Tablets Mean Business

Survey of IT pros reflects growing trend toward tablets for workforce mobility and more

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Table of contents

Introduction

If your organization isn't supporting tablets for the workforce, you're not alone – but you are in a minority that's getting smaller all the time. Spiceworks recently conducted a survey of IT pros in which only 17% of respondents indicated their organizations were not currently supporting tablets. And of that 17%, more than half indicated they'd be likely to support tablets within 12 months.

The Spiceworks survey findings are in line with predictions that business tablets will represent 18% of all tablets in use by 2017 (Forrester)[1] and that shipments of tablets to enterprises will see a 48% annual growth rate from 2011-2016 (Infinite Research).[2] And the trend isn't just among large organizations; it's especially notable in small businesses, where a 78.5% growth rate in tablet adoption is projected from 2011-2016 (Intuit).[3]

Given the increased productivity, enhanced mobility, and other benefits reported by IT pros in the survey, it's easy to understand why so many organizations are adopting tablets – and hard to understand why even more aren't. This white paper looks at the IT pro's perspective on both the benefits and the challenges that factor into tablet adoption, including how some of the challenges organizations anticipate never actually materialize. It also examines how the role of tablets is not only growing in number but also in scope, as organizations find more and different ways to benefit from them.

> " *"Business tablets will represent 18% of all tablets in use by 2017."*
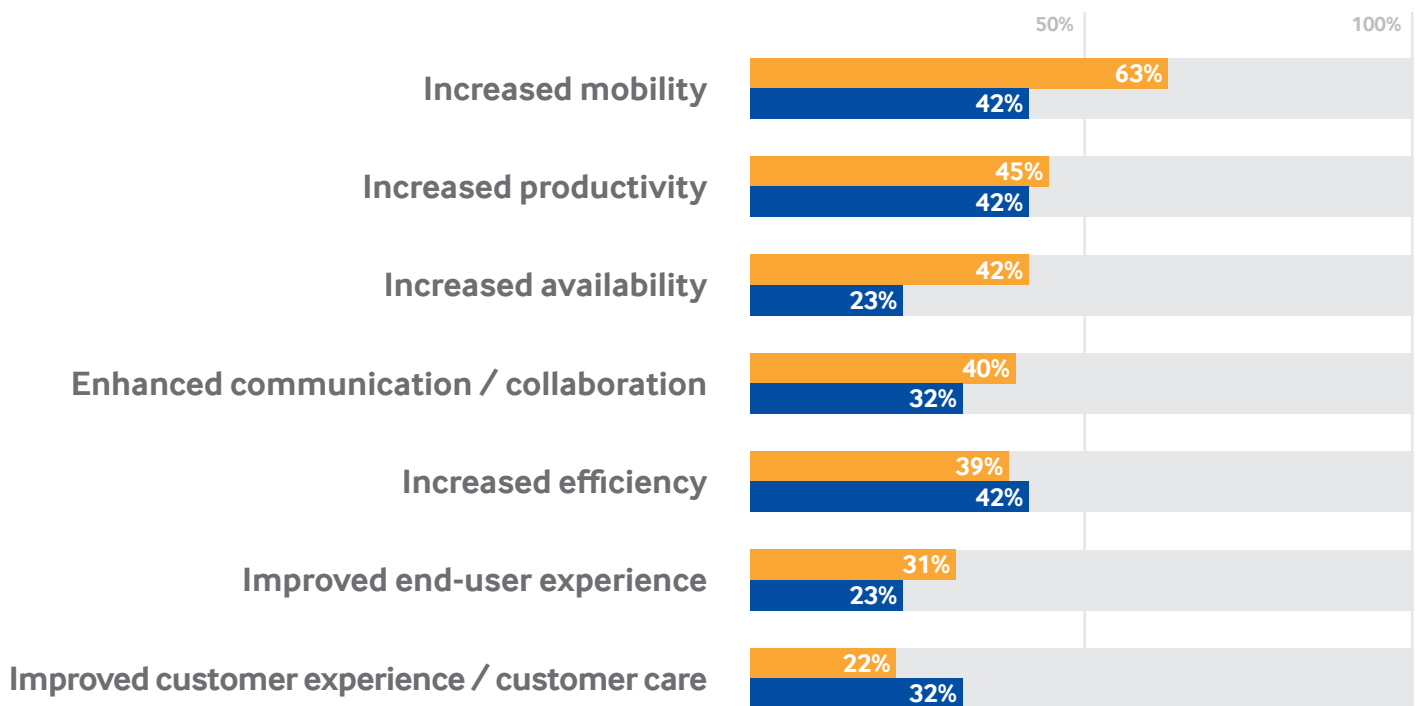>
> - Forrester

Giving employees what they want pays off

Sixty percent of IT pros in the Spiceworks survey named employee or end-user demand as the main driver for their organizations to support tablets. For these organizations, giving employees what they want is paying off in a dozen different benefits, with enhanced mobility (63%) and increased productivity (45%) topping the list. These benefits are also anticipated by organizations that don't support tablets now, but will consider supporting them in the future.

