
The future of mobile management will be away from the device and more about applications

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The next stage of mobile management will less about devices and more of a move to application security.

Speaking to SC Magazine, MobileIron CEO Bob Tinker said that the mobile control market is changing to enable users to choose and access email and applications in a secure way.

He said that the first phase was how to enable device choice, from the perspective of an IT manager, and that is where mobile device management (MDM) came in. The next is now about how to enable mobile applications and content, establishing the content of 'mobile IT'. "This is about how to enable applications and the content inside, it is not just MDM, it is turning into a bigger market," he said.

"We believe in mobile application management; that is the next generation of mobile IT where access is to email and devices to enable application access and content. Applications that change a business to make your life easier. With mobile content, the biggest thing is access to applications and content."

Tinker said that he could see a big shake-up of the market as many vendors are entering the MDM market without the capability to offer secure access to applications. "Our technology is so dynamic that it is really about moving to the security of the application. To be successful in mobile you need to focus on mobile, as many are struggling to keep up," he said.

Alan Giles, managing director EMEA at Fiberlink, told SC Magazine that the concept of bring your own device (BYOD) doesn't have to be about providing for big business as small and medium enterprises are also opting into the policy.

He said: "A 'containerised' approach will not work as it affects the user experience. If you take that away, the policy does not work so you want more of a lighter touch so the user can use the device as they want to but have secure access to corporate assets. However the IT manager needs to be safe in the knowledge that it is done securely.

"Most vendors in the space are still growing, but we see more maturity in policy setting. Everyone knows that you can save money with BYOD and it is convenient, but companies are getting away from saving money as the driver to moving from it being a capital expenditure to an operational expenditure."

Asked if he felt that MDM was 'last year's technology', Giles said it was in terms of blocking and wiping, but a year ago application management took off for Fiberlink as it was about being security-centric. "Half of our business is application management so the corporate can decide what they allow from what is bought in-house and what is developed by a third party," he said.

"The distribution of apps is based on access right and need, and you can build a profile based on what goes where and how. On a personal device you cannot say 'you cannot use Angry Birds' but on a corporate device you can. You need to separate consumer from professional applications."

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Analyst Alan Goode said that he had never been a fan of MDM, but felt that this was a maturing market as the wave of devices coming into the workplace continued. “We are getting reports of C-level executives and down wanting mobile management and wanting to use their own device,” he said.

“We see instances with a sandbox for access to email and corporate applications in a silo and you authenticate into it, then the user experience is very poor. Do users like a client on their own device? Probably not. The market is maturing as it is another tool and a burden. We will see MAM coming more from vendors to improve the user interface to fix the inadequacies of MDM, and I think we will see that going into the platform.

“Application management makes sense as it is understanding mobility and it will improve the development of applications in the lifecycle and how code is tested.”

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