iPass Mobile Workforce report

By Craig Lowe   15 Jul 2013

iPass recently published its Q2 2013 Mobile Workforce Report. Read without the executive summary and conclusion (which no doubt have been tailored for iPass's needs) the report makes some damming revelations about the use of public wi-fi by mobile executives.

One would not argue that mobile workers work longer hours and are using remote connectivity to be more productive. One might argue with the sentiment that "because wi-fi is fast, generally reliable and sometimes free, mobile workers often search first for a wi-fi signal."

The report itself later states: "Wi-fi has its own challenges, of course, such as availability, price and ease of use."

Unpacking the data highlights:

- Only 14% of mobile workers have never paid for wi-fi access;
- More than 24% have paid USD30 or more for one-time access to wi-fi;
- Hotels and airports are the main perpetrators of excessive wi-fi fees (captive audience); and
- When wi-fi is unavailable or expensive it can negatively impact productivity.

The bigger issue is, of course, productivity. With 75% of mobile workers working more than 45 hours a week and 66% spending ne to three days out of the office, the correlations between remote connectivity and productivity is evident. In the light of global trends, such as cloud computing and collaboration, it would be remiss to examine the relationship more intently.

The report indicates:

- Forty percent of mobile workers work from aeroplanes or coffee shops;
- Additionally, 29% work on public transportation;
- Less than half (49%) felt "more productive" when working in a hotel; and
- More than 70% of mobile workers described themselves as "less productive" in public places.

Besides the obvious concerns over data security when working in public wi-fi hot spots, environmental noise, lack of privacy and space and poor connectivity are touted as reasons why this might be the case.

Astoundingly, against this backdrop of lower productivity, 85% assume that wi-fi will be available and actively seek it out with 71% researching wi-fi before embarking on a trip.

It seems that the need to be connected is of utmost importance and, to improve productivity, the alternatives for remote connectivity must seriously be considered.

ABOUT CRAIG LOWE

Craig Lowe is founder and managing director of execMobile. Lowe left BT Global Services to start execMobile, introducing innovative roaming voice and data solutions into the South African market. execMobile offers corporate customers affordable post-paid data roaming as a managed service

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