Tablets increase productivity by making it easy for people to be productive on the go. They're more convenient than laptops to take to branch offices or client sites, to bring along while commuting or traveling, and to use when working in a home office, construction site, or other alternative work environment.

Top benefits with tablets: *experienced* vs. *expected*

Experienced   **Expected**

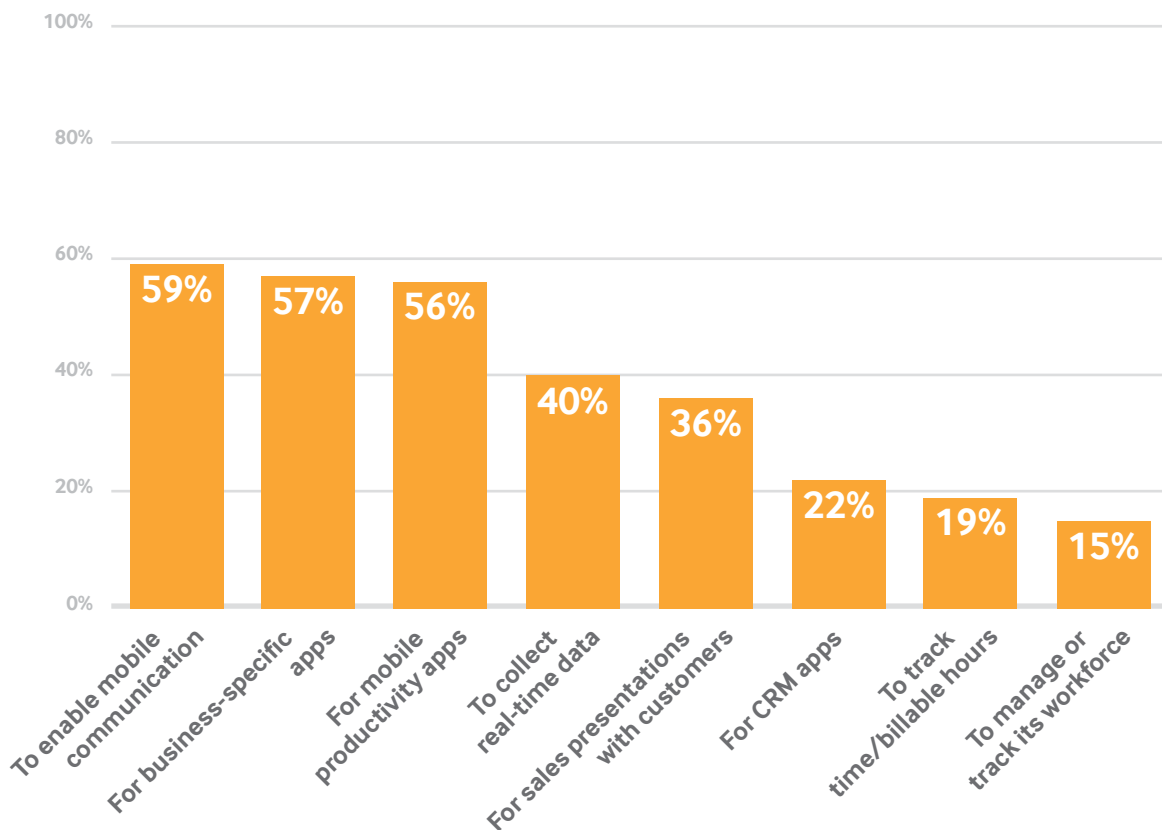|	50%	100%
Increased mobility	Experienced: 63% / Expected: 42%	
Increased productivity	Experienced: 45% / Expected: 42%	
Increased availability	Experienced: 42% / Expected: 23%	
Enhanced communication / collaboration	Experienced: 40% / Expected: 32%	
Increased efficiency	Experienced: 39% / Expected: 42%	
Improved end-user experience	Experienced: 31% / Expected: 23%	
Improved customer experience / customer care	Experienced: 22% / Expected: 32%	

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Tablet advantages move beyond mobility

The survey also suggests that the productivity benefits of tablets now extend beyond staying connected via mobile email, calendar, and contacts. According to the IT pros who participated in the survey, mobile communication is still the top use case for tablets (59%) in their organizations — but tablets are being used for other purposes, too, such as running business-specific applications, collecting real-time data, and making sales presentations. And when it comes to sales presentations (and other visually driven uses like demonstrations and training), it's reasonable to expect that as the quality of graphics on tablets continues to improve,[4] the percentage of organizations using tablets will grow.

