



Five Steps to Effective Management of Mobile Usage

Utelize Mobile Best Practice Guide

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Managed Mobile for Business

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Introduction

Mobile networks, devices and budgets have always been challenging for businesses to control and support. Mobile devices are with their users all of the time, they support both business and personal life through applications and the internet; and commonly they sit outside of secure, “ring-fenced” corporate IT networks. To compound matters further, they’re more prone to loss and damage than all other forms of IT hardware and they are easy to resell. Managing mobile IT is a complex business.

Unlike most IT expenditure, mobile costs are also highly sensitive to end user behaviour. Controlling that behaviour whilst also ensuring employees remain productive is both difficult to achieve and resource intensive. The way we use our mobile phones also varies dramatically from user to user, and with the advent of smartphones it’s extremely difficult to draw clear boundaries between personal and business use. The arrival of 5G services in 2019/20 will only serve to increase this challenge, forcing businesses to work hard to find the right balance between user productivity and usage controls. Smartphones also bring more technical complexity, and with this, new security and rapidly increasing support challenges – none of which are going to disappear anytime soon.

At Utelize, we are seeing a convergence of four significant mobile challenges that are already having a growing impact on mid-market and enterprise businesses. Challenges that are set to dramatically increase mobile administration and costs for businesses that fail to implement a proactive and strategic approach to mobile network, device and security management:

Challenge 1: Increasing mobile device costs - that can no longer be subsidised by network “tech funds”

Challenge 2: Increasing mobile data consumption - driving greater management challenges and increased airtime costs with more frequent “bill shock” both domestically and abroad

Challenge 3: BYOD programs failing to deliver expected savings – driven by higher IT support costs coupled with lower BYOD adoption rates and device purchase savings than expected

Challenge 4: Increasing mobile security, data leakage, GDPR and compliance risks - leading to increased pressure to issue corporate devices, as well as increased security and support costs, especially in regulated markets and professional services firms

At Utelize our Managed Mobile Services are built on our tried and tested mobile management methodology that spans mobile network, device administration and mobile security. We openly share our methodology in our best practice guides, where we offer a detailed look at the causes and impact of these converging challenges on mobile IT administration and budgets. In our plain-speaking guides, you’ll also find clear insights and practical approaches that your business can implement today to regain control and release significant budget that you can reinvest in mobile working and security.

In this guide we look at the challenges faced by businesses when managing and controlling mobile usage, specifically focusing on mobile data consumption - one of the main drivers behind increasing mobile costs.

We hope that you find this guide of interest and value with your own mobile strategy and management. Follow us on LinkedIn or Twitter or visit our website for more best practice guides and free resources on managing mobile services, security and devices.

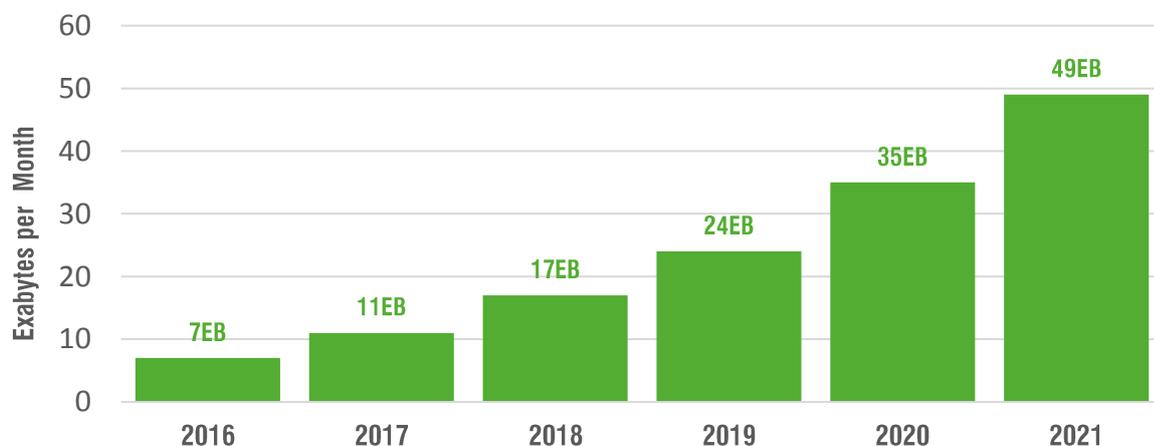
What is Exponential Mobile Data Growth?

