

Chapter XXXII

Mobile Strategy Roadmap

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ABSTRACT

Convergence between business environment and technology solutions is a today challenge: is it possible to identify and adapt traditional business analysis tools into IT infrastructure and viceversa ? Mobile business has already dramatically changed our way of life: to get the most of it, it is necessary to understand how and when to take the next step in order to achieve the best possible results. After a short description of the current and available Mobile technologies, the chapter tackles the solutions that some companies have already implemented, enabling thus customers and stakeholder to efficiently and effectively cooperate: yes, because the bog news in mobile business is that such a technology makes business process and communications (either internal and external) visible. It is a true “one stop shop” where people are really always connected. It is now possible to create a framework where business environment and mobile solutions get together, enabling the development of a roadmap (or a mindset if you prefer so) that can be used to create new services. Enjoy the reading!

INTRODUCTION

This chapter outlines the convergences and the opportunities available in mobile business markets from both technology and business perspectives. An overview of the wireless options available to businesses is provided. This is followed by description as well as analysis of the mobile business in order to provide a possible framework enabling design, development,

and eventual implementation of new business initiatives incorporating mobility.

THE MOBILE BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT

Mobile business is a broad definition that includes communication, transactions, and different valued-added services that are made

available by using portable devices. Today, most of the attention is around consumer services, but business-to-business and business-to-employee segments are important too.

Another essential definition of “mobile commerce” is that it is referred to as “transactions with monetary value, conducted by mobile Internet.” This definition covers business-to-business, business-to-consumer, and consumer-to-consumer transactions. Traditional voice calls are not included in the definition of mobile commerce, but the services using voice recognition systems to enable commercial transactions fall into the category. Mobile commerce is a subset of electronic commerce in terms of technical issues. However, the term “mobile e-commerce” is misleading because the business models and the value chain of mobility differ from electronic commerce.

Mobile commerce is not a truncated form of e-commerce, but an innovative way of conducting time-critical transactions regardless of location (May, 2001; Paavilainen, 2002).

Wirelessly Speaking

The wireless world is a complex environment consisting of different and competing technologies. Some of these technologies are as follows:

- **WiFi:** The first WLAN (wireless local area network) standard offering the capability to connect wirelessly to LAN; this technology developed rapidly with a wider offer of bandwidth (Gratton & Gratton, 2004).
 - **Strengths:** Expanding existing network without cables; expanding network where cables are difficult to install, rapidly evolving with users’ need; largely used and close at hand; one of the fastest wireless technologies available; very flexible for home and small business
- **Weakness:** Difficult set up and configuration
- **Competitors:** HiperLAN
- **Complements:** Bluetooth, WirelessUSB, and ZigBee
- **HiperLAN:** This technology is used in Europe and provides a different set of wireless communication specifications providing WLAN support. It is also compatible with 3G, enabling voice, and imaging communications (Gratton & Gratton, 2004).
 - **Strengths:** WLAN support provided, data rate of 54 Mbps, the 3G applications support
 - **Weakness:** Located only in Europe
 - **Competition:** WiFi
 - **Complements:** Bluetooth, WirelessUSB, and ZigBee
- **Bluetooth:** From the name of the Viking king Harald whose aim was to join together the Nordic European territories, a cable replacement technology to overtake the messy cables around laptops and desktops. Infrared was also engineered to tackle similar issues (Gratton & Gratton, 2004).
 - **Strengths:** Can be incorporated in many products and devices, low cost resulting in cheaper products, can make use of low power schemes, ease of use for consumer
 - **Weaknesses:** Small data rate available, uses the same frequency as other devices
 - **Competition:** WirelessUSB, some overlap with ZigBee
 - **Complements:** HiperLAN, WiFi
- **ZigBee:** Introduced to disseminate a large range of products and devoted to businesses willing to develop wireless prod-

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