

special advertising section

Johan de Villiers, Director,  
Enterprise Connection.



# Putting “ability” into Mobility Solutions

Enterprise Connection spotted the mobility market gap and has come up with an offering that has some large corporates rushing to accept.

**E**nterprise Connection has taken the mobility bull by the horns in a way that will allow executives and sales teams to access e-mail, applications and other services through their existing notebook or PDA, utilising GSM cell phones, while keeping costs under control.

The combined benefits of the IT revolution and cell phone services have been readily apparent for more than ten years. However, cost implications, a lack of robustness in the technology and security issues have been difficult to overcome. Furthermore, companies and other large organisations have been unwilling to replace legacy systems that contain a huge store of information – not to mention retraining workforces.

Company executives, sales teams and technical force operators have all been calling for a true mobility solution that allows them to connect, from almost anywhere, to head offices, clients and business partners at the touch of a button.

Development of such a facility has been hampered by hassle factors like having to connect notebook computers to modems and power sources, finding appropriate telecoms connections, and the high costs of hotel phone calls. The alternative of using Internet cafés or airport and hotel business facilities carry concerns related to both costs and security, with alternative public service e-mail addresses often having to be used.

Enterprise Connection director Johan de Villiers observes: “There was a trend for companies to buy a ‘sexy solution’ to this problem, install it and then try to figure out how it worked. This led to a lot of frustration and disillusionment.”

De Villiers says many telecoms operators have realised the mobile market is a means by which they can increase their own revenues, although the solutions offered do not help the end user contain costs – rather the opposite.

#### **KEEPING THEM ON THE LINE**

“Most solutions are geared to keeping the end user on the line for as long as possible so that his charges are higher, utilising GPRS for example. Very few, if any, have explored solutions that con-



Mncedisi Mayekiso,  
Director, Enterprise  
Connection.

tain connection costs,” he says.

Security has also been of major concern as there has been almost no means of ensuring data on a stolen or lost laptop computer or other portable device doesn’t compromise company sensitive information. There is also the fear that, if a device is lost or stolen, unauthorised entry can be gained into a company’s network by a third party.

Nevertheless, demand for mobility is on the increase and international research organisations indicate it is among the IT sector’s most pressing issues. The need for true enterprise connectivity allowing a company to use distributed architecture-type information technology to empower its workforce just keeps growing. Studies show that any modern organisation must heed the power of enterprise networking if it is to survive and thrive in the coming years.

The realisation has dawned that true mobile applications extend a company’s network, so that it is accessible from almost

anywhere and is able to reach employees irrespective of their physical locations.

“Much hype has accompanied the release of various bits of new technology that go some way towards meeting these needs. However, while some address some of the needs, few products meet all the requirements of mobility and cost containment,” says Mncedisi Mayekiso, Director, Enterprise Connection.

Wi-Fi hotspots have sprung up at nearly all leading hotels and airports, but costs of this application can be extremely high – with fees in the region of R70 per hour. Furthermore, such technologies require specific devices or add-ons that serve to complicate the issue rather than make it simpler. And the user only has connectivity



Bradley Hopkinson, PSG  
Country Manager, HP  
South Africa.



on-demand accessibility, cost, security and the need to preserve legacy systems.

“We knew from almost a year ago that mobility would be the ‘Next Big Thing’ and looked for a real solution that would meet the needs of the market. It had to be able to give messaging access from anywhere, whether in a hotel, airport or taxi, and it had to be integrated with existing Microsoft platforms in order to protect legacy investments,” De Villiers says.

The solution also had to be something that appealed to more than just the IT managers of a corporation and allowed offline access to all staff designated to use it.

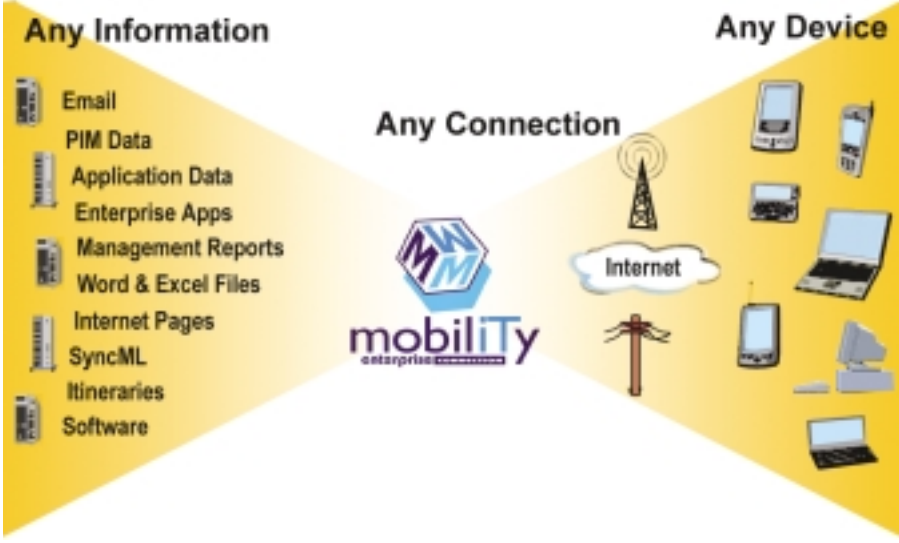
“It had to be a ‘thin-client’ type of solution that allowed the downloading of e-mail within as little as two minutes on a minimum 9 600-baud connection,” Paul Moses, MD of Enterprise Connection explains.