Top tablet use cases

Use case	Percentage
To enable mobile communication	59%
For business-specific apps	57%
For mobile productivity apps	56%
To collect real-time data	40%
For sales presentations with customers	36%
For CRM apps	22%
To track time/billable hours	19%
To manage or track its workforce	15%

There's less to worry about than you might think

Organizations that aren't currently supporting tablets expect that adopting them will bring both benefits and challenges. And while the benefits they anticipate generally line up with the actual benefits experienced by organizations that have already adopted tablets, that's not the case with the challenges. In fact, the two main challenges expected by survey respondents who aren't currently supporting tablets – lost or stolen devices (55%) and security breaches/threats (48%) – appeared near the bottom of the list of challenges that tablet adopters *actually* experienced.

This may be because protection against loss or security threats is readily available for organizations that support tablets.[5] While these risks are real, there's a lot an organization can do to protect the data if the device is lost or stolen. Using a locked screen or wiping the device remotely, along with choosing a good backup application, can help ensure that an organization will be able to recover data – and prevent others from accessing it – in the event of a loss.
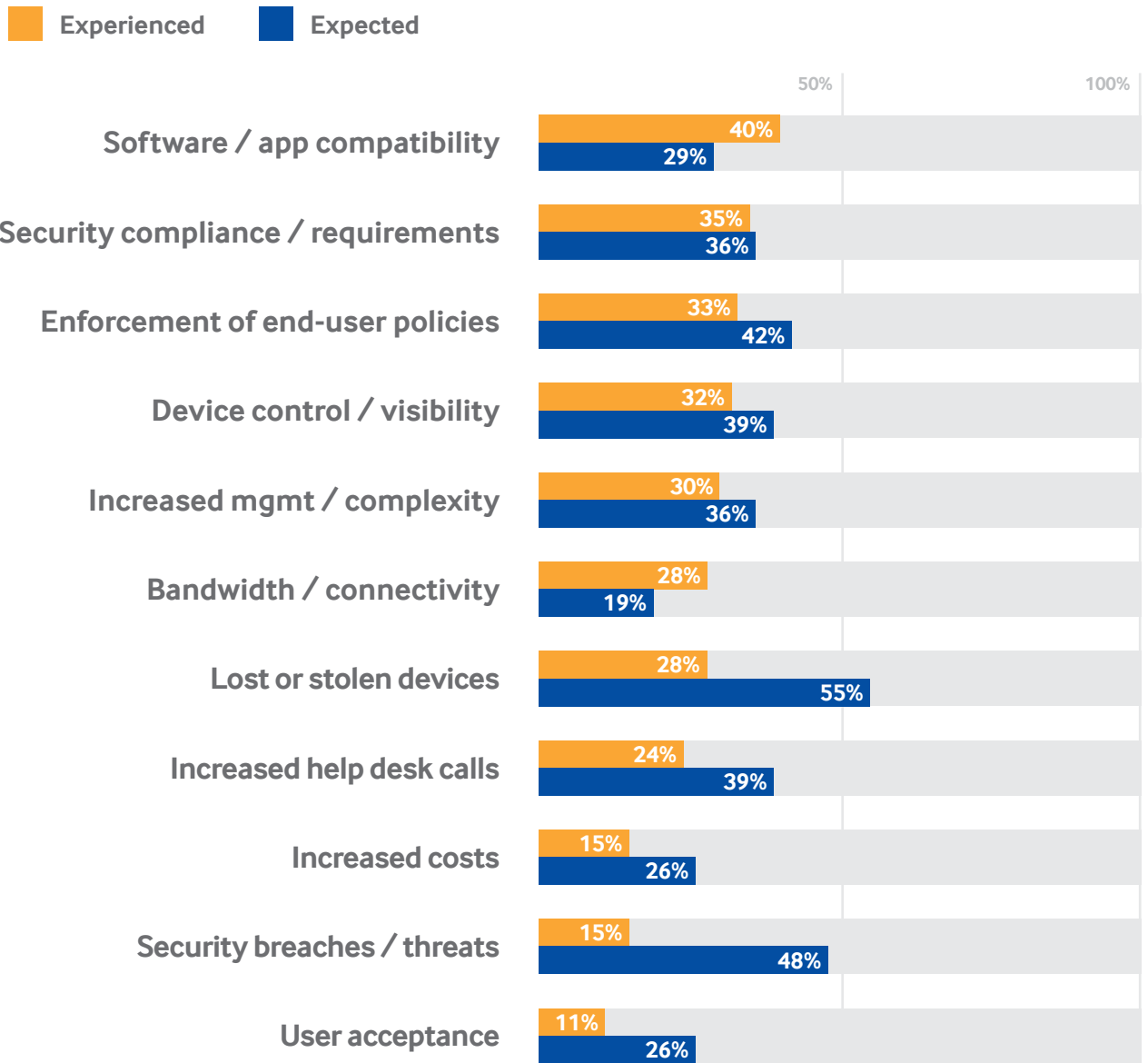
Enforcement of end-user policies regarding tablets was a challenge that appeared in the top three challenges organizations expected and in the top three challenges organizations actually experienced. Although it's a legitimate concern, the challenge comes up less frequently than expected; while 42% of organizations not supporting tablets expected it, only 33% of organizations supporting tablets reported actually experiencing policy enforcement issues.

