

iPhone in the Enterprise? Believe it. Business is Quickly Catching iPhone Fever

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You are in charge of production for a large manufacturer. It is 7 PM and you are boarding a flight to Asia. Wi-Fi is not working, but you checked your email via 3G on your iPhone. Suddenly your iPhone plays a tone that signifies a notification alert from your iPhone based supplier application that ties into all of your back end systems. The alert on the phone tells you that a critical component is not available due to a production problem from the supplier. You launch the application and immediately are taken to a detailed description of the issue. In the same application you check for alternative suppliers. You find an alternative supplier that shows immediate availability of the same component. You choose the new supplier on your iPhone and the appropriate notifications are passed to the correct teams to make the change.



This is just one example of how the iPhone is going to change the way corporations take advantage of a significant paradigm shift in mobile computing. The iPhone has shown itself to be a powerful consumer and business device. With over 50,000 applications, 1 billion downloads and over 30M iPhone OS devices sold, the iPhone has taken the stage by redefining what a mobile platform can provide.



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Beyond the new announcements about the iPhone 3G S and iPhone OS 3.0, what caught my attention was the number of developers flocking to the platform for the first time. And while that is good news on multiple levels for both consumers and enterprises, there is another trend that doesn't show up on Apple's slide decks, but crystallized in meetings with customers and other developers. Enterprises are diving in and beginning to

embrace the platform. There is transformation happening in the mobility space enabling solutions that never been available to enterprises before.

I'll briefly outline some of the key technologies that will be available beginning late next week for the iPhone. With iPhone OS 3.0 there are a number of key enhancements that make the iPhone a great corporate citizen. There is still VPN and Exchange support and host of technologies introduced with iPhone OS 2.0. New to iPhone OS 3.0 is full file system encryption, encrypted backups on the user's computer, new tools to assist corporations in provisioning and locking down the user's phone, as well as tethering support (dependent on carriers). The enhanced security translates to an immediate ability to wipe an iPhone remotely or after password failures. It also means it will be more secure if someone gains access to the phone's file system or a user's encrypted backup.

The iPhone is all about the software and the tools and services Apple is providing. New with this release is the ability to utilize Apple's Push Notification service. In a nutshell, the service allows you the ability to notify your application on a user's iPhone to pass along mission critical data. This overcomes an early complaint that the iPhone does not allow third party applications to run in the background and check in with servers while the phone is not in use. The scenario that we opened with demonstrated how this technology can come into play in the enterprise space.