

How to unleash the full power of the smartphone

You have the right devices but do you have the right approach?

THE PERSPECTIVE SERIES

New insights into the UK workplace

February 2017



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Foreword



Phil Mottram
Head of Enterprise,
Vodafone UK

The first mobile phone call in the UK was made by Vodafone 32 years ago on the 1st of January 1985.

Since then mobile phones have become smartphones and have gone from solid bricks weighing over 5kg, to beautiful, streamlined devices that fit in your pocket.

They've transformed our lives. Now we're living in a better connected nation than ever before. The internet gives us access to terabytes of data on any topic imaginable. E-commerce and e-government portals allow us to access products and services whether we're on the go, at home or in the office. And apps help us to keep close to friends, families, colleagues and even our possessions.

Smartphones are central to this new era. They deliver computing power which would have seemed unbelievable back in 1985. Couple this with super-fast broadband, 4G mobile internet and the cloud, and not only are we connected, we're completely mobile.

In our latest Perspective series report: How to unleash the full power of the smartphone, we commissioned independent research to find out how you can make the most of mobile devices to help your business be ready for anything. Specifically, we look at how smartphone-enabled mobility can enhance the customer experience, boost productivity and attract the most talented staff.

The report demonstrates that those who put mobility at the heart of their organisation are feeling the benefit from improved performance, happier staff and a wider, more engaged customer-base.

There isn't a one-size-fits-all solution when it comes to technology though. Mobility is an umbrella term that's made up of many different services and devices. But many businesses, especially SME's don't know who to seek advice from¹ – this is where mobility experts like Vodafone can help.

Research for the report found that larger businesses are much more likely to use technology as a way to empower employees, improve their productivity and boost job satisfaction. Smaller businesses are likely to be more focused on using technology to keep connected with their customers.

So, the really big question is this: Are smartphones central to your growth plans and business success?

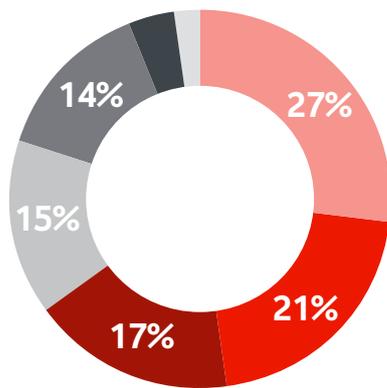
I want to thank the UK businesses who took part and hope you find this report thought-provoking and helpful in your own digital journey.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Phil Mottram". The signature is fluid and cursive, written in a professional style.

Phil Mottram
Head of Enterprise,
Vodafone UK

Executive Summary

Over half of social contact is online



- Face-to-face
- Phone
- Email
- Social media
- Internet phone/video
- Online gaming
- Other

Mobile phones, particularly smartphones, are omnipresent. Deloitte estimates that 81% of the UK population now owns a smartphone, up from 52% four years ago². This has changed how people live their lives.

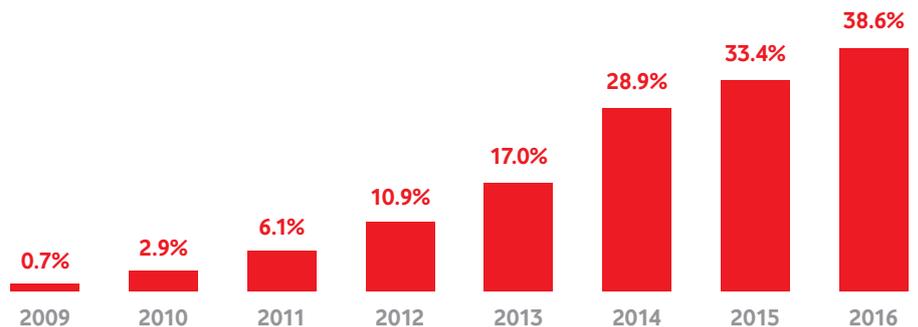
In addition to communicating via good old fashioned voice and text, a plethora of social media sites and apps now make us better connected than ever before. It has never been easier to communicate with friends, family and colleagues, and now we can do it in so many different ways. The majority of that communication is virtual. As a result, only 27% of the contact a typical person has with others is in-person. So we're not losing contact, we're actually gaining it, albeit through different media.

A dream come true

Until recently, when we wanted information, documents, tools and entertainment online, we were tethered to our PCs. Accessing such resources on the move wasn't always straightforward. Instead, we had to write to-do lists before our next opportunity to get connected to a fixed device at home or work.

