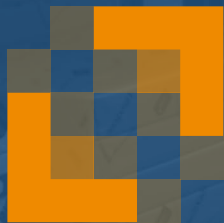


A WHITE PAPER FROM BARCODING

THE FUTURE OF ENTERPRISE MOBILITY:

*Making the Shift From
Windows CE to Android*



Barcoding

Making the Shift From Windows CE to Android

As the dominant operating system for mobile applications, Windows Mobile and Windows CE are now at end of life and are no longer being supported by Microsoft. The days of Windows Mobile serving as the backbone of enterprise mobile technology have passed, with the majority of the market choosing Android as its new mobile operating system. What's more, with the extreme stress placed on supply chains by the coronavirus pandemic, those who transitioned to Android earlier are ahead of the curve. And those who haven't need to do so as soon as possible.

The transition was already underway before the pandemic hit, says Greg Henry, Vice President of Operations at Saleen, Inc. and former VP of Client Solutions at Barcoding, Inc. But many projects got delayed when workers were furloughed. And some planned ones were put on hold. Now, Henry says, companies shouldn't feel pressured to proceed immediately with the transition to Android in order to get a quick win. They should, however, be seeking to understand "how you can leverage the technology to improve your business and your people's productivity."



Android Gives You Options and Flexibility

Shash Anand, Vice President of Product Strategy with SOTI Inc., says companies are now looking to include remote workers in the transition. Many are already familiar with the Android platform, given that more than 72% of the world's mobile devices rely on it.

Kevin Lollock, Senior Sales Engineer for Zebra Technologies, says customer-centric industries such as retail and healthcare tend to be ahead of the curve, and are continuing with the transition even during the pandemic.

Some of the market, however, is taking a "wait-and-see" approach, says Sam Gonzales, director of Global Systems and Solutions with Ivanti Wavelink. "They're saying, 'Let's let other people be on the bleeding edge. We'll see how it works out, then we'll move when we have to.'" But early adopters are finding that their investments are already yielding benefits in the form of greater productivity, as mobile technology replaces paper and eliminates unnecessary human interactions.

Additional benefits come from the use of newer and more powerful devices. "They have a lot more functionality, they're easier to use, and they're more reliable," says Anand. "These new Android devices have to be ready to go as soon as they're out of the box. Business-critical applications have to be pre-loaded. These are becoming the new norm in every work environment that we're seeing so far."

"In a highly competitive, fast-moving business world, it all comes down to a desire for flexibility," says Gonzales. "You need something that can change over time and grow with your business and can turn on a dime when something unexpected hits you." Henry adds that Android devices specifically offer a broad spectrum of hardware platforms for both consumer and enterprise use. "In a word," he says, "Android gives you options."

Android Technology Continues to Evolve

So how to begin? Companies that failed to make an early move to Android might be feeling intimidated about the prospect of starting now. Henry says the exercise should start with the question “why.”

“It’s about looking at the current state of your people and processes, and envisioning what a future state could be,” he says. “Then you can begin the real work of putting together a detailed plan for what kind of applications, training and support strategies you need.”

Users should be included early in the planning stages, so ensure that they feel part of the change. “Otherwise they’ll look for reasons to say no,” says Anand. “They want to be contributing, and you need to take their input into account when you’re implementing new procedures.”

Android Enterprise technology continues to evolve. A new operating system is released nearly every year. The latest is Android 11, due for release in the third quarter of 2020. According to Anand, it delves more deeply into work profiles and asset management for company-owned devices. “It’s improving the separation between work and personal.”

“The application ecosystem is just growing so fast,” he adds. “You’re continuously seeing a more stable platform with new capabilities that are getting more granular and automated. For example, if I want to do an update, can I do it when the device is charging? When the device is idle? When I’m on Wi-Fi only?”



Security and Cloud Reliability

Over the next three years, enterprise mobility and mobile device management (MDM) will continue to focus on tightening up security and a reliance on the cloud. Of prime importance, says Gonzales, will be the ability to scale operations quickly — a lesson that companies are learning today, as they're being called on to open up temporary distribution centers to meet demand.

“If you were to set that up in a traditional way, on a dark network in a closed system, it wouldn't work,” says Gonzales. “But if you've already adopted the cloud and Android Enterprise, you're in a much better position. All you need is an internet connection, and you can stand up a warehouse very quickly.”

