring. They empower field personnel at the point of service with paperless applications that are fully integrated with back-office systems. Just as important, today’s mobile solutions effectively solve the costly problems of paper-based manual operations.

Break the Paper Habit

Paper-based business processes and remote operations have built-in problems that impact the efficiency and profitability of your business, as well as the morale of seasoned employees. Unfortunately many owners and managers of such businesses still accept the built-in shortcomings and high operating costs of paper-based business processes – even though extremely accurate and cost-effective mobile alternatives are now available from iWay Software. If you’re not convinced that manual operations are a problem, try asking your field personnel and managers about the downside of non-automated mobile workflow:

- **Labor intensive.** Paper-and-pencil data collection with the subsequent rekeying of data into computer systems is extremely tedious and labor intensive. Why use multiple people to achieve what one person can do faster and more accurately?
- **Costly.** Human-based processes are very expensive due to personnel costs like salaries and benefits. Plus there are hidden costs because they are notoriously unproductive, inaccurate, and unresponsive to customer needs.
- **Error-prone.** Rekeying data makes business processes very prone to error. Workflows that involve copying or keying data from an original source make data inaccuracies inevitable – they can cause operational havoc, hurt your ability to meet goals, and undermine customer satisfaction.
- **Delays and latent data.** Typically, manual re-entry of data from field employees means a 48-to-72-hour latency in operational information. An order written on paper at a cus-

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tomer's location may not be keyed in for fulfillment processing until two or three days later! Latent information can also seriously impede decision-making and responsiveness, which can carry real costs.

- **Employee stress.** Paper-bound processes create enormous employee stress. For example, a route delivery driver might need to track expenses, record mileage, prepare triplicate order forms, reconcile inventory and payments, and manually fill in this paperwork upon cash-out at day's end. Such onerous routines can negatively impact both morale and customer service.

But the biggest problem now is competitive vulnerability. Proven, integrated mobile solutions are here today, and it is only a matter of time before a competitor implements one. To maintain or gain your competitive edge in the marketplace, you will need to get there first – just to stay even.

Offset Costs With ROI

Mobile solutions usually overcome their own costs because they offer great potential for cost savings, improved productivity, and enhanced revenue over their first two years. Because of their firm, calculable, and substantial return on investment, mobile solutions often pay for themselves or at least defray their implementation cost. Here are some areas where your organization could achieve considerable ROI with a new mobile solution:

- **Eliminate, reduce, or redirect data entry staff.** For an organization with a large field workforce, the data entry headcount can fill a good-sized room. Mobile solutions let you eliminate or reduce the need for manually keying data into your business systems. The cost savings can be tremendous.
- **Increase customer calls.** Your field employees will make more calls per day thanks to automation, elimination of paper-and-pencil grunt work, and reinventing the way you conduct business. More calls per day translate into better productivity and hard dollars in both cost savings and new revenue.
- **Retain valued employees.** Mobile workers appreciate and value new field solutions. Introducing automation, handheld technology, and better business processes will reduce employee stress and improve productivity, resulting in reduced attrition. Major savings of hiring and training costs are achieved if you reduce employee attrition and, as an added benefit, mobile technology helps entice highly skilled candidates to positions you need to fill.
- **Improve customer satisfaction.** Satisfied customers mean revenue gains. For instance, taking customer orders accurately



ly in the field and eliminating data-entry errors will reduce returned merchandise. And accurate, efficient deliveries will help keep customers loyal, too.

- **Less overtime.** We've seen depots where drivers waste precious time – their trucks running and burning fuel – waiting in lines at the cashier's window to submit their paperwork. Eliminate the paper, and end-of-day processing goes much faster. This is just one example of time-saving mobile technology.
- **Better decisions, planning, and negotiation.** Good decision making and negotiating depends on the quality and currency of a company's data. With potential real-time data updates and near-zero data latency, integrated mobile business solutions can help you plan to reduce product spoilage, negotiate better prices, and more.
- **Improve inventory turn.** Mobile business solutions give you much better visibility of what customers want and when they want it – and that means you can improve inventory turn. Often you can reduce the amount of inventory you stock and for the inventory that you do keep – you can identify the right products.

These are just the major ways that a quality integrated mobile solution can supercharge your business operations while delivering a firm and calculable ROI for your business.

Go Mobile – or Wireless – With Custom iWay Mobile Applications

Until now I've used the term "mobile" – not "wireless" – in describing integrated applications running on handheld devices. The distinction is important because wireless communications aren't mandatory for a mobile business solution to be efficient and cost-effective. Wireless communication between the handheld device and a server in your company's data center is just one implementation scenario. Your other options include synchronization technologies that permit employees to update their day's schedule in the morning, work independently all day long, and then "re-synch" with the back office periodically or at day's end.

You'll find much more information about iWay's productive mobile applications at www.iwaysoftware.com – including customization services that give you flexible solutions built with technologies from iWay, NovaSync, IBM, Symbol, and other industry leaders, fully integrated with your back-office systems. My recommendation is, "Don't wait." Because iWay's mobile applications offer such a competitive edge and compelling ROI, you can start surveying the mobile landscape and confidently planning your mobile initiative now. 🌐