Smartphones have changed everything. They generate 39%³ of all global internet traffic, over double what it was just three years ago, allowing us to be permanently connected and spontaneously smart. They have delivered such freedom of choice, especially for the consumer, whose behaviour has radically changed. Now they can 'click and buy' wherever they are, whenever they want.

Mobile share of internet traffic worldwide is growing rapidly



The growing prominence of the smartphone owes much to the massive growth in applications that make it quick and simple to perform a variety of tasks on a smartphone at the tap of an icon. A cursory glance at the Google Play or iTunes stores reveals a multitude of new apps added every day (a 2015 study suggested that over 1,000 apps are added to iTunes daily⁴). Over half the time we spend on our smartphones and tablets is now spent on apps (54%).



SOHO

Technology = connectivity with customers

VS

LARGE ENTERPRISE

Technology = employee enabler



“Different size organisations and different sectors have very diverse attitudes and behaviours regarding technology”

Yet despite their popularity, smartphones are not without their critics, especially when it comes to their role in the workplace. There are claims that they are a distraction, lowering concentration levels at work. Also, due to increasing expectations to be ‘always-on’ and ‘always contactable’, they threaten employees’ work-life balance⁵ and increase stress levels. This is driving a need for new management practices in our new world of connectivity.

A new era of collaboration

However, that’s only one side of the story. Just as smartphones are revolutionising our personal lives, they are also transforming how business works. They’ve led to new digital-first business models, they’ve changed how customers interact with organisations, and they’ve created a new era of collaboration.

Businesses around the world are tapping into this phenomenon, strategically putting mobility at the heart of their organisation. And it’s fascinating to see how the practical application of the new technology varies from business to business. Research for the Vodafone Perspective series has found that different size organisations and different sectors have very diverse attitudes and behaviours regarding technology.

Empowerment and connectivity

For example, larger businesses are much more likely to see technology as an employee enabler – empowering them, improving their productivity and increasing job satisfaction. In addition to smart devices, they also have the resources needed to adopt more complex technological solutions such as marketing automation, CRM systems and the Internet of Things (IoT).

Smaller businesses are more focused on using technology to connect with their customers. Given that our recent ‘Connected Nation’ Perspective series report found that 96% of internet-connected consumers are using digital as part of their typical purchasing journey, it’s perhaps unsurprising that 46% of businesses with fewer than 10 employees are selling their products and services online.

Where business needs to focus

Consequently, if your business is to ride the wave of smartphone transformation, it should focus on three areas. How the smartphone, and mobility as a whole, can:

1. Enhance the customer experience
2. Boost productivity
3. Attract the most talented staff

Let’s explore each of these in turn

Enhancing the customer experience

“73% of ambitious SMEs believe that analysing customer data – including real-time location data – is key to successful business”

Our ‘[Turning Ambition into Growth](#)’ Perspective series report revealed that the single most important enabler for turning business ambition into business growth is delighting customers, who then go on to promote the brand. On both sides of this equation – the business delighting the customer and the customer reviewing the business – the use of smartphones is becoming increasingly important.

Tapping into sales via smartphones

In this age of instant gratification, there is no downtime for businesses when it comes to engaging their customers. From researching products, to comparing options, seeking advice, checking availability and making purchases, 96% of the internet-enabled UK population go online as part of their typical purchase journey. And they’re increasingly going online via smartphones or tablets (see the ‘[Connected Nation](#)’ Perspective series report for more on this phenomenon).

E-commerce, itself a rapidly growing market, has shifted significantly over the past few years from desktops and laptops to mobile, allowing customers greater convenience and choice. Indeed, it is estimated that 66%⁶ of all e-commerce traffic and 51% of all online purchases are taking place via smartphones and tablets, as customers become ever more comfortable making transactions on the phone.

Maximising the odds of conversion

At the very least, this means that reviewing your business’s online presence, especially as it appears on a mobile device, should be a priority:

- Are customers able to find you online?
- Are you providing the information and tools they need?
- Are you doing so in the formats they prefer?
- Ultimately, are you maximising the odds of converting interest into sales at every touchpoint?

One way you can help maximise the odds of conversion is by using smartphone technologies to deploy real-time, location-relevant, communications and promotions. The ‘[Turning Ambition into Growth](#)’ Perspective series report found that 73% of ambitious SMEs believe that analysing customer data – including real-time location data – is key to successful business.

