

Making the Most of Mobile Devices For Business

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Mobile devices have come a long way in recent years, so much so that approximately 80-90% of activities currently performed on desktop computers can be undertaken with a new generation mobile device.

Along with the improved hardware, another technological development that has equally had an impact on the effectiveness of mobile devices, is that of “Cloud Computing”.

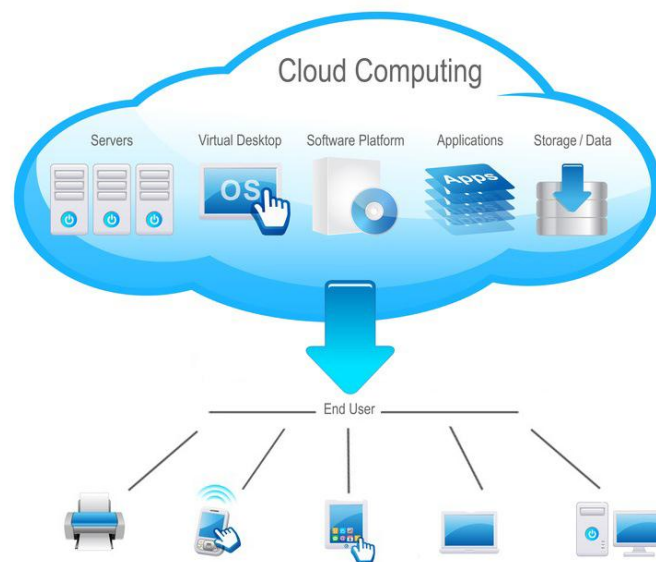
Cloud Computing

Cloud computing can be defined as “software on the internet”. With cloud computing, you no longer need to install software on your device in order to make use of it.

In the past if you wanted to create documents, you needed to have software programs such as Word, or Open Office installed on the computer. With cloud computing you can create the same type of documents simply by using a web browser on your computing device (computer or mobile device) connected to the internet, and accessing an online service such as Google Docs, or Microsoft Skydrive etc. The types of cloud software is increasing daily, from word processing applications, image editing, video editing, accounting software to name a few.

As well as using cloud computing to create content, the cloud is also used to store files online.

The advantage of storing files online is that they can be accessed any time from any device capable of connecting to the internet.



Some commonly used cloud services:

Dropbox – is a file storage service – easily access for files online.

Google Drive – offers file storage, as well as document creation and document editing capabilities

Sky Drive – from Microsoft offers file storage, as well as document creation and document editing capabilities, for Word, Excel, Powerpoint and Onenote.



Types of Mobile Devices

Smartphones

Smartphones are mobile phones that are essentially mini computers. Other than having more processing power compared to “simple” or “low” end cheap mobile phones, Smartphones have the ability to install small programs, known as Apps (short for Applications). Installing apps on your phone can transform your phone into a multi-purpose computing device. You need to visit the App Store for your phones operating system – Android, iOS etc to download and install apps.

Two of the popular smartphones currently available:



Samsung Galaxy S3
(Android)



iPhone
(iOS)



Mobile Operating Systems

Smartphones run on a different operating system to that found on laptops and computers, so programs that run on a computer will not run on a mobile device.

The two best known mobile operating systems found on mobile devices are Android (created by Google) and iOS (created by Apple). Apps created for one operating system, eg Android, will not work on another operating system, like iOS, and vice-versa.

Tablets

Tablets are devices with screen sizes around 10 inches, measured diagonally. The lower end models are typically wifi only (capable of connecting to the internet wirelessly), while the top end models can have 3G or the ability to connect to the mobile network, ie connect to cell phone towers like mobile phones.

Tablets that are 3G capable will require a sim card to be installed on the device, and a data plan from a mobile network provider, eg Telecom, Vodafone etc. They will also be wifi capable, so when a device is within range of a known wifi network, any data received/transmitted will go via the wifi network first, thus minimising mobile data costs. (while 3G tablets use the mobile network, tablets are not equipped with the hardware capable of making mobile calls, like mobile phones).

