

BYOD boosts Macs vs. PCs

New management tools remove last barrier to widespread Mac adoption in the enterprise

BY JOHN S. WEBSTER, NETWORK WORLD

The emergence of BYOD policies and virtual desktop platforms, plus new integration and management tools, have removed the final barriers to widespread Mac adoption in the enterprise.

And while Macs still cost more than PCs, IT shops are looking at the bigger ROI picture and figuring that improvements in employee productivity, reduced help desk costs and better inherent security can offset the higher sticker price.

"Over the past 15 years, Apple targeted every argument against them and made them moot," says Matt Heric, CEO at IAVO Scientific, an engineering software development company in Durham, N.C.

bers should trend upward as more employees take advantage of an employee choice program, says CTO Gregory Simpson.

"When we were having BYOD discussions employees said they wanted a choice. At the time, we wanted to be a single-platform shop so we could get scale pricing. But with the Mac, we could buy a whole bunch or just a few, so that didn't matter. We had two PC vendors and Apple ticked up in part because the form factor was attractive even to PC users," he says.

He says another factor in offering Macs as a choice was the growth of iPhones at GE. The company had 10,000 in August of 2011, and that grew to 30,000 in August 2012.

What's more, the company's new employee choice program and support of both

"We're seeing a change in the make up of PCs vs. Macs that are not employee owned, but company owned. We are seeing a shift toward Macs," says Sheila Johnson, a senior vice president at the company.

"Employees can choose Macs if that's what they want. Forty percent of our employees, including a large portion of our contractors who work here at the headquarters are on Macs, and we've seen 11% quarter-over-quarter growth of that platform. We also saw more growth globally than PC growth in November," she adds.

In terms of support, Cisco IT learned that when Macs first came into the company — and it had 2,500 that were not IT-supported — they were self-supported by employees.

"It should be a last resort to call the help desk when you have a support problem. To avoid this, within the community we provide actions, content and policies, and chat. All this is part of our self-support offering, which started on the Mac. That's improved our employees' confidence in the Mac platform and helped drive adoption. Employees love it. It's simple and easy to use on PCs, Macs, iPhones and iPads," adds Johnson.

CBS Interactive has a similar story. The design of Macs, as well as usability and lowering prices, contribute to its growth at the company, says CTO Peter Yared. He also notes that PCs are seeing a growth spurt of late due to Windows 8.

"When we brought in Macs, we thought we'd have to do a lot of training, but none of the employees who chose Macs needed it. We could even switch key commands to those in a Windows environment, so people who are used to PCs were not confused by the Apple key commands," Yared says.

At the company, 30% to 35% of employees use MacBook Airs and iPhones, and as a result, they're a more "excited" workforce, according to Yared.

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After being a 100% PC shop, IAVO employees are now all on Macs. This even includes the company's engineers, who once thought PCs would remain the primary tool in software engineering.

Analysts are predicting that 2013 will be a big year for Macs in the enterprise. In a report released in mid-2012, Gartner forecasted that the Mac would see more than 20% year-over-year growth in the business market, while the PC would see about a 5% drop.

GE brings the Mac to life

General Electric has about 330,000 computers on employee desktops, of which only 2,500 are Macs. But those Mac num-

iPhones and Macs have become a positive recruiting tool because it communicates that it is a contemporary company, he says.

Forrester released a report in September detailing why more large companies are turning to the Mac. "One thing we found is it's clear that there's more confidence in the Mac for the perception of security — it's more secure than a Windows machine. That's hard to argue, because historically there have been relatively few intrusions on the Mac," says analyst Dave Johnson, the report's primary author.

Cisco was a leader in bringing Macs into the enterprise. The company now has 28,000 Macs out of an installed base of about 80,000 PCs.

fearless leader, Jim Lanzone, is a big supporter of using Macs, and that has given the program a fantastic boost. We might see over time that 90% of employees want Macs," he adds.

At Cambridge, Mass.-based Caregroup, CIO John Halamka, says that given the demand for OSX and iOS in the user community, it is the responsibility of CIOs to embrace, manage and support these devices.

"At present, we have about 12,000 Windows devices, 1,000 iPads, 4,000 iPhones, and 2,000 Mac OSX devices," he says.

Management: The final frontier

Dave Johnson at Forrester says to reduce management challenges when Macs are brought into a corporate setting, IT departments should determine which employees are good candidates for BYOC.

They should also take into account things like access privileges and regulatory

lels, Moka Five, Orchard Parc, Centrifry and Group Logic.

- Moka Five provides a standardized way to deploy VMware desktop virtualization on Macs.
- Orchard Parc provides OPUS, which lets Macs work with Windows without the need for a virtual machine and hardware.
- Centrifry Direct Control for Mac OS X integrates with Active Directory and Windows Group Policy.
- Group Logic solves the problem of Macs accessing Windows for file sharing.
- Parallels Desktop allows users to run Windows apps on their Macs, and Parallels Management Suite for Microsoft System Center provides for cross-platform management.

Of course, Mac integration into the enterprise still has some minor kinks to be worked out.

signed a Web site on the PC, we purchased certain fonts that didn't work on the Mac. To solve this, we use Open Type fonts, which work on Macs and PCs. Cost sort of entered into it because the site is subscription-based, but we did it on case-by-case basis," he says.

And Macs aren't totally self-supporting. "I do agree that you need to find an IT guy or company that specializes in the Mac. PC guys don't 'get' Macs," he adds.

Costing it out

Before it began to bring in more Macs, Genentech thought IT management would be more expensive. This turned out to not be the case, says Cindy Elkins, vice president of IT.

"At first IT management thought the Mac would be more expensive, but the truth is, when we retrained people on the service desk, for example, we found that it's actually cheaper."

In addition, the Mac is more durable, she adds. "But all goes back to IT, and we're ahead of the curve there. This has to do with being in the medical field, but the Mac users have proved to be as happy as can be, and the machine is actually very easy to support. It's our philosophy in IT to take courageous steps. Having lots of Macs has also proven to be a recruitment tool."

Her final words of wisdom regarding Mac management reflect those of other IT managers. "Don't think around a Windows-centric model. Invest in Mac management expertise, and modernize your application portfolio. Your software vendors will have to be more prepared, and to support the Mac."

Webster is freelance writer. He can be reached at johnwebstervt@gmail.com.

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issues. At the high end, they need to assess user sophistication, and identify groups of employees who can take care of themselves.

"There are a couple of ways to do this once you decide on your approach. You can deliver the Windows desktop to the Mac, and expand self-support. Software such as Casper Suite does a really good job with this," he says.

Other management software that has been released for the Mac include Paral-

There are still some issues with high-end graphics, says IAVO Scientific's Heric.

Elsewhere, at Lighthouse Design, which began to bring in Macs in greater numbers several years ago, other issues arose, says Glenn Romanelli, president, CEO and creative director at the Web development company.

"There were a few problems when we considered a switch to the Mac. Fonts are critical in my industry. When someone de-