If you consider your own internet usage, you'll recognise that internet and data usage is increasing dramatically. And with each year, mobile data accounts for an ever-growing share of all internet traffic. This growth in mobile data consumption is also true in the workplace and is set to grow exponentially as we see faster 5G networks rolled out and businesses migrate to a mobile first based on cloud services and video-based communications.

Cisco estimates that mobile data usage is likely to increase seven-fold between 2016 and 2021, and this increase in mobile data is going to have a dramatic impact on your mobile phone budget, unless you put in place a suitable strategy, policy management tools and importantly a mobile contract capable of addressing it.

Global Mobile Data Traffic Growth / Top-Line

Global Mobile Data Traffic will increase 7-fold between 2016-2021



Source: Cisco VNI Global Mobile Data Traffic Forecast, 2016 2021

An Exabyte is 1 Billion GB and sounds like a big number, however today it's the equivalent of downloading 1 full length movie for every human on the planet per year – it's therefore easy to see how this number will be dwarfed in years to come when mobile networks replace the requirement for fixed line broadband for most users.

Effectively Managing Mobile Usage

To start effectively addressing user behaviour and the associated excess costs, businesses need to understand the most common forms of mobile overspending and also create and publish a suitable plan of action. At Utelize, we see several common areas of overspending on mobile usage, most of which can be addressed even if your business is in contract.

Step 1: Focus on flexibility in mobile contracts rather than “tech funds”

Flexibility means the ability to adapt your mobile contract and tariffs during the term of the agreement, or to be able to terminate individual connections without incurring excess charges or termination penalties. Without this flexibility it's easy to inadvertently lock yourself into commercial terms and spend commitments that will create ever greater levels of overspending as data usage increases. This problem is only set to increase - driven by faster networks, adoption of cloud services, greater use of tethering, along with exponential increases in video and social media.

Many businesses fail to look forward when they negotiate their mobile contracts and underestimate the impact of mobile data growth. It's only during the contract that they typically start to incur significant and unplanned costs as their data

allowances are regularly exceeded, however often there are no simple mechanisms to bring this spend under control. Having clear visibility of data costs and the ability to flex allowances up (or down), along with having in-month alerting and reporting will help to control the impact of increasing data costs.

As part of negotiating a flexible mobile contract, we strongly recommend removing network “tech funds”. Tech funds look great on paper; however, they bring with them a wide range of inflexible contract commitments that typically lead to significant long-term overspending. Please see our mobile best practice guides on “**Breaking the habit of mobile tech funds**” and “**Negotiating the right fit mobile contract for your business**” for more detailed advice on negotiating the right mobile contract for your business.

Step 2: Implement a pragmatic mobile data usage policy and user reporting

Educating users on what is and is not acceptable usage will become more and more important as mobile data usage continues to increase. Mobile networks are often less than proactive in helping businesses to control mobile usage, and even though they can easily see in real time when users are consuming vast amounts of data, they rarely step in to alert businesses to this, unless specific bars have been set, or there is a credit risk with the customer.

Ideally to help control and manage data usage you’ll want to ensure that your mobile provider is able to offer “in-month” usage reporting, and they are able to provide alerts for exceptional usage, both in the UK and abroad. With ever faster data speeds enabling high bandwidth tethering, video and streaming, usage can quickly exceed allowances in month, especially where users have individual allowances. This can lead to substantial excess charges, which are normally charged at between £10 and £20 per GB for domestic data, and with high volume users now regularly exceeding 10GB per month, these costs can quickly add up.