The two main challenges *expected* by survey respondents who aren't currently supporting tablets appeared near the bottom of the list of challenges that tablet adopters actually *experienced*.

Top challenges with tablets: *experienced* vs. *expected*

■ Experienced   ■ Expected

Challenge	Experienced	Expected
Software / app compatibility	40%	29%
Security compliance / requirements	35%	36%
Enforcement of end-user policies	33%	42%
Device control / visibility	32%	39%
Increased mgmt / complexity	30%	36%
Bandwidth / connectivity	28%	19%
Lost or stolen devices	28%	55%
Increased help desk calls	24%	39%
Increased costs	15%	26%
Security breaches / threats	15%	48%
User acceptance	11%	26%

Choose the right provider

As more organizations realize the benefits of tablets and explore different business uses for them, it's important to choose the appropriate device for the task. For example, a larger screen and high-end graphics will better serve a sales team that's using tablets for presentations. But screen size and graphics quality may not be important to someone using a tablet to collect data from equipment in the field, where ruggedization may be a more important feature. A tablet provider that offers a range of choices makes it easier to match device to task throughout your organization.

Samsung tablets

Matching the right tablet form factor and function with the job you need to do can offer many advantages — as well as improve your organization's experience supporting tablets for business use. To support a wide variety of applications and work environments, Samsung offers a broad line of tablets, including:

01

Samsung Galaxy Tab® S

Combines a 10.5-inch detail-oriented, high-resolution display and long battery life to make it ideal for video-driven applications

02

Samsung Galaxy Tab® Active

Ruggedized tablet includes a protective case, water/dust resistance, and 8-inch daylight-readable display to ensure effectiveness in rough outdoor workplaces

03

Samsung Galaxy Tab® A

A powerful business tool designed to improve productivity and workflow efficiencies, featuring Android™ Lollipop 5.0 OS, Microsoft® Office® for Android™ Apps pre-loaded, and available in 9.7" and 8" size options.

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About the survey

Samsung commissioned Spiceworks to conduct an online survey in August 2014 to profile current tablet business practices and use cases, as well as to identify benefits of and barriers to tablet use in the workplace. A total of 185 interviews were collected from IT pros in the US. Forty-three percent of the respondents came from companies with fewer than 100 employees. Another 40% came from companies with 100 to 499 employees, and 17% came from companies with 500 or more employees.

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Sources

[1] "One in every five tablets will be an enterprise device by 2017," *ZDNet*, August 2013. http://www.zdnet.com/one-in-every-five-tablets-will-be-an-enterprise-device-by-2017-7000019038/

[2] "Enterprise tablet shipments could top 96 million by 2016," *TabTimes*, January 2012. http://searchdatabackup.techtarget.com/tip/Is-traditional-enterprise-backup-dead

[3] "Small businesses, not huge companies, will lead the way for tablet growth," *VentureBeat*, March 2013. http://venturebeat.com/2013/03/05/small-businesses-not-huge-companies-will-lead-the-way-for-tablet-growth/

[4] "Tablets and smartphones will evolve to accommodate console-quality graphics, says EA's Gibeau," *Polygon*, July 2013. http://www.polygon.com/2013/7/6/4496298/tablets-and-smartphones-will-evolve-to-accomodate-console-quality

[5] "5 Tablet Security Threats: Are Yours Protected?" *Business News Daily*, October 2014. http://www.businessnewsdaily.com/7224-tablet-security-business.html