From small, local businesses who increase their advertising spend efficiency by only targeting consumers in their vicinity, to larger nationals and multinationals who use geo-fencing to promote different offers to customers in different locations, and click-to-map to maximise the chance of converting a lead, the use of location-based advertising on smartphones is set to reach a staggering \$18bn in the US alone by 2019⁷.

UBER RUSH

Many small businesses are taking advantage of new services enabled by smartphone technology. For example, the UberRUSH app provides a cost-effective delivery service for small businesses – giving them access to a logistics platform without the overheads. By tapping into smartphones, every store is able to be a 'superstore'.

“Augmented reality provides a new dimension when evaluating choices, and QR codes give customers direct access to information such as stock levels, offers and even the option to buy online”

Delighting customers through a great mobile journey

Once a prospect has become a customer, the demands on a business's online channels continue throughout the customer journey with expectations for instant, self-service account management and user community feedback.

Is your business responding to these demands? If not, you might be missing an opportunity to forge closer relationships with your customers.

Whilst the retail customer journey often still has a physical, offline element, mobility has also enhanced the in-store experience. For example, mobile checkouts reduce queues; augmented reality provides a new dimension when evaluating choices, and QR codes give customers direct access to information such as stock levels, offers and even the option to buy online.

Mobility also changes the shopping experience for retailers themselves. Many retailers are now using mobile to connect to almost anything in a store environment, easily monitoring stock levels and triggering automatic replenishment to ensure they never miss a sale opportunity.

Smartphones are enhancing the customer experience across the service sector. In the restaurant trade, more control is being placed in the hands of the consumer by, for example, bill payment apps such as 'Qkr!', reducing pressure on waiting staff and at the same time, creating a better customer experience. Deliveroo allows the consumer, for a small fee, to receive their favourite food in the comfort of their own home. Ultimately allowing the restaurant to reach more consumers regardless of their location.



Dr Now is an app connecting users with a GP via video chat. It can provide consultations and, if necessary, order medicine that's then couriered to their door. Through partnerships with several major medical and travel insurers, Dr Now already has over a million members.

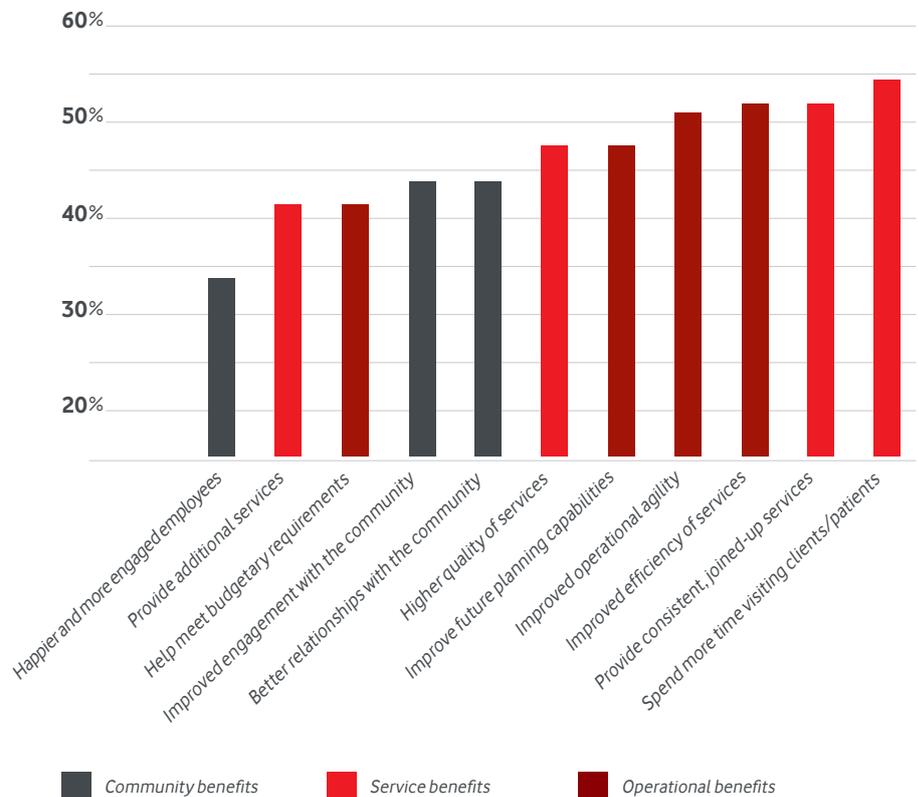
In the next two years, Dr Now will go one step further, creating a system that fits into wearable devices to measure sleep patterns, core temperature and pulse rates. In doing so, it will be able to proactively alert healthcare professionals and form the first line of preventative care.