There are a multitude of tablet devices available; most will not contain any sockets or plugs to connect USB devices etc. Data transfer is via wireless connection to cloud services, as mentioned earlier.

The advantage of tablet devices is their battery life. Typically the battery life of a tablet is between 5-10hrs depending on the hardware and components in the device.



Samsung Galaxy Tab (10 inch display)
(Android)



iPad (10 inch display)
(iOS)

Mini Tablets

Mini Tablets are essentially a smaller version of their larger cousins. Typically a mini tablet has a screen size of approx. 7 inches.



Samsung Galaxy Tab 7"



iPad Mini (7inch Display)

Phablets

Phablets are the new generation of mini tablets. A phablet is a combination **PH**one and **tAB**LET. Screen size is approx. between 4-5 inches. Unlike tablets, Phablets are capable of making phone calls like a mobile phone.

The phablet is targeted to people who want the functionality of a tablet with a larger screen than that of a phone, but has the capability of making calls and text messaging.



Samsung Galaxy SIII (phone) V Samsung Galaxy Note II (phablet)

Netbooks

Netbooks are small computers designed primarily for the internet. Netbooks use low powered components, in order lengthen its battery life. As a consequence Netbooks run a lite version of the Windows operating system, which means, most programs that are capable of running on a computer or laptop can run on a Netbook. However because netbooks do not possess the processing power of their larger counterparts, large software programs that require fast computing speeds may not function as well on a netbook.

Netbooks do not have any optical drives like DVD or CD drive, but does contain USB sockets to connect an external mouse, memory sticks etc. Screen size of a Netbook is typically around 10 inches.



App Store

Each of a mobile devices operating system has an App Store. The App Store is the market place whereby you can search for and download apps to your phone. Simply visit the app store on your mobile device, and enter a keyword to search for a particular type of app eg “notetaking” or search via category’s eg Business, Media, etc

As a result of your search you will see a list of apps that match your search criteria. Simply click on an apps icon to view more information about that app. Within the apps info, you can view “User Reviews” whereby other people who have downloaded this app, can comment on its performance. A “User Rating” whereby users rate the app can give you an indication of how well this app is received by other users.

There are free apps and also apps that cost in the App Store.



iOS 6



Searching for the right Mobile Device

With the multitude of mobile devices available, how do you know which device is best for you?

Before you begin searching for your “perfect” device, write down any “must have” features or tasks you wish your device to be capable of.

When you have your list, start compiling information on a number of devices for you to consider.

The best way to narrow your search, is to talk to people who already have a device, smartphone, tablet that you could consider. If possible have a go at using the device; how it feels in your hand, how easy is it to use etc.

Visit stores and look at the various devices on display.

Write down the brand and model of any device you think might meet your criteria.

Visit tech sites, such as CNet, Engadget, Geekbeat TV etc, and search for these devices you have noted, and read the reviews. Do a separate search for “best” mobiles, tablets etc. From the results you will get a list of models, and reviews for each of the devices. These tech sites are good for giving you a run down on the good and bad of these devices.

Read through the reviews, and discard any that you’re not convinced about.

With your short list of devices, visit the app store (Android or iOS) and search for possible apps that you may want to download, read through the app reviews and note down the app details.

Visit Youtube and enter the model for the device your considering, along with keywords such as “review” ,“tips”, “tricks” etc. You will get a list of videos, some made from tech sites, and others made by users of the device.

View a selection of videos, to get user feedback of the device and any tips and tricks and some lesser known features or app recommendations for your device.

With your short list of devices, visit www.pricespyspy.co.nz

This is a NZ website that lists all known retail stores, both online stores and brick/mortar stores, that stock a particular device. Enter the brand and model for your device, and compare prices across all NZ stores.