Importantly, where your business has a shared data allowance, the consumption of a relatively small number of users can quickly lead to the shared data pool being exceeded. This can create a range of knock on cost and administration challenges, as suddenly all users, including those who have not used their allowances start to receive excess data charges from the point that the shared data pool is exceeded. In businesses where mobile charges are rebilled to cost centres, this can create unwanted internal recharge challenges.

Whilst it may be possible to increase your data pool or allowances mid-month, most mobile networks only apply these increases on a pro rata basis; or can even take several weeks to implement changes. This means that if you are half way through the month, and you may need to upgrade by 100GB to cover the expected excess data, you’ll only actually receive the pro-rata 50GB if the upgrade takes effect from the middle of the month. So, you’ll either need to upgrade by 200GB to cover the predicted 100GB over-usage or pay excess data charges anyway.

Some mobile networks allow upgrades, but they only become effective from the start of the next billing cycle, which means there is little that can be done to react to in month excess usage. Finally, once you’ve upgraded however, the networks often won’t let you reduce the allowance again – locking in that new data cost for the remaining term of the agreement, so it’s important to establish the exact terms before you lock in higher data allowances, that may be addressing some exceptional individual usage.

To effectively control mobile data consumption, we recommend implementing a programme to deliver continuous user and business awareness of both usage and mobile usage policies by implementing the following activities and services:

- **Mobile User Statements** – Most businesses don’t normally provide users with visibility of their actual usage and costs – do you? As a result, even unintentional usage can go unresolved for months or even years, as users simply don’t realise they are generating excessive mobile costs. Providing users with monthly visibility of their

usage and costs can help to reinforce your mobile usage policy. If possible, show the user how they compare to the “average user” or the “fair usage policy” each month.

Ideally, these reports should be “pushed” to users in a clear to read summary report, with the option for the user to log in to a portal to see more detail. Monthly reporting is also an excellent way to remind users of best practices to reduce mobile data usage and costs; as well as reminding them of support numbers and other mobile updates.

At Utelize we create tailored “fair usage” policy rules that can be applied to users, and then summarise their performance against those policies in a simple to read monthly statement:




MOBILE POLICY SUMMARY: 07789 654321

<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;"> £260.81 ✗ </div> <p style="color: red; font-weight: bold; margin-top: 5px;">OVERALL MOBILE EXPENDITURE POLICY</p> <p style="font-size: 10px;">Overall spend on your connection should not exceed £50 per month. The value shown is the total cost including line rental.</p>	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;"> 2.43GB ✗ </div> <p style="color: red; font-weight: bold; margin-top: 5px;">UK/EU MOBILE DATA - FAIR USAGE POLICY</p> <p style="font-size: 10px;">Users should aim to restrict combined mobile data usage in the UK / EU to no more than 2GB per month.</p>	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;"> 2.15GB ✗ </div> <p style="color: red; font-weight: bold; margin-top: 5px;">NON EU ROAMED MOBILE DATA - FAIR USAGE POLICY</p> <p style="font-size: 10px;">Users should aim to restrict mobile data usage outside of the UK / EU to no more than 250MB or £100 in total per month.</p>
<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;"> £44.00 ✗ </div> <p style="color: red; font-weight: bold; margin-top: 5px;">NON EU ROAMED CALLS - FAIR USAGE POLICY</p> <p style="font-size: 10px;">Users should aim to restrict roamed voice calls outside of the UK / EU to no more than 50 mins or £20 in total per month.</p>	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;"> --- ✓ </div> <p style="color: green; font-weight: bold; margin-top: 5px;">PREMIUM CONTENT & MOBILE PAYMENTS POLICY</p> <p style="font-size: 10px;">Users are not permitted to make premium rate calls, mobile payments or use premium rate messaging services.</p>	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;"> £1.41 ✓ </div> <p style="color: green; font-weight: bold; margin-top: 5px;">UK TO INTERNATIONAL CALLING POLICY</p> <p style="font-size: 10px;">Users should aim to restrict UK to International voice calls to no more than 50 mins or £20 in total per month.</p>
<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;"> £4.20 ✓ </div> <p style="color: green; font-weight: bold; margin-top: 5px;">NUMBERS COMMENCING 084/087 CALLING POLICY</p> <p style="font-size: 10px;">Users should aim to restrict calls to 084 or 087 numbers to no more than 50 mins or £20 in total per month.</p>	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;"> 22 MSGS ✓ </div> <p style="color: green; font-weight: bold; margin-top: 5px;">UK SMS MESSAGING - FAIR USAGE POLICY</p> <p style="font-size: 10px;">Users should aim to restrict SMS usage to no more than 100 messages in total per month.</p>	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;"> 10 CALLS ✗ </div> <p style="color: red; font-weight: bold; margin-top: 5px;">LONG DURATION CALLS POLICY</p> <p style="font-size: 10px;">Users should aim to restrict individual mobile calls to no more than 60 mins in duration.</p>
<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;"> --- ✓ </div> <p style="color: green; font-weight: bold; margin-top: 5px;">GROUP CONFERENCE NUMBER POLICY</p> <p style="font-size: 10px;">Users should no longer call our conference number on numbers commencing 084 or 087 and should instead call 0800 XXXXXX.</p>		

