# Why BYOD Is A Big Opportunity You Can't Miss

If you're able to provide your customers with secure, flexible access to their personal mobile devices, you can help them see you as the trusted business advisor you really are.

By Gary E. Barnett, senior VP and GM, Collaboration Platforms, Avaya

### What are some of the specific challenges IT might face in this new BYOD world?

One is: how do you even track BYOD traffic on your network? You'll have to have some way to know that yet another new consumer-owned device has access to your information, and you're going to have to make sure that information stays secure.

Also, BYOD will certainly increase traffic. There's absolutely nothing to keep employees from jumping on the corporate network with their iPhones.

Another thing is that someone could bring his own device and start being malicious on the network, barging into calls and stealing calls. We're seeing more and more demonstrations of that is where someone can, without anyone knowing, hijack a voice or video call. That's a real threat to the IT organization.

### If BYOD is potentially troublesome for IT, should businesses avoid it?

No, they shouldn't. I believe BYOD has high potential for increases in overall productivity. The workers who want to use them in their work are available any time, anywhere. They have a myriad of applications at their disposal. And there are times when a purpose-built device just doesn't make as much sense as BYOD.

I also believe BYOD is a potential tool for retention. I came from an environment before I joined Avaya where BYOD, even at the top executive level, was absolutely prohibited. I found there were times when that was just an inhibitor to productivity.

Another thing that I've talked to a lot of our customers about is the idea of blending personal and work life. I don't want to carry a Blackberry and an iPhone and have my family and friends call me on the iPhone and everybody at work contact me on the Blackberry. One enabler of maintaining a work/life balance is having devices that participate in both of them. I think that's something companies will start thinking about from an attraction and a retention point of view.



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### What kind of network do you need for security, quality, and productivity?

First of all, I think flexibility is very important. Who knows what devices employees are going to be bringing three to five years from now? Secondly, you need a vendor who understands the network as well as the communications it will carry. Someone who understands data networks might not be the best partner for those who want to deploy a voice and video network. I believe that communications, collaboration, and network solutions are going to continue to get closer together. And business decisions are going to be based on which networks are best for deploying voice and video applications.

Ease of deployment and configuration have a lot to do with it too. Interoperability is very important, as are industry standards, which means that SIP is essential. I can't tell you exactly what applications will be designed over the next few years, but you can bet they're going to be SIP-based.

### Any closing thoughts for IT Organizations?

The BYOD approach is going to allow IT organizations to deploy different types of applications — applications that are more applicable to mobility, as well as video because there are plenty of consumerized devices that lend themselves very nicely to video.

So, there's a nice upside for IT here. Sometimes people think of IT organizations as very limited, but now they can start saying: The more iPads that come into the environment, or the more of them we deploy, the more we can start to think about deploying our own applications that give users more accessibility, a better user interface, and better reliability. If they can get past the initial challenges, IT can use BYOD to increase its value to the business. ●