Apps like Dr Now have the potential to drastically reduce the time and cost burden on GP and A&E services, whilst helping us all to live healthier lives.

The power of mobile to improve all aspects of life

Customer experience innovations aren't limited to retail. In our 'Strengthening Communities' Perspective series report, we found that healthcare organisations are embracing technology to drive service improvements and medical outcomes. They told us that technology was enabling them to provide joined-up services and spend more time with patients whilst boosting operational efficiency and agility.

Technology means that healthcare professionals spend more time with patients



In particular, UK-grown healthcare apps such as 'Dr Now' are starting to change the medical care landscape, providing the community with immediate, online access to medical appointments and medical care around the clock. These apps are helping to build a much more convenient service, especially for those who may otherwise struggle to get to a doctor when they are ill or living in remote areas, as well as providing a better experience for patients who can't afford to take time off work to sit in a waiting room.

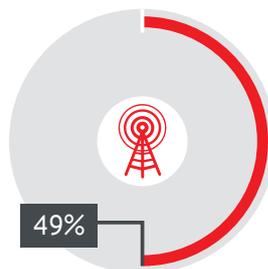
Boosting productivity

“For every working day a UK small business is separated from its smartphone capabilities, it misses an average of four new business opportunities”

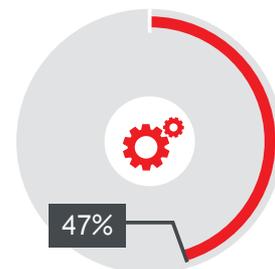
Productivity and collaboration are two words that are synonymous with business success. But how do you achieve them in practice? One key component is investing in smartphone-enabled digital communication channels.

In recent years, the opportunities for implementing real-time communication channels have sky-rocketed with the exponential rise in smartphone capabilities. The smartphone brings us closer together, ensuring information is always at our fingertips. Instant communication and collaboration with colleagues is now taken for granted.

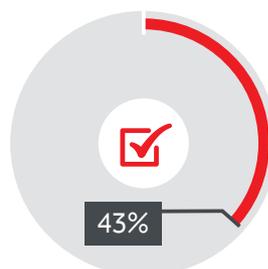
The benefits are vast. Our [‘Stronger Together’](#) Perspective series report found that implementing real-time digital channels into a business delivers remarkable results: communication is improved by 49%, working practices are made 47% more efficient and decision-making is enhanced by 43%.



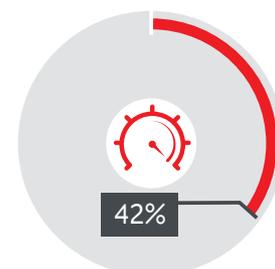
Improved communication



More efficient working practices



Better decision-making



Faster response to public needs

Providing employees with smartphones equipped for real-time communication and collaboration is now a prerequisite for any growing business. Fail to implement them and your business growth will be stunted. Our [recent research](#) has found that, for every working day a UK small business is separated from its smartphone capabilities, it misses an average of four new business opportunities. Sobering stuff.

Are you and your colleagues ‘always on’?



“To adapt to the modern world, we’re looking to make it easier in every way for people to collaborate. We’re investing in next generation communications and collaboration capabilities so that people can collaborate remotely, including across borders in over 200 countries. We’re opening up our networks by investing in core technology, whether products, services or applications. In every single part of our business we’re running collaborative, open business models. Collaboration is our watchword.”

Rupert Pearce, CEO, Inmarsat

‘Leading the Way’
Perspective series report

It’s not just small businesses that benefit from mobilising the workforce. In the public sector, our ‘[Strengthening Communities](#)’ Perspective series report described the fantastic service improvement benefits that Nottingham County Council has experienced since equipping their Adult Social Care frontline staff with high functionality mobile devices.

From accessing emails and calendars on the move, to retrieving critical patient information as and when they need it, Nottinghamshire’s Adult Social Care workers are now able to provide high quality, efficient care to a greater number of people in the community, whilst still achieving significant cost savings for the Council.

Where will we ‘boldly go’ next?

And could another monumental shift in real-time communication be on the horizon? Since the Star Trek ‘holodeck’ first graced TV screens, the idea of hologram technology enabling in-person interaction, even when hundreds or thousands of miles apart, has fascinated society. Now it’s becoming reality.