Cost Centre and Manager Reports – Managers who know the individuals in their department or cost centre are often best placed to reinforce messages and to sense check why excess usage is occurring. We therefore recommend providing managers with a summary level view of usage and costs across their users. This information needs to be detailed enough to present a clear picture of usage and adherence to fair usage policies, however it should not contain detailed usage records or other “personal” data. This allows exceptional usage to be identified and addressed on an ongoing basis, without the need for vast levels of mobile billing data to be distributed across the business.

For legitimate usage, tariffs or services can then be tailored to better meet the user’s needs, whilst inappropriate usage can be stopped at source. Where “excess usage” needs to be explored in more detail, then we recommend providing managers with the facility to request an “itemised” report, subject to an associated approval process, in conjunction with HR.

At Utelize we create tailored cost centre manager’s report that shows how each user is adhering to the “fair usage” policy rules in a simple to read monthly statement:

COST CENTRE: IS INTERNAL

USER	COST CENTRE	CONNECTION	EXPENDITURE	UK/EU DATA	NON EU DATA	NON EU CALLS	PREMIUM	INT'L CALLS	NON GEO CALLS	M-PAYMENTS	PERSONAL USAGE	DISCONTINUED	LONG DUR CALLS	COMPLIANCE	COST
Sample User 1	10100	07999123456	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	£ 23.50
Sample User 1	10100	07999123457	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	£ 32.50
Sample User 2	10100	07999123458	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	👎	👍	👍	👍	👍	👎	£ 41.00
Sample User 3	10100	07999123459	👎	👎	👍	👍	👎	👍	👍	👍	👎	👍	👎	👎	£ 235.70
Sample User 3	10100	07999123460	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	£ 12.00
Sample User 4	10100	07999123461	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	£ 23.50
Sample User 4	10100	07999123462	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	£ 23.50
Sample User 4	10100	07999123463	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	£ 12.00
Sample User 5	10200	07999123464	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	👎	👍	👍	👎	👍	👎	£ 38.75
Sample User 6	10200	07999123465	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	£ 23.50
Sample User 7	10200	07999123466	👎	👍	👍	👍	👎	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	👎	£ 69.70
Sample User 8	10200	07999123467	👎	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	👎	£ 102.50
Sample User 9	10300	07999123468	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	£ 23.50
Sample User 10	10300	07999123469	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	👎	👍	👍	👍	👍	👎	£ 42.75
Sample User 11	10300	07999123470	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	👎	👎	£ 23.50
Sample User 11	10300	07999123471	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	👎	👎	👎	£ 24.75
Sample User 12	10300	07999123472	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	£ 23.50
Totals															£ 776.15

In Month Alerting – With the potential for significant “bill shock” arising from both UK and roaming data usage, it is essential that costs and usage are tracked during the month wherever possible. Where available, agree suitable policy rules on data usage with your mobile provider and use SMS or email alerting when these are exceeded. In month alerts to both the user and the IT service desk can prevent a relatively small problem turning into major bill shock.

