



## IT's Critical Role in the 'BRING YOUR OWN APPLICATION' Trend

Two unstoppable forces—cloud computing and the consumerization of IT—each have dramatically reshaped how organizations deploy and use technology for competitive advantage and improved productivity. Now, those two powerful trends are combining to create a new paradigm that once again is transforming the IT landscape: bring your own application (BYOA).

While BYOA may have entered organizations stealthily, its impact was unmistakable. BYOA has gained steam with business users, making life very different for IT organizations. Consider a few compelling data points from a recent research report:<sup>1</sup>

- Although IT respondents to the study estimated that an average of about three applications in their organizations were introduced by employees, business users surveyed put the average at nearly **21 applications**.
- About **70% of organizations** said employee-introduced apps were being used, and nearly half of them said they expect BYOA to grow “significantly” over the next five years.
- Nearly **two thirds of employee-introduced apps** were being used despite the existence of IT-provided applications.
- Numerous classes of BYO applications, including sync and share, productivity and collaboration tools, have subsequently been adopted or endorsed by the IT department.

---

<sup>1</sup> “Managing applications in the age of BYOA: Reclaiming IT’s strategic role,” LogMeIn and Edge Strategies, April 2014

Where has this left in-house IT departments? After all, many end users are sufficiently adept with their applications and initially require relatively little IT support. However, it's fairly typical for help desks and IT administrators to get calls asking for a wide range of support for employee-introduced applications, especially when trying to access "official" applications and data sources from their own platforms.

Then, there's the issue of securing employee-introduced applications. Research indicates that 71% of businesses acknowledge that they are using cloud applications that have not been sanctioned by their IT departments, and that challenges such as password management, identity management and unauthorized breaches by ex-employees create a major headache for the organization.<sup>2</sup>

Additionally, there is evidence that the challenge of "rogue applications" brought into the organization by employees is even more formidable than IT departments realize. One study conducted with business users discovered that enterprises have an average of 461 active cloud applications—roughly 10 times higher than IT management assumed.<sup>3</sup> In such instances, IT cannot afford to be a passive bystander.

The turmoil created by the BYOA trend for some IT organizations actually represents an important opportunity for IT leaders. As BYOA becomes more prevalent and more deeply embedded into an organization's IT fabric, it is giving IT departments the authority to harness BYOA's potential for improved productivity, enhanced user experience and increased organizational flexibility and agility. In fact, it can be a key step in helping the IT department reclaim its strategic role not only in technology direction, but also in helping to achieve tighter alignment between IT and the business side.

IT leaders and their teams who recognize and embrace the trend, and the opportunity it creates, can build a strong business case for even greater adoption of BYOA by establishing smart policies and introducing powerful, flexible and easy-to-implement tools to manage BYOA.

## Building the Business Case for IT's Role in BYOA Solutions

For IT decision makers who have yet to embrace BYOA in their organizations, BYOA may seem akin to a "wild West" mentality to applications deployment and utilization. But many IT departments are bringing a fresh mindset to cloud-based applications and are taking smart steps to provide a sense of order and efficiency to BYOA, and to fully harness its potential.

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 IT organizations can take a more strategic role in order to make BYOA a real asset, rather than a risky bottleneck.

Investing in flexible, cloud-centric BYOA solutions can go a long way toward alleviating vulnerabilities faced by organizations due to unfettered, unmonitored deployment of employee-initiated applications. Security, compliance, IT administration and unnecessary costs all are potential challenges that need to be taken into account by determining how IT can get the most out of BYOA. New solutions are coming to market that can get the most out of BYOA, turning previous "islands of information" and application silos into highly leveraged sources of collaboration.

BYOA can also be a catalyst for tightened, fortified security defenses from the endpoint to the data center with new solutions planned and overseen by IT. At the same time, cloud app management tools with rich functionality can actually lessen the IT management burden that may result from runaway BYOA. In so doing, those tools also serve to improve applications availability and ease onboarding of new applications.

<sup>2</sup> "Security a Rising Concern for Cloud-Based Application Usage," eWeek, Jan. 28, 2013

<sup>3</sup> "Control Rogue App Blight, Shadow IT," SearchCloudApplications.com, May 2014

IT's strategic role is also cemented by the need for smart, organization-specific rules for BYOA introduction and integration that don't require the IT department to act as enforcement that cracks down on unauthorized application usage.

Finally, smart management of the BYOA trend requires IT to sit at the intersection of business leadership, end users' needs and technology resources in order to achieve the ultimate goal: providing the right information to the right people at the right time.

## A New Solutions Framework for BYOA: AppGuru

Whether your IT department already is already BYOA-savvy or running to catch up, there is no better time than now to take control of employee-initiated cloud apps.

AppGuru by LogMeIn allows IT to embark on a managed approach to cloud applications adoption to support BYOA throughout the enterprise. AppGuru is an application monitoring and management service, allowing IT departments 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 in order to onboard new users and deploy new apps more easily.
- Securely scale the enterprise's BYOA initiative as more apps, users and locations must be supported.

AppGuru offers a non-intrusive approach to reclaiming IT's strategic role in securely, reliably and efficiently integrating employee-initiated cloud apps into the organization.

## Summary

With the increasing adoption of both IT consumerization and cloud-based applications, BYOA is rapidly gaining momentum as a way to support end-user flexibility and increase productivity. Many IT leaders are discovering that ignoring the inevitability of BYOA can come with a high price of management challenges, security risks and duplicative investments.

BYOA, if properly managed and supported by forward-thinking IT organizations in collaboration with the user community and business stakeholders, can be a tremendous leverage point. Investing in BYOA tools can pay big dividends for organizations looking to support their end users' choices without putting undue burdens on already strapped IT departments.

Tools such as AppGuru from LogMeIn can validate the business benefits of a BYOA framework by embracing the accelerating trend toward cloud-based applications with a proven, secure and manageable solution.

**To learn more, go to [appguru.com](http://appguru.com)**