In the next step up from virtual reality, companies around the world are investing heavily in augmented reality solutions. Whilst tech giant Microsoft is currently exploring a new product called ‘Holo-portation’, the lesser-known Meta is already offering pre-orders of their Meta 2 Development Kit, including “direct hand interaction with holograms” aimed at “the developers and creators, makers and artists who want to change the world”.

As discussed in ‘[Virtual Reality is Hitting the Mainstream](#)’, business applications of augmented reality are creating new worlds of opportunity; from architects planning ambitious new building projects in real-world detail, to estate agents and property developers who can show you around buildings long before completion. So, if you want to take the lead, now’s the time to put your thinking cap on: how could this technology be applied to your business?

“Augmented reality is creating new worlds of opportunities for business”

Attracting the most talented staff

When thinking about business interactions, it's easy to become too customer-focused. In reality, business success depends on much more than just customer engagement. We must never forget who engages the customer in the first place. So selecting the right channels to recruit the best talent is critical. And technology can help to achieve that.

Here also, being mobile and digital first is becoming hugely important. Especially when it comes to recruiting the most recent generation joining the workforce.

In our Perspective series report, '[Millennials, Breathing New Life into the Workforce](#)', we found that millennials are predominantly searching for their next (or in many cases, first) role online, through 'Google' (64%), job engines (57%) and company-specific websites (51%), as well as online job boards and social media platforms.

Millennials turn to online channels to search for jobs



And these sites are not just being accessed via laptops. 54% of the new generation of applicants use mobile devices to conduct their job research. 42% of whom do so on smartphones, and 26% on tablets.

What has become very clear is that, if businesses don't adapt right now to attract the new millennial talent, they will miss out on the elite of a demographic that will soon form the majority of the workforce.



J.P.Morgan
Asset Management

Snapchat & JP Morgan:

Financial giant JP Morgan recently teamed up with Snapchat, the popular multimedia messaging app, to create a recruitment campaign with a difference.

JP Morgan developed a 'geo-filter' for use on the Snapchat app and posted 'live stories' following different students on a University campus, alongside opportunities at JP Morgan. This campaign was rolled out around college campuses up and down the US during peak graduation season.

And Snapchat's plans in the recruitment space don't stop with single collaborations: it is also developing a dedicated app that businesses can use for recruitment. With a monthly audience of over 200 million, 71% of whom are under 35, Snapchat is positioning itself as the perfect platform for recruiting the next generation⁸.

Smartphones are the new careers fairs

If you're not recruiting online with smartphone optimisation, then you're already lagging behind. Recruitment is set to become even more heavily linked with smartphones, as high-profile businesses fully embrace new styles for recruiting the new generation, such as the recent JP Morgan collaboration with Snapchat.

Once recruited, you still need to pay close attention to motivating and retaining your talent, and here again smartphones have a key role to play.

In 'Millennials, Breathing New Life into the Workforce' Perspective series report we established that flexible working and access to the latest technology are critical contributors to employee satisfaction. 54% of millennials actively enjoy working with others via digital collaboration channels, whilst 34% now expect as standard to use advanced technology to communicate remotely with colleagues.

"54% of millennials actively enjoy working with others via digital collaboration channels, whilst 34% now expect as standard to use advanced technology to communicate remotely with colleagues"

WELCOMEBREAK

“The biggest tech investment we’ve made at Welcome Break is a new HR database. I’d describe it as an HR database on steroids. Not only can you do the basics, but it’s also possible to interact with employees. The system is in fact a communication vehicle and we like to think it’s our own internal Facebook.

With this tool, I can pass the compelling vision I have for the business for the next year or next three years, down to every single employee in the business and know whether he or she reads it. The system makes communicating with all employees immediate.”

Rod McKie, CEO Welcome Break

‘Leading the Way’
Perspective series report

Whilst some predict these expectations will lead to the end of the office, perhaps a more likely development – in the short term at least – will be the emergence of the ‘smart office’, created around the core principle of mobility.

What would a smart office look like? It might include smart desks, where employees login to their desk to make it into their personal space, thus enabling hot-desking that best utilises limited space availability, whilst providing employees with personalised, pleasant and above all, fit-for-purpose work spaces when they are in the office.