The screenshot shows the PriceSpy website homepage. The header features the PriceSpy logo, a search bar, and navigation links for Menu and Sign in. Below the header, a banner indicates 'Right now: 66,000 products from 410 shops'. The main content area is divided into two columns. The left column displays ten product categories with icons and item counts: Phones & GPS (1,077 items), Computer components (12,629 items), Computer accessories (7,758 items), Computers (2,476 items), Audio & Home Entertainment (15,776 items), Photo & Video (2,878 items), Games & Consoles (5,770 items), Home & Garden (4,487 items), ...and more (PriceSpy Raw 1,700,000 items), and My favourite categories. The right column contains a 'First time visitor?' section with welcome messages and tips on finding products, deals, creating lists, monitoring prices, and becoming a member. Below this, a 'News from PriceSpy' section lists recent updates. At the bottom, there is a 'Price alerts' section with a sign-in button and a 'Forum' section with a list of discussion threads. A 'Top 5' list of mobile phones is also featured, showing the top five models and their prices.

PriceSpy Shopping Intelligence Search products, categories etc. Menu Sign in

Right now: 66,000 products from 410 shops Feedback

First time visitor?
Welcome to PriceSpy!
Find the right product
Search, filter and compare - read consumer ratings, comments, tests and reviews.
Find the best deal
The lowest price isn't necessarily the best deal.
Create product lists
Create private or public lists to share or compare - or to calculate the lowest total price.
Monitor price drops
PriceSpy will notify you when prices drop for products you have chosen to monitor.
Become a member
It's free and gives access to features that makes it even easier to save time and money.
Hide this tip

Price alerts
Latest price changes among your Price alerts
Sign in Create account

Forum
Watercooling Discussion Thread 18 min ago
Vader (JoshHunter's Watercooling Buildlog) 22 min ago
Battery Drainage Problem 43 min ago
\$300 GPU 52 min ago
Games (possible) meeting times 2 hours ago
Go to the forum

Top 5
Samsung Galaxy S III GT-I9300 16GB \$583.00
Samsung Galaxy Note II GT-N7100 16GB \$795.00
Apple iPhone 5 16GB \$915.00
Samsung Galaxy S III Mini GT-I8190 8GB \$385.00
Google Nexus 4 16GB \$625.00
See the entire top 100

Price spy will also provide details on the models specifications and hardware – this will make it easier to compare devices and prices.

Multimedia tablets
Apple iPad 4G 16GB (4th Generation)
Like & share 0
Feedback

Create alert
Add to list
Compare

Product generation: Apple iPad (4th Generation). 8 products in this generation. 3 predecessors and no successors
Products from Apple (193)
Show all Apple Multimedia tablets (26)

Stores
from \$849.00

Product details
3G (UMTS)
Apple iOS 6 9.7 inches
2048x1536 pixels 662 q

User reviews

Expert reviews

Statistics
Rank: 25
Price hist:

Media

Related
Similar: 5

Stores selling this product
Online stores 25 from \$849.00
Physical stores
Nearest store: 324 km

Store	Info	Retailer message/Notes	User rating	Price	Incl shipping	Link to store
MNI		Free Delivery Nationwide 1 Year Warranty No Credit Card Surcharge	★★★★★ (5 user reviews)	\$849.00		Visit shop
Expert Infotech		Retail Store / Shop Online In Service Since 2002 Quality Products @ Fair Price	★★★★★ (505 user reviews)	\$867.00		Visit shop
AlphaCity		Reliable Reachable Fast Service	★★★★★ (153 user reviews)	\$904.23		Visit shop
PC Online Shop		Everyday lower price Cameras CPUs	★★★★★ (120 user reviews)	\$907.03		Visit shop
Bluewheel			★★★★★	\$908.41		
PB Technologies			★★★★★	\$908.50		
PB Tech Hamilton			★★★★★	\$908.50		
Wiseguys		Over 20,000 Products Huge Savings Off RRP Fast Shipping NZ Wide	★★★★★ (6 user reviews)	\$917.97		Visit shop
PB Tech Wellington			★★★★★	\$918.85		
Warehouse Stationery			★★★★★	\$919.00		
KTECH		Simple and safe shopping Pickup available Easy Warranty Service	★★★★★ (140 user reviews)	\$920.00		Visit shop

Having compared prices between the devices you’re considering, you should be able to reduce the number of devices that fit your budget.

Next step, is to get your hands on each of the devices and test them out. Visit the stores and have a go.