DATA BRIEF: MOBILE COMPUTING

A powerful communication tool, mobile computing lies at the heart of the customer-centric emphasis. This is a powerful method of interaction enabling customers, employees, suppliers, partners and distributors to interact in real time anywhere from their mobile devices be it a smartphone, a tablet or computer. This competitive edge that allows customers to be able to engage in real-time 24/7 conversation anywhere is a competitive edge for those companies that have developed and deployed mobile interactive software. Consumers can readily and easily find information, relay comments and receive timely communications from companies. Similarly communication among company players as well as those within the company ecosystem can be managed globally.

FUNCTION USE. Mobile technology is concentrated in the sales and marketing functions of the company with more than half of companies using it as part of their strategy.

TARGET. The target population for mobile apps is significantly skewed towards customer-centric apps with 75% of the companies developing apps for customers. Little emphasis is being placed on other points of the value chain. Only 33% of the companies have developed apps for suppliers/partners and even less frequently have developed apps for distributors (16%).

CUSTOMER. Extensive use of interaction with customers through mobile apps is moderate with only about 1/5 of companies currently interacting to a great extent with their customers. Use of mobile apps for interaction with customers are more a part of the arsenal of customer engagement for those in the trade industries (56% retail/wholesale trade report interacting with customers to a moderate or great extent using mobile technology) than other industries.
EMPLOYEE APPS. For employees, mobile apps or optimized sites for tablets and smartphones are confined to remote access to email, contact management and corporate network files. Providing apps to enhance logistics and inventory management are infrequently provided as yet.

PAYOFFS. Mobile computing has a broad reach with improved impacts not only in operational performance measures such as employee productivity (85%) and efficiency (82%), but also customer relations (82%). Across industry, companies in the survey positive changes from the use of mobile computing from the use of mobile computing. A number of executives in business services focused on the ability to communicate with clients more effectively at a lower cost of contact. An executive in the personnel services field focused on the benefits of having the additional channel for work availability. In the retail industry, the mobile apps have increased customers pre-shopping before visiting the brick-and-mortar store. Global manufacturing can be done on a 24/7 basis thus greatly improving efficiency and decision making quality.

ABOUT THE SURVEY

A total of 124 CXOs were surveyed over a 6 month period. Forty-four percent of the respondents were the chief executive officer (CEO) or President of the company, 11% were COOs, and 17% were CFOs. The size of the companies ranges from small to very large companies with 29% of the CXOs in companies with more than 10,000 employees and 30% in companies with less than 1,000 employees. Total annual revenue ranges from under $100 million (12%) to over $10 billion (11%). The companies are primarily engaged in manufacturing (42%), services (27%), finance, insurance and real estate (11%) and trade (14%) industries. Two-fifths of the companies surveyed were founded after 1990, while 29% were the older, more established companies founded before 1970.