

Increasing Flexible and Mobile Working Productivity Through Better Wireless Working

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For local government and public sector service organisations, increasing flexible mobile worker productivity can dramatically enhance service. One of the most effective ways to realize these gains is through mobile technologies that put information at the fingertips of users in the community anytime, anywhere they need it. Whether they are querying a CRM database for citizen information, submitting a work-order request to an ERP system, finding out what their next call or job ticket is, or checking on status from central databases; remote access to information lets people in the field better meet the needs of their customers better and work more efficiently, whether working in the field or working from home.

For hundreds of thousands of managers, service engineers, customer-facing staff and other workers; continuous, mobile access to their CRM, order management and work scheduling systems is a business imperative.

The following project snapshots illustrate the use of NetMotion Mobility XE™ mobile VPN by some UK Public Service Organisations.

Cherwell District Council - took a strategic decision to encourage employees to work from home and within the community. Key concerns were end-to-end security and end user productivity. They did not have any existing remote access or mobility infrastructure. They tested mobility on a variety of device types including laptops, PDAs, tablets and Smartphones, for a range of applications from simple browser-based Intranet access, through to complex geographical information and client-server asset management systems (street furniture, office facilities, street sweeping) and typical local authority application like home visits and social care. During the evaluation period Cherwell achieved enhanced application performance and, in some cases for the first time, had applications working over cellular and 3G networks. Security over any network type was achieved without having to purchase an APN service from their mobile provider, with significant savings every year. Gareth Jones, Desktop Team Leader said "We can see the status of all our mobile devices on a single screen, allowing us to quickly identify and resolve issues – often before the user has reported anything." Mobility covers all the requirements for both Remote and Mobile Working and is seen as a key enabling technology for their Flexible Working strategy. Cherwell also has plans to offer shared services to enable flexible and mobile working to other councils in the area, based on their infrastructure and the facilities NetMotion Mobility XE gives them to isolate data access for different authorities from each other.

Durham Unitary Council - have selected Mobility XE as their standard remote access VPN, displacing the previous IPSec-based solution. They have tested Mobility XE on a wide variety of devices and applications and have recently placed an order for 300 device licenses to meet their immediate needs. The Council reports that Mobility XE will be a requirement for future mobile and flexible working with its combination of security, productivity and management features

Leeds City Council - has been a NetMotion Wireless customer since 2006, with NetMotion Mobility XE being used in a Pilot project for Mobile Video streaming of CCTV images to mobile devices both for the council, and also for Public Safety agencies. The new real-time applications support in the latest release of NetMotion Mobility will improve wireless voice and video streaming even further.

Powys County Council – Recently completed a successful evaluation of NetMotion Mobility - the purchasing process is underway. The initial business driver was for Housing Control officers using Windows Tablet devices (Motion Computing) and communicating over Orange network. Mobility has eradicated the issue of applications crashing when devices loose cellular connectivity as the Housing Control officers travel in the valleys of Wales. Performance of the application has also improved.

Oxfordshire County Council - originally looked at Mobility XE to assist with applications persistence issues for their Library Service. The service has 7 mobile library trucks each equipped with two laptops which are intended to provide the librarians with access to the centrally run Galaxy system for reservations, requests and membership details. Galaxy is a centrally hosted application accessed via VT220 protocol. This protocol is totally intolerant to cellular disconnects which can occur intermittently in the GPRS service. As a result, each time the mobile libraries stop, the librarians were spending the first 3-5 minutes of each 10 minute stop to connect the laptop to the GPRS network and restart the Galaxy application. With the 7 trucks making a total of over 500 stops a week, this meant the service was potentially facing a productivity loss of 25 man hours a week. Librarians were spending that valuable time wrestling with software and wireless connections instead of attending to the needs of Library Service users. With NetMotion Mobility in place, once the librarian has logged in to the system at the beginning of the working day, they remain connected and can instantly start serving customers as soon as the van is stopped. Occasional disconnects no longer cause database corruption due to lost data, and as a result the reliability of the service has also improved greatly.

Initial installation was completed within 1 hour and the decision to purchase was made during the 30-day evaluation period. Oxfordshire has since purchased 300 additional licenses, displacing Netilla SSL VPN as the standard remote and mobile access technology. A broad selection of mobile applications are now Mobility enabled, including Housing Control, Revenues and Benefits, Registrars, as well as all existing and future home workers as part of their Better Office Programme (BOP)

Service Birmingham - Birmingham City Council - initially tested Mobility XE to improve the security and performance of their SAP project. Based upon positive experiences with the product, they have since been working on plans to extend this to home and flexible working, social services, revenues and benefits administration and other council departments to keep data secure while allowing the receiving devices to roam anywhere within the city. Paul Ramsey, Wireless Architect at Service Birmingham said during the trial that the personal benefits he experienced for flexible and mobile working were sufficient for him to pay for the cost of using the software out of his own salary

Westminster City Council - Are currently running a pilot project to equip up to 1000 council staff with mobile devices. Of primary focus is Highways and Parking Enforcement. The City's network architects are using Mobility to provide seamless roaming between the City Council's Metropolitan WiFi network and cellular (3G/GPRS) infill. The Pilot project will run till end of June with deployment planned for completion by the beginning of August.

Oxford University - Campus-wide WiFi coverage and roaming issues have been overcome with the deployment of Mobility XE on PDA devices for the Buildings Maintenance Team. Access to the Planon job scheduling application is now secure and robust, with future plans to extend applications deployed to include an Asset Management system.

Strathclyde Partnership for Transport - NetMotion Wireless have just implemented a no-cost evaluation as part of an investigation to improve support for secure and flexible mobile working for laptops, Windows Mobile handhelds and Smartphones

NetMotion Wireless enables mobile workers to maintain and optimize connections to applications as they move across various networks and in and out of wireless coverage areas. NetMotion's mobile VPN software - Mobility XE, addresses today's key mobile deployment challenges including:

- ⌂ Standards-based wireless network security
- ⌂ True applications session persistence through coverage gaps and interruptions
- ⌂ Inter-network roaming
- ⌂ Wireless application performance optimisation
- ⌂ Mobile Network Access Control (NAC)
- ⌂ Centralized management of multiple devices over multiple networks
- ⌂ Accelerating rollouts by easing mobile deployment complexity

Mobility XE has helped organisations worldwide realize the benefits of their mobile deployments fully, increase mobile worker productivity and efficiency, and improve customer service.