Furthermore, it’s not as expensive as it first might appear. Think of the efficiencies of scale and usage, with fewer empty desks sitting on expensive office square footage. Indeed, businesses that invest in smart offices should see it pay off. Our ‘[Turning Ambition into Growth](#)’ Perspective series report found that 61% of business leaders believe that using new technology to help employees work how they want to, when they want to, is not only important for employee satisfaction, but also for business growth.

“61% of business leaders believe that using new technology to help employees work how they want to, when they want to, is not only important for employee satisfaction, but also for business growth”

How smartphones are changing the way SMEs work



Phil Lander
Director, Operator Sales & B2B,
Samsung Electronics UK

Vodafone's latest research on how smartphones are fuelling businesses uncovers some fascinating findings. It's incredible to think that 82% of the UK population now owns a smartphone (up 29% over the last four years) and how quickly the smartphone has gone from a nice-to-have to a necessity for many people.

Smartphones have cemented their position in the business world too. The research supports my belief that smartphones are now key to small business owners and employees who want to enjoy more good days at work. They're changing the way we run and grow small businesses in the UK. They've opened up opportunities for SMEs to create exciting customer experiences that can increase sales, boost productivity and recruit top talent.

Enhancing the customer experience

The research reveals that 96% of the internet-enabled population goes online as part of their purchase journey. On top of this, 66% of all e-commerce traffic and 51% of all online purchases are taking place on either a smartphone or tablet.

These stats show just how important it is for businesses to optimise their content and create experiences that delight customers on mobile devices.

Data drives sales via smartphones

The Vodafone report shows that 73% of ambitious SMEs believe that analysing customer data – including real-time location data – is vital for a successful business. Real-time geolocation marketing is one way SMEs can effectively reach engaged smartphone users.

Geolocation marketing uses the smartphone's GPS to locate the user, so you can target them with timely and relevant offers and marketing via a smartphone app. If the user has given the app permission to use their location details, it's an effective way of targeting customers with offers and promotions whenever they enter your store, or even when they visit a competitor's.

“Virtual Reality apps and programs are becoming more popular and easier to use, enabling small businesses to create their own bespoke virtual reality experiences”

Engaging experiences are made for mobile

Smartphone apps are a great way of connecting with customers. Besides encouraging purchases with real-time marketing, you can also use them to reward customer loyalty. Brands like Nando's have given their loyalty cards a digital makeover – rewarding repeat visits by uploading loyalty points straight to the smartphone app. Applications are also often the best way to optimise the customer's mobile experience – they can be used to easily browse and order products, find stores and unlock the latest promotions.

Still, even without a dedicated company app, small businesses can create conversations and showcase products and services through social networks such as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram and Snapchat – which can be accessed any time, any place on a smartphone.

It's an easy win for SMEs – communicate with your customers in a creative way and you can create lots of love for the brand and engagement that's often consumed via their smartphone.

Opening up a new world of experiences

As the report rightly identifies, smartphones are supporting new and exciting marketing methods. Virtual Reality (VR) could be the answer for SMEs looking to lead the way and create memorable customer experiences.

Smartphones can be connected to virtual reality headsets to take creative marketing to new levels: the Irish estate agent chain Sherry FitzGerald can show you around a house that hasn't even been built yet via virtual reality, increasing their sales of off-plan homes; and Audi took customers on the drive of their life, letting them go for a spin in the VR version of their new TT model at their London showroom.

You don't necessarily need a big budget to create something special. VR apps and programs are becoming more popular and easier to use, enabling small businesses to create their own bespoke virtual reality experiences using smartphones and VR headsets. Customers aren't the only ones benefiting either; SMEs can use VR to improve communication between employees by creating virtual meeting rooms that let colleagues interact with each other without being in same room. Virtual interviews can help businesses find the perfect candidates, and VR is increasingly being used to train staff – putting them in a more realistic environment, enabling them to interact with objects, and offering an effective way of learning new skills.

“A UK small business misses an average of four new business opportunities every working day it does not have access to a functioning smartphone”

Boosting productivity

Smartphones are creating more good days for employees too. The report found that by implementing real-time digital channels into a business, communication is improved by 49%, working practices are made 47% more efficient and decision-making is enhanced by 43%. Whether it's communicating with colleagues over mobile messaging services, using VoIP or accessing files and documents on your smartphone via the cloud, smartphones have become an essential communication tool for businesses.

This is underlined by the report's finding that a UK small business misses an average of four new business opportunities every working day it does not have access to a functioning smartphone.