At Utelize, we are seeing growing instances of users generating 100GB or more of data per month – the equivalent to about 100 hours of movie downloads; most of which could be addressed through in month usage monitoring and alerting.

- **Real Time Management** – For businesses that are uncomfortable with putting in place automatic barring or data caps, or for those that are regularly experiencing “bill shock” and excess data charges then we recommend considering real time mobile data management. At Utelize, we work with specialist service providers like **Wandera**, to achieve this real-time control and protection for our customers.

Step 3: Implement ongoing call usage management and monitoring

Whilst mobile data usage continues to drive the highest levels of overspending for businesses, more traditional voice and SMS services can still create significant costs. With mobile voice traffic, businesses have until recently had limited options outside of barring calls or negotiating discounts. With the advent of Unified Communications (UC) services and Mobile VoIP (Voice over IP), that has now changed.

VoIP and UC services allow business users to use their mobile devices as an extension of the business telephone system using a Wi-Fi connection (both when roaming or at home). Unlike mobile network “Wi-Fi calling”, where calls are still charged at the tariff set by the mobile network, UC calls are chargeable as if they originated from the fixed line telephone system, and as a result they can offer significant costs savings.

The most common mobile voice charges that can be addressed by policy and new technologies like mobile VoIP include:

- **Roaming Voice** – As mobile networks are forced to provide EU roaming as part of their domestic tariffs, they are unsurprisingly seeking to maximise revenues in less regulated areas. As a result, the costs for calls made outside of the EU and inclusive “day pass” roaming countries, should be closely monitored.
- **UK to International Calling** – International calls from mobiles can often be extremely expensive, whereas the equivalent cost from a UC service can be a tiny fraction of this cost.
- **Calls to Non-Geographic Service Numbers & Conference Numbers** – Mobile networks have taken advantage of recent changes introduced by Ofcom that were intended to regulate pricing for calls to Service Numbers. Whilst the regulator achieved greater clarity on pricing for calls to numbers starting 084 and 087, they failed to anticipate that the mobile networks would simply apply large “access charges” to these calls.

The impact is that calls to these types of numbers which used to cost a few pence per minute, now commonly cost up to 50p/minute. Many businesses still use non-geographic numbers for internal calls (e.g. calls to IT helpdesk), and inadvertently these can be generating large excess costs. Migrating to 03 or geographic numbers can substantially reduce these costs.

Other areas that can be controlled through more traditional mobile usage management include:

- **Premium SMS** – (Charity Giving & Content Purchases) – these types of short dial SMS services allow third parties to charge your mobile account for their services. What many users do not realise however is that by texting these numbers they are often inadvertently entering into a contract for that service provider to send the user content on a regular basis (each time at a charge). These services can only be stopped by sending “STOP” to the number or by contacting the third party directly. It is typically not possible to bar these calls on the network.

- **Calls to Audio Conference** – many businesses make significant volumes of calls to their own business audio conferencing services, however selecting the right access number when calling these services can make a significant difference to the overall cost. Whilst calling a toll-free (0800) from a UK mobile is free of charge from the mobile, the audio conference bridge charge will often be significantly higher than the standard bridge charge. Businesses therefore need to analyse the optimum access and bridge costs to establish the right access number for mobile users, which may be a different number than the optimum one when calling from a fixed line. Under no circumstances should your users be provided with access numbers that start 084 or 087 for conferencing as these can cost up to 50p per minute from mobiles.
- **Calls to Own Landlines** – several mobile networks offer discounts on frequently dialled landline numbers; however, businesses don't regularly take advantage of these discounts, or fail to review changes to frequently dialled numbers over time. When combined with optimising calls to Audio Conferencing, it may be possible to include the audio bridge number in the discounted numbers, to further reduce costs.

