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John Edwards

BYOD Users Fear & Loathe IT



John Edwards, Technology Journalist, 7/24/2013

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IT departments have a lot of explaining to do, particularly when it comes to reassuring enterprise BYOD users about the security and sanctity of their personal data.

While the BYOD trend shows every sign of being unstoppable (see [BYOD Reaches Tipping Point](#)), and more organizations are now allowing their employees to use their own mobile devices at work (with some restrictions, of course), a growing number of workers now fear that IT is planning to swipe personal data from their phones and tablets.

For proof of this fact, one need only look at a recent study, "[Employees Tell the Truth About Your Company's Data](#)," published by Aruba Networks. The study's key finding is that many employees fear that their employer's IT department will examine and copy data from their devices without their knowledge or permission.

According to the study, fears and misconceptions about the role and duties of the IT department, as well as enterprise digital security needs, are encouraging employees to keep their personal devices far away from IT staff for fear of compromising their personal data. This trend poses a direct threat to company data.

Losing personal data is the No. 1 concern for workers using personal devices, the study found. US users were the most worried, with 66 percent of respondents saying they feared losing control over their personal data. Europe was second, at 45 percent, and the Middle East region was third, at 40 percent.

A large number of people worldwide simply don't trust their employer to even know that they are bringing a personal device to work. Twenty-five percent of respondents in Europe, 31 percent in the Middle East, and 45 percent in the US worry about the IT department having access to their personal data. Perhaps even more worryingly, 26 percent of employees in the Middle East and 18 percent in Europe fear their IT department would interfere with their private data if they handed over their device.

Apparently acting on their fears, a disturbingly high percentage of respondents admitted that they are hiding their devices from IT. Seventeen percent of individuals in the US and Middle East and 15 percent in Europe have not told their employers that they are using a personal device at work. Meanwhile, 11 percent of US workers, 13 percent in Europe, and 26 percent in the Middle East stated that they would never tell IT that their personal device had been compromised, even if it had leaked company data.

When asked how they would feel if their personal data were accessed by their IT department, around half of all users across Europe and the Middle East described their likely reaction as "angry," and 41 percent in Europe, 47 percent in the Middle East, and 46 percent in the US said they would feel "violated" by the news.

Employers should take steps to correct misconceptions and assure employees that personal data will be respected and not tampered with under any condition. Simultaneously, enterprises must also protect the user experience while exercising network control to ensure that sensitive information is not leaked.

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Anand
8/24/2013 1:29:22 PM
User Rank **ONE BAR**

Re: They have a right to fear

The IT departments have a long running reputation of not respecting their employees' privacy boundaries and thus the numbers do not come as a surprise. The IT guys are more concerned about the security of the company's documents, so much so that they end up tempering with the private documents of the employees with little or no apology.

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munira
8/4/2013 8:31:52 AM
User Rank **FIVE BARS**

Re: They have a right to fear

In both cases it was a company phone. "I'm thinking that perhaps it would make employees' lives a little less complicated if company-given phones would be used purely for business. "Michael in ideal world yes you are right but how many of us carry two phones? Company gave her phone along with a limit for personal calls every month, so it becomes natural to use it for personal purposes as well.

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munira
8/4/2013 8:27:58 AM
User Rank **FIVE BARS**

Re: BYOD Users Fear & Loathe IT

Mobile, how many users can be added in the group for virtual desk tops. There may be a more simpler solution. All the data resides with the server and computers are processing machines without hard disks. The down loads too are not permitted without approval of line managres and what ever file is needed, access for one time download is granted which to is encrypted and can be opened within the network. Once opened outside network it evaporates..... scifi

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michaelsumastre
7/30/2013 7:33:12 PM
User Rank **FIVE BARS**

Re: They have a right to fear

@Munira, that's quite a cold answer. But I do have a question, though. Was the first one her own phone? Now that the company has decided to give her a new phone, does it become a company phone? I'm thinking that perhaps it would make employees' lives a little less complicated if company-given phones would be used purely for business.

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Toby
7/30/2013 5:12:14 AM
User Rank **FIVE BARS**

Fear and Loathing in IT

Interesting article. Do you think that this is more a matter of education and training or is there a more fundamental issue at the root of it..?

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munira
7/29/2013 3:32:52 PM
User Rank **FIVE BARS**

Re: They have a right to fear

Your observation is right. A friend of mine lost over 2000 pictures of her baby and family. Company changed her iPhone to a newer iPhone 4 she asked IT to take backup and transfer all her data into her new iPhone. The IT did a wonderful job, they copied phone book and erased everything else. When my friend told IT guys what they have done, their reply was, "ohh sorry but those were just pictures".

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munira
7/29/2013 3:26:32 PM
User Rank **FIVE BARS**

Re: They have a right to fear

nimanthad, you got it right that is why you left it for me to answer. Ok, well what I was referring too was "checking out" as a pass time.

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Re: They have a right to fear

Ahh that never came to my mind. You never know it may be a weapon in

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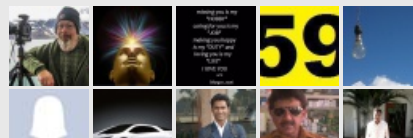
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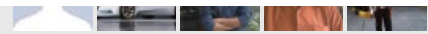


munira
7/29/2013 3:17:00 PM
User Rank **FIVE BARS**

use. In both cases, IT needs to fully understand their role and responsibility.

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munira
7/29/2013 3:11:22 PM
User Rank **FIVE BARS**

Re: They have a right to fear

Tank, i am not sure but if partition can be password protected in a mobile phone, only then it becomes secure. Just having a partition will not be a solution for people looking for privacy in BYOD regime.

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michaelsumastre
7/29/2013 1:18:35 AM
User Rank **FIVE BARS**

Re: They have a right to fear

@Mobile: On the other hand, based on my experience, IT guys are too cautious. In fact, once they tried to prevent us from accessing the Internet at certain times just to reduce spamming. If you're working in an Internet marketing company, that sounds like an illogical, impractical, and "serious! what they were thinking" plan.

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