Using smartphones to boost productivity is something that the public sector excels in. Both Surrey Police and West Yorkshire Police gave their officers Samsung Note smartphones so that they could perform a number of everyday tasks while policing their communities without having to return to their stations, saving each officer around two hours per day. By developing bespoke smartphone apps, officers can issue paperless tickets and fixed penalty notices, as well as make database checks and fill in missing person reports.

West Middlesex University Hospital also used smartphones to save time and money by developing a way to detect atrial fibrillation on the Samsung Xcover3 smartphone instead of having to perform expensive heart monitoring tests. The productivity-enhancing opportunities smartphones offer are endless.

Building internal talent

Smartphones empower employees. But they also help to bring the brightest talent into your business.

The Perspective series report, ['Millennials, Breathing New Life into the Workforce'](#) found that the majority of millennials are searching for jobs online, with 64% turning to Google, 57% using job search engines and 51% looking to company-specific websites; 42% of these are using their smartphone to find their next role. This figure is likely to grow too, with an increasing number of employers requesting creative applications through the likes of smartphone-friendly apps such as Snapchat.

As this report shows, smartphones, coupled with a powerful network, are a smart move for SMEs looking to enjoy more good days.

How this small business made smartphones part of the team



Simon Hill
Managing Director,
Assential Clean

Assential Clean is a ventilation installation maintenance and hygiene company. We operate across a huge variety of businesses. From schools and universities to theme parks, wherever there's air movement, you can find us.

As a 24/7 nationwide business, we've integrated smartphones into our business and now couldn't work as efficiently without them.

Smartphones are fundamental to our day to day operations. Without them, we wouldn't be able to communicate. Our engineers work in very isolated locations meaning information wouldn't be able to be relayed back to the office. The use of a smartphone allows them to get back to us in real time to get the work signed off, confidently knowing they've done it correctly.

Constant communication for efficiency gains

Being able to constantly communicate with team members, no matter where they are in the UK, has made it possible to make our business better than ever. The Perspective series report revealed that this isn't an isolated case. The introductions of new technology and digital channels have been shown to improve communications by 49% and decision making by 43%.

Not only that, 61% of business leaders are saying that new technology makes people happier, smarter and enables growth. Because of this, efficiency gets a 47% boost, something we've experienced first-hand.

Smartphones have increased our productivity quite dramatically. We're making an extra two visits per week, per engineer. We've reduced our time on site by 20% and we've reduced travel costs by £20-30k a year.

"Smartphones have increased our productivity quite dramatically. We're making an extra two visits per week, per engineer. We've reduced our time on site by 20% and we've reduced travel costs by £20-30k a year"

“The ability to send an evidential pictures or video straight through to the customer has had an incredible effect. It’s improved our first time resolution by about 90% and dramatically enhanced our customer experience”

Technology upgrades business processes and the customer experience

It shows that the right technology used in the right way can have a transformative effect on every aspect of your business. From the phones you use to communicate with, to networks that run your business - everyone can benefit.

For example, by placing our scheduling system online, our efficiency has improved. If any engineer calls in sick or they’ve got a longer time on site, the system updates in real time and gives an estimated completion time, and reports straight back to the office.

But don’t think that technology upgrades are just about efficiency and profit; customers also get a better service as a result of the improvements behind the scenes, in everything from problem-solving to ordering parts.

Being able to send photos and make video calls has improved our customer interactions. A lot of our work is behind the scenes – often in confined spaces – so the ability to send an evidential picture or video straight through to the customer has had an incredible effect. It’s improved our first time resolution by about 90% and dramatically enhanced our customer experience.

Last but by no means least, the impact on the daily lives of my team has been huge. When people aren’t tied to a single, physical location, it allows them to plan their days better. A smartphone isn’t just the key to unlocking productivity, it’s also the key to achieving a better work/life balance.

Digital workflow has improved, which means that team members can now send the reports offsite, they don’t need to come back to the office. They can get on with their lives.

Top tips

Top tips to unleash the power of the smartphone for your business – boosting productivity, enhancing the customer experience and enticing new talent.

