



THE BYOA OPPORTUNITY:

Building the Business Case for IT Solutions and Service Providers

Managed service providers and outsourced IT organizations have a difficult juggling act: They must be ready to embrace new industry trends to serve their customers' needs, but they must also evaluate the business potential for their own organizations. Bring your own application (BYOA) is an important trend that they must not only understand, but also embrace. In fact, a recent research study notes that 70% of organizations already have employee-introduced applications deployed, and that the trend will continue to grow in the coming five years.¹

This development creates three distinct choices for service providers: ignore BYOA and suffer its impact, passively accept the trend or proactively embrace it. Each choice has significant implications for service providers, especially as BYOA quickly gains momentum. As a result, service providers' customers—especially among small and midsize organizations—are increasingly concerned and are looking to service providers for help and guidance in determining how best to cope with BYOA.

But that's only part of the story; the same research indicates that both in-house IT departments and service providers underestimated the number of employee-introduced applications by a factor of seven—a startling data point that highlights how this once-stealth movement has taken on a life of its own inside organizations.

For service providers and outsourced IT, this is a big deal. After all, the BYOA trend is even stronger among the small and midsize organizations that are solutions providers' bread and butter. According

¹ "Managing applications in the age of BYOA: Reclaiming IT's strategic role," LogMeIn and Edge Strategies, April 2014

to the previously cited research study, 75% of small and midsize businesses said they have a BYOA presence. More and more often, end users are bringing applications such as social media, collaboration, productivity, remote access and sync and share into their organizations without going through their IT departments.

But this freedom and flexibility comes with a price. Organizations without a well-conceived and properly executed cloud app management strategy can find themselves in risky security situations or running up against potential compliance violations for not properly safeguarding client information. They also can experience financial and operational inefficiencies due to duplicative applications and higher management overhead to support users' requests to access official company applications, data and services from their own applications.

Ignoring BYOA creates a potentially perilous situation for service providers. Without proper attention to the trend, service providers will find their customers' IT architectures becoming wildly inefficient at best, and chaotic at worst. Addressing these and other challenges represents a unique and very attractive business opportunity for service providers.

What BYOA Means for Service Providers

There are numerous ways that service providers can act as a strategic advisor to help their clients address the BYOA challenge:

- Offer cloud app monitoring and management as a service.
- Identify and understand what apps are coming into the network, by which users and on which devices.
- Guide BYOA policy implementation for clients.
- Find efficiencies in similar apps being used across the organization.
- Unlock cost savings for clients by effectively managing licenses and uncovering duplicate employee-introduced apps.

One important reality to consider is that many service providers' in-house IT colleagues are just trying to evaluate how extensive the BYOA trend is inside their organizations—and they need help to determine what to do about it. Fortunately, many IT departments are bringing a fresh mindset to cloud-based applications and are taking smart steps to bring a sense of order and efficiency to BYOA.

Non-technical executives, however, may still need to be convinced that BYOA can be a secure, reliable and cost-efficient way to improve worker productivity and satisfaction. In fact, this is where service providers can work with in-house IT to take on a more strategic role in order to make BYOA a real asset, rather than a risky bottleneck.

There are several key areas where service providers' expertise in looking at big-picture trends like BYOA can have important benefits to their customers. Security, compliance, IT administration and unnecessary costs all are potential challenges where service providers can help IT departments get the most out of BYOA.

Smart management of the BYOA trend creates a unique opportunity for service providers to work closer than ever with their customers in order to navigate the potential confusing intersection of business leadership, end users' needs and technology resources.

Finally, enterprise service providers that address the BYOA trend can reap important financial benefits by adding BYOA tools to their solutions libraries. Having a suitable array of tools and expertise to bring to

bear on behalf of their customers can significantly increase their perceived value as a trusted advisor for their clients, and help to differentiate themselves from traditional break-fix reseller companies.

Working with Successful, Visionary Technology Companies: Partnering with LogMeIn

One company that has been in the forefront of BYOA tools and solutions is LogMeIn, whose managed approach to cloud app adoption includes app discovery, central management and reliable security. AppGuru, an important LogMeIn tool, enables service providers and outsourced IT to embark on a managed approach to cloud app adoption to support BYOA throughout a business. AppGuru allows them to:

- Understand which apps are being used on the network and how much data is going into the cloud.
- Explore whether apps in use are secure and if users are leveraging apps that pose threats.
- Manage cloud apps to onboard users and deploy new apps more easily.
- Securely scale with growing needs to support more apps, more users and more locations.

AppGuru offers non-intrusive cloud app monitoring services to securely, reliably and efficiently integrate employee-initiated cloud applications into the organization. This can be a significant resource for service providers by allowing them to concentrate on client satisfaction and spotting additional opportunities to add value to their customer relationships.

The financial benefit to channel partners and service providers is far greater than recommending cloud apps or BYOA tools. It creates opportunities for higher-margin services such as consulting, provisioning, ongoing maintenance contracts, security solutions and policy development, as well as recurring monthly subscription revenue.

Summary

BYOA is now an important part of the IT landscape that must be acknowledged and addressed by the service provider community. Its inevitability is both a blessing and a curse for organizations, and for the service providers that partner with them. IT organizations—especially in the channel's sweet spot of small and medium businesses—are being forced to confront BYOA's impact, and they often need help to do so.

Service providers and channel companies of all kinds are essential to solving the problem of unfettered and inefficient BYOA evolution. Whether service providers are partnering with internal IT teams or acting as a fully outsourced IT resource, they are being called on to create a sense of order and efficiency out of BYOA. Those that are able to address the opportunity can generate incremental revenue and profit, while deepening their relationships with customers. Those that ignore or pay scant attention to BYOA will find themselves—and their customers—in a morass of operational inefficiency that will drain productivity and existing resources.

By offering an end-to-end solution to BYOA, service providers can leverage their traditional strengths in serving customer needs with sophisticated, yet proven technology through their customer-centric services and consulting.

To learn more, go to appguru.com