

Chapter 44

Business and Mobile: Rapid Restructure Required

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ABSTRACT

This chapter will explore the peculiarities of business applications of mobile technologies, including a short history and a review of the current state of affairs, major trends likely to cause further change over the coming years, key theories and models to help understand and predict these changes, and future directions of research that may provide deeper scientific insight. M-commerce has many aspects from design and usability of the devices to monetization issues of mobile applications. M-enterprise is about drastic changes in internal and external communications and efficiency in the work of each business unit. M-industry reviews the impact of mobile technologies on traditional industries and the development of entirely new industries. M-style is how our everyday lives are changing in behavior, choices and preferences. After reading this chapter you will be able to differentiate m-business in many important areas: why is it important, where it is going, what is the value to consumers.

INTRODUCTION

Mobile technologies influence business in many different and sometimes unexpected ways. Mobile technologies influence public relations (including media, investor, employee, supplier, government and customer relations), marketing, accounting, banking, human resources, training, employee safety, supply chain, product development, and many other aspects of business and the entire environment in which the business operates (Ciaramitaro, 2011).

Several preconditions were necessary for mobile technologies to develop so fast and to become a norm in everyday life and business. Mobile technologies started to develop quickly when Internet connections became easy and massive volumes of information could move without difficulties. Then the processors in mobile devices became powerful and affordable enough to work with these volumes of

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information for pictures, programs, video and audio contents. Software and applications followed the power of the servers and hardware, as providers of the devices created relatively low barriers for new applications to enter the market. So, mobile technologies emerged as a result of the combination of all these factors. Mobile technologies became fast, reliable, safe, cheap and convenient for customers. As infrastructure developed, mobile technologies created new opportunities, uncertainties and for some sectors they presented a clear threat, as do many innovations even in classic Schumpeterian terms (Corrocher & Zirullia, 2004; Perry, 2013).

Mobile technologies are relatively cheap for businesses or sometimes are even free in comparison with traditional tools and channels used to get products and services to market. It gives new advantages for small- and medium-size businesses with good new ideas for competing with giants in the marketplace (Boston Consulting Group, 2014).

MOBILE TECHNOLOGY ISSUES

Mobile technologies' rapid development brings forward certain issues regarding legal regulation, ethics, privacy and even personal safety. It has changed life styles and everyday communications (Parker, 2012; Zeichner, et al, 2014; Thayer, 2014). Mobile technologies are universal tools to reach customers and stakeholders because almost everyone has either a smartphone or opportunity to buy one, as prices are constantly declining.

The main issue for business has been how to monetize mobile technologies and deliver better value to customers. Are they tools to improve business or are they revolutionizing the whole concept of business? We would assume that mobile technologies for mature businesses create additional values as they are the continuation and substitute of e-business in a new mobile ever-accessible form, and they create a new layer of business organization and opportunities.

Fast changes in mobile technologies – when every year producers create new, powerful devices – are a challenge for all. Not everyone is able to follow the changes and features of each new model or device. The maturation of the products and services in the mobile world is so fast that investors in hardware and production lines are facing tough competition and cost challenges. Providers of applications and software have opportunities to reach the wide global audience but, on the other hand, they have to upgrade constantly and live in an environment of severe global competition with both other small and versatile companies and with huge digital giants.

Academic Research

The speed of change has created a situation where sometimes academic research cannot catch up with technical changes and market development, as it requires more profound work with data collection and testing of models and findings. The curve of maturity of a product from production to market, from achieving credibility and acceptance from the most enthusiastic customers and then from the more conservative ones, and then the obsolescing of the technology is so rapid that customers can feel frustrated and companies exhausted by the necessity of constant re-investment. These threats and shortcomings are definitely outweighed by the opportunities and profits for all participants of the mobile technologies market. Severe competition brings better value for the money to customers and helps the best technologies and innovations to achieve success.

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