- 1 REVIEW your business's online presence.** Check you are able to convert interest into sales at every touchpoint – especially if your site appears on mobile devices. And it's crucial to get the formats right, with all the correct specifications, especially when re-sizing from online to mobile dimensions. Then analyse your customer data. Ask whether they can they easily find you online? Are you providing the information and tools they need? The more you know, the better you can target and engage your customers – both current and potential.
- 2 INVEST in smartphone-enabled real-time digital communication channels.** Provide employees with smartphones equipped for real-time communication and collaboration. Any business that wants to grow must be 'always on'.
- 3 DELIGHT customers through a great mobile journey that empowers them.** That means informing decisions/purchases with real-time, location-relevant, communications and promotions using appropriate smartphone technologies. Ask yourself how those technologies (for example, virtual and augmented reality) can be beneficially and creatively applied to your business? The better and more memorable the experience, the more likely customers are to promote your brand.
- 4 CREATE conversations and showcase products and services through social networks.** Use Facebook and Twitter, which can be accessed on a smartphone.
- 5 STREAMLINE processes and administration.** Smartphones with task-specific apps can be used to monitor stock levels, triggering automatic replenishment, remotely access information, complete forms, etcetera – all without the need to go back to a desk or office. This saves time and money while boosting productivity.
- 6 ATTRACT the most talented staff.** For millennials, smartphones are the new careers fairs. Choose the right channels such as LinkedIn and job search engines to recruit the very best the generation has to offer. These are the people who are going to engage your customers. And when talking to them, make sure your content is relevant and tailored to the social platform you are using. One size does not fit all.
- 7 EMPOWER employees to work how and when they want to.** Using new technology to help them work flexibly is not only good for morale and business growth, but comes with the bonus of reducing fixed office costs. Think 'smart' office and reap the rewards of using square footage more efficiently.

Final thoughts

Why not use our [Ready Business Indicator](#) to put your organisation's strengths and weaknesses under the microscope, to reveal where you are today – and how well prepared you are for the digital tomorrow.

Throughout the Perspective series we've learnt a great deal about how smartphones are changing the world of work.

1 Customers are likely to be highly mobile and will expect to engage with your business on their terms. The odds are that they want to:

- Have the option to explore, and buy, your products and services via their smartphone
- Have the convenience of an app and self-service tools where relevant
- Engage with customers and your staff online, such as through user groups
- See technology augmenting the physical experience

As these expectations become the norm, businesses in all sectors, no matter how 'traditional' will need to adapt or be left behind. [What's your strategy?](#)

2 Smartphones and mobility in general can boost your business's productivity.

If used to their full potential, you'll see improved communication, more efficient working practices and enhanced decision-making.

Remote working also presents you with an opportunity to reduce infrastructure costs whilst improving collaboration and employee motivation. [Is it time for your business to embrace new ways of working?](#)

3 The role of the smartphone in recruiting and retaining talent has become evident.

Millennials, the future of your workforce, find and engage with employers who are digitally prominent and smartphone savvy. **Are you one of them?**

Once in the workforce, they expect to have access to the latest technology so they can collaborate and work flexibly. After all, these are digital natives who have become reliant on tools like these to function effectively. [Are you enabling digital natives to deliver their best for you?](#)

In short, is your business ready for anything?

Methodology

About the Vodafone Perspective series

The Perspective series is designed to help businesses and public sector organisations find better ways of working. Researched independently, the series explores the biggest challenges facing UK Plc and Government today and provides new perspectives from independent thought leaders.

There are currently eleven other reports in the Perspective series:

- What if?... exploring attitudes to risk
- Great expectations in hard times. Citizen service beyond today
- Have a nice day. Customer service beyond today
- Exploring the shift in employee expectation
- The perfect storm. The role of 4G in the 'age of me'
- The new IT crowd. The role of the IT Director in simplifying complexity
- The fluid society. Working without boundaries
- Connected Nation. A digital Government for everyone
- Connected Nation. The digital impact on buying behaviour
- Unleashing the Mega Trends
- Leading the way – Exploring modern CEO leadership
- Millennials breathing new life into the workforce - Implications for the work place
- Strengthening Communities - How technology is raising service quality and building public trust

The Perspective series gives you fresh insight into the world of work. Find this latest report at www.yourreadybusiness.co.uk/perspective and for other resources and insights www.vodafone.co.uk/perspective

This report is based on the findings from five Perspective series reports and secondary research using third party sources as well as articles on Vodafone's thought leadership website Your Ready Business. Included in the report are statistics from the following Perspective series reports; Connected Nation, Turning Ambition Into Growth, Stronger Together: Strengthening Communities, Millennials, Breathing Life into the Workforce and Survival and Growth (coming soon).

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The Perspective series gives you fresh insight into the world of work. Find the latest reports including 'How to unleash the full power of the smartphone', at www.yourreadybusiness.co.uk/author/perspectives/ and for other resources and insights visit www.vodafone.co.uk/perspective

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