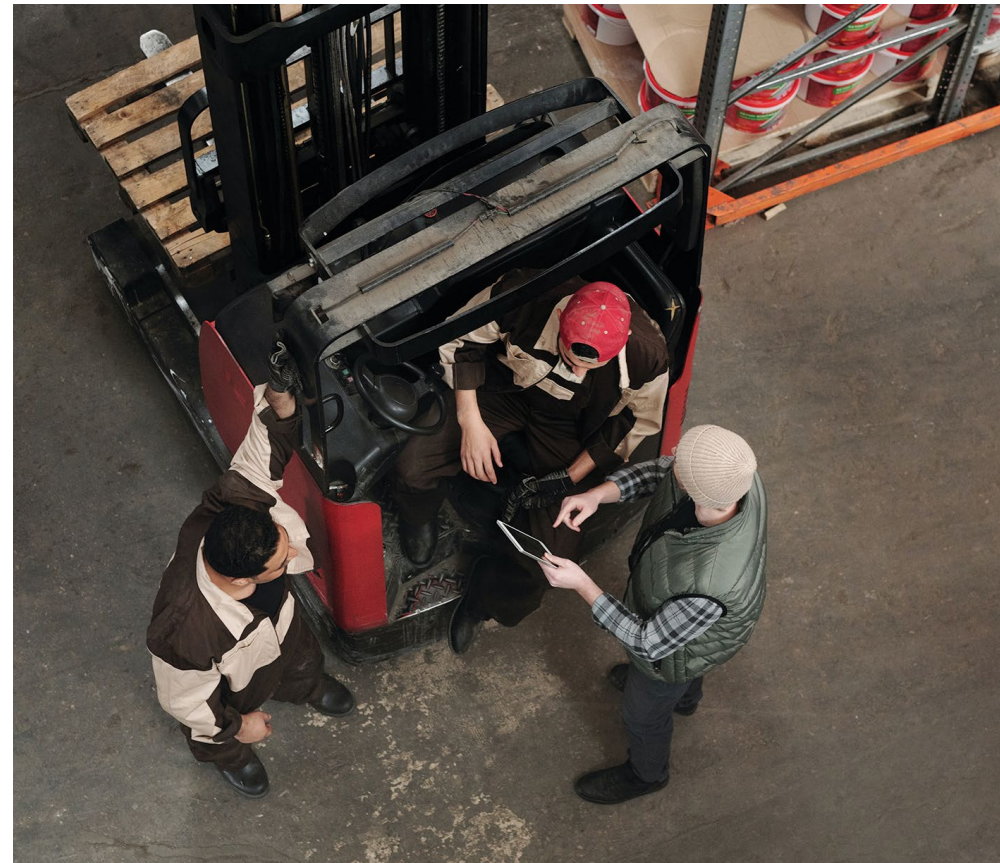


Partner with Experts for Guidance

Experts recommend that organizations undertaking the transition to Android don't go it alone. Trusted advisers, including a range of experienced software and equipment providers, can provide valuable guidance and help build a strong business case for the effort. "The challenges that we face as an industry are hard," says Henry, "and you need help to tackle them properly."

Adds Anand:

"Partnering with experts that have performed hundreds if not thousands of migrations, who know the migration path, can help make it a seamless process."



Migrating Mobile Operations

“As-a-service” purchasing options can play an important role in easing the transition to, and management of, the new Android platform. “Android is changing pretty much on a monthly basis, and keeping up is challenging,” says Anand. “To my mind, as-a-service is the new norm, because it makes the upfront cost of purchasing that much easier. You can purchase software on a monthly basis if desired, and you can cancel at any time. This provides the flexibility to switch providers if you’re not happy with the services you’re getting.”

Regardless of how a company ultimately decides how to proceed with migrating mobile operations away from Windows CE, doing nothing isn’t an option. Even more than a case of replacing technology that’s no longer being supported, embracing modern and ever-evolving mobile device-management systems is crucial to an organization’s ability to keep pace with changing customer demand, and adjust to unanticipated disruptions such as the current pandemic.

“Moving platforms is hard and can be scary, but embrace it,” Gonzales advises. “It’s your opportunity to drive your business to the next level.”



About the Editor

Jody Costa, VP of Marketing

Jody Costa is the vice president of marketing for Barcoding, Inc., where she is responsible for all aspects of strategic marketing and communications for the company. In this position, Costa drives Barcoding's content strategy, multi-tier marketing campaigns, and various events and programs that enhance the Barcoding brand. Creative and professional, Costa is also a freelance consultant and writer whose poetry has won several industry and local awards.

About Barcoding, Inc.

Barcoding is a supply chain automation and innovation company that helps organizations be more efficient, accurate, and connected. With extensive subject matter expertise in data capture, labeling and printing, and mobile computing, we are trusted to build and manage solutions for some of the best IT and operations teams in the world. Founded in 1998, Barcoding is headquartered in Baltimore, Md., with offices across North America (Chicago, Houston, Seattle, Montreal, Toronto, and Vancouver). For more information, visit www.barcoding.com.



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