

More than 80 per cent of Australian government agencies believe mobility can improve their efficiency, yet almost half have no idea what it will cost, according to new research.

The 2013 Government Mobility Survey, based on interviews with senior managers across federal, state and local governments, found strong enthusiasm for the potential of mobile devices and services. Of those questioned, 81.8 per cent said they would "improve processes and deliver efficiencies".

However 47 per cent of respondents admitted they didn't know how much budget to allocate for mobility projects. A further 31 per cent said they had "a pretty good idea" while 15 per cent felt they had "formulated an estimate". Only 7 per cent of respondents were confident they knew precisely how much money they would need to spend on their project.

The survey, conducted by Tech Research Asia on behalf of BlinkMobile Interactive, offers fresh insight into the way mobility is being used within the public sector and how this usage is likely to expand during the next two years.

Darren Besgrove, Director and COO, BlinkMobile Interactive, said, "It is interesting to see how quickly demand for mobility solutions is growing within all levels of government. There is clearly a broad understanding of the benefits it can deliver.

"Yet the research shows there remains work to be done in the formulation of strategies, the choice of technology and accurate budgets. This challenge is likely to stem from agencies recently appreciating the need to take an agency wide approach to mobility over the traditional 'point solution' or project-by-project approach."

The survey found most agencies intend to steer away from the prospect of developing mobility solutions in-house with only 25 per cent of respondents nominating this path in their future strategies. The remainder plan to either use existing vendor mobility solutions (38 per cent) or engage a specialist organisation to design and implement a solution (37 per cent). The study also revealed that senior business managers are more likely to be the driver of mobility strategies rather than the IT department itself.

"This shows the majority of government agencies recognise they don't have all the required skills in-house to undertake a successful mobility project," said Besgrove. "With more devices and more capabilities within those devices, plus open web services evolving so quickly, they see merit in making use of the experience and knowledge of an external provider to get the very best result for their users, be they citizens or internal staff. "

Asked to nominate their key priorities for agency-wide mobility projects, 70 per cent of respondents identified integration with existing systems and services as being either "extremely" or "very" important. This was followed by support for future technologies (59 per cent) and the ability to support most or all of a department's needs (55 per cent).

When it comes to the specific functions within their agency that would benefit most from mobility, more than half of respondents (51 per cent) nominated field data collection and inspections / reporting as being either "extremely" or "very" important. Email was placed in the same category by 50 per cent, followed by work orders and asset management (36 per cent).

"These priorities align with those of many private-sector organisations," said Besgrove. "The key benefit of mobility is that it can provide access to centrally held applications and data. This is particularly powerful for field workforces who need fast, reliable access regardless of where they happen to be."

Asset management, however, is a key candidate for mobility and many organisations have not yet fully realised the advantages it can bring in terms of time savings, efficiency and actual asset and lifecycle management.

On the device front, the survey found Apple's iPad was the most supported device within government agencies (nominated by 73.13 per cent of respondents). This was followed by the iPhone (67.16 per cent), Android devices (40.30 per cent) and BlackBerry handsets (33.58 per cent).

Tim Dillon, Director of Tech Research Asia, said, "The data clearly highlights the desire of government agencies to incorporate mobility into their business operations to provide better services to both employees and constituents. It's pleasing to see the mobility discussion change focus from a preoccupation with 'which device are you using?' to actual outcomes around productivity and engagement."

"IT managers within government agencies are dealing with a diverse range of client devices," added Besgrove. "For an agency-wide mobility project to succeed, applications must be able to run across them all. Careful selection of a robust application management and deployment structure is therefore vital as is the requirement to deliver users activity-based applications specific to their job roles and daily tasks. This ensures mobility projects have the highest possible success with greater user adoption and less training and support costs."

The complete 20 page report by Tech Research Asia into Australian Government Mobility Trends and Issues can be downloaded from the BlinkMobile website: <http://www.blinkmobile.com.au>

#### About BlinkMobile Interactive

BlinkMobile Interactive is an Australian-headquartered Mobile Enterprise Application Platform (MEAP) provider whose robust global deployment capabilities combined with a highly innovative architecture enables enterprise and government organisations to rapidly and reliably build, deploy and manage many types of mobile applications across the widest range of devices and operating systems.

The BlinkMobile Platform is a hosted, cost-effective, single development and management environment that speeds development time by offering advanced features as pre-built modules, while simplifying the integration of both internal and customer-facing services to deliver highly customised, powerful and intuitive, activity-based apps for any number of users.

BlinkMobile provides enterprise mobility solutions to local, state and federal government department as well as to airport, construction, logistics, education, healthcare and finance organisations. These customers are supported through a range of partners large and small who bring their own industry knowledge and skills to our mobility platform.