Step 4: Clean up your inventory & remove inactive services

Building and maintaining an accurate mobile connection and device inventory is an essential aspect of long term mobile management, providing clarity on both devices and user details. This task has been made more manageable with the wider adoption of Mobile Device Management software, which can remotely report on device details, however MDM is often not applied to all devices and connections.

By combining this inventory information with usage information, it's possible to quickly identify inactive services, where businesses are paying for connections and bolt on services that are no longer required. The use of mobile broadband connections (MBB) is one of the most common areas of overspending. The use of MBB connections is declining as the use of tethering and secure Wi-Fi increases, along with connections that remain after users leave the business. So regularly reviewing connection usage is an important step in keeping costs under control.

Importantly we recommend that businesses link their mobile inventory to their HR employee data. In many cases we have completed audits for customers that have identified inactive connections that were assigned to employees who have long left the business, however more seriously we regularly identify connections that are generating extreme costs that are registered against ex-employees, however the business no longer knows whether the connection is in the business or has been sold or passed on to a third party. In the most extreme cases, mobile broadband connections have been identified as being used by unknown parties in other countries, racking up vast excess and unrecoverable costs.

Step 5: Simplify mobile tariff “bolt-on” management

Managing roaming and international user bolt-ons can be a resource intensive and challenging activity. The biggest challenge is that bolt-on's typically require businesses to try and predict in advance what levels of usage will be incurred. This commonly leads to two forms of overspending, either from advanced purchasing of too much data or conversely from excess charges from underestimating data usage. Often businesses simply opt to permanently apply expensive bolt-ons for regular travellers, however it's common to find that these bolt-ons are not cancelled when they are no longer needed.

Wherever possible try to negotiate bolt-ons that are automatically applied when there is usage; but are not charged in months where there is no usage. This approach will create an optimised cost, without the need for IT teams to constantly manage bolt-ons and associated billing administration. Alternatively consider shared pools of minutes and data for elements like international calling or roaming usage, which apply across all users and remove the need to manage bolt on tariffs.

Mobile savings are just waiting to be uncovered in your business.

Whilst most businesses look externally to their mobile suppliers to achieve cost reduction in the form of reduced tariffs, the reality is that most businesses already have significant hidden overspending on mobile usage. It's not uncommon to find between 5 and 15% of business mobile connections that are inactive, and for businesses to be able to reduce costs by up to 20% by implementing an effective mobile usage management program.

For more information and guidance on the many ways that your business can reduce mobile costs and free up budget and IT resource for more strategic work, then download our range of Mobile Best Practice Guides, or get in touch to arrange a discovery meeting, and challenge Utelize to demonstrate how we can help.

Other Mobile Best Practice Guides from Utelize

-  [Negotiating the right fit" mobile contract for your business](#)
-  [Breaking the mobile "tech fund" habit](#)
-  [Rethinking mobile device purchasing and financing](#)
-  [Implementing a "lifecycle" approach to managing mobile devices](#)
-  [Planning BYOD programs beyond device security](#)
-  [An introduction to Mobile Device Management \(MDM\) & security](#)

Utelize – Managed Mobile for Business

At Utelize we specialise in providing managed mobile services that enable our customers to gain total control of their mobile airtime, devices and security; helping them to:

- Streamline the administration of mobile airtime and devices
- Reduce mobile network and device charges
- Free up IT resources for more strategic projects
- Cost effectively finance mobile devices
- Secure mobile devices and data
- Manage in-life device repairs and end of life trade-in and device recycling
- Control mobile data usage and roaming charges
- Implement effective mobile usage policy management
- Evaluate which mobile telecoms technologies and services can best support their business needs

To arrange a no obligation meeting and mobile health check, get in touch ...

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