Enterprise Connection’s “mobility” was unveiled to the market about a month ago – with the express purpose of meeting the cost/performance challenge posed by the market.

**BLUE CHIP COMPANIES SIGN UP**

The service will allow connectivity anywhere, anytime, with absolutely no need for modems, telephone lines or adapters. It will work with any current Microsoft Exchange Server or Microsoft Outlook Client . Blue chip companies such as HP South Africa have already standardised their mobile executives on Enterprise Connection’s Mobile Solution, as have some of the bigger life insurance companies and auditing firms.

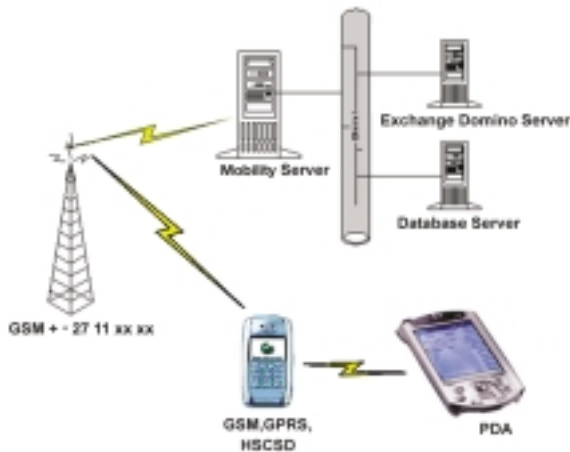
“Connectivity is achieved by using an existing GSM cell phone as a remote modem, enabling full connectivity to an office network in any country that supports this cellular protocol. GSM may be dual



within the radius of the “cloud” or within the reception range of wi-fi transmitters.

Cell phone networks, in particular GSM, have thus far been the most pervasive new communications protocol – suggesting the way forward. Almost every country in the world has at least

one cell phone operator.  
**ENTERPRISE CONNECTION RECOGNISED DEMANDS**  
About nine months ago, Enterprise Connection recognised the compelling market gap for true wireless mobility that would meet all the requirements of



band or tri-band enabled and the Mobile Solution will operate on GSM, GPRS (general packet radio switching) or the new HSCSD (high speed circuit switching data, from cellular phone provider MTN). The actual connection between the cell phone and the remote device (notebook, laptop or PDA) may be infrared, Bluetooth or USB,” says Bradley Hopkinson, PSG Country Manager, HP South Africa.

However, Enterprise Connection’s Mobile Solution will work effortlessly on the standard 9 600-baud connection found on a normal cell phone and therefore HSCSD or GPRS do not necessarily have to be activated.

**MOBILE SOLUTION WITH E-MAIL ACCELERATION**

The reason for this is that Mobile Solution offers e-mail acceleration, which means that connection times are kept to a minimum and synchronisation may be achieved in as little as two or three minutes at any given time. This may lead to a direct reduction of up to 90 percent of mobile communication charges for connections both locally and abroad. Full management support is built into the software and, for the first time, a remote user can control the speed of the dialled-up download.

Control of the download is enabled through the use of a filter that allows subjective selection of maximum e-mail size; maximum accepted attachment size, or even predetermined acceptable file-types for download. By being able to just read the headers, for example, one can effectively skip or discard unwanted e-mails and get straight to the important ones. Previously users would have to wait for all of attachments to download,



Paul Moses,  
Managing Director,  
Enterprise  
Connection.

adding to costs and frustration.

“Every time a connection is made, the device is synchronised with the latest downloads and the system can do incremental backups,” says De Villiers. “This ensures the integrity of commercially sensitive information and the whole device can be ‘ghosted’ so that the settings can be recaptured by the end user should anything happen to it.”

The mobile solution will interact with all existing hardware, notebooks, touch tablets and PDAs, ensuring the continuation of legacy systems. This results in protection of existing investments and means companies can still use legacy technology while receiving the benefit of a measurable return on investment.

Enterprise Connection’s Mobility software is approved to run on Microsoft Windows XP, 2000, NT, 2003 as well as on PDA operating systems such as PocketPC, Windows CE or Palm O/S.

**PROTECTION FOR LEGACY INVESTMENTS**

There is no need to acquire any additional hardware when installing Mobile Solution, as it will run on any existing RAS server,

which can be reconfigured. If a remote server is required, the minimum requirement is a desktop with Intel Pentium 3 (512MB) with a minimum single V.90 or 56 kb modem connected, although this will depend on the number of users.

The mobile solution offering includes modules with full file distribution functionality and ODBC database synchronisation. This means current CRM, ERP or databases can be effortlessly accessed and updated from anywhere via a notebook or PDA, using minimum connectivity to ensure costs are brought down to a reasonable level.

Enterprise Connection’s sales teams are more than willing to discuss requirements and offer a “try before you buy” proof of concept or no-obligation pilot. For more information, interested parties can contact their existing account manager, Paul Moses on 011-258-8000 or Johan de Villiers on 021-680-3100.



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