

On the Radar: PowWow Mobile helps mobilize enterprise apps

SmartUX facilitates the development of modern and intuitive enterprise mobile apps and workflows

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Summary

Catalyst

As employees increasingly move toward utilizing a more diverse and mobile hardware estate in the workplace, the need to transform the applications that many leverage to work productively is increasing. However, enterprises are struggling to adapt to this trend, with many mobilizing only a modest fraction of an app estate. PowWow Mobile offers a solution to support organizations in overcoming this challenge through a new approach to mobilizing enterprise apps that is both quick and cost-effective.

Key messages

- The PowWow SmartUX platform enables the rapid and cost-effective development of mobile apps.
- Modernizing legacy systems and applications is a key objective for organizations looking to realize value from digital transformation.
- PowWow Mobile's recent acquisition of StarMobile improves the capabilities offered by the SmartUX platform, especially the analytical functionality.

Ovum view

Modernizing legacy systems is a key digital objective for organizations. Evolving applications and infrastructure in a bid to reduce costs and transform employee and customer experiences is an objective at the forefront of most organizations' strategic digital thinking. Executing against this objective has, however, proved challenging for many organizations, often due to development tools and processes not being agile enough to meet a more rapid rate of change. PowWow Mobile's SmartUX is a solution that can help organizations overcome this challenge by facilitating the creation of modern, native mobile apps easily and quickly.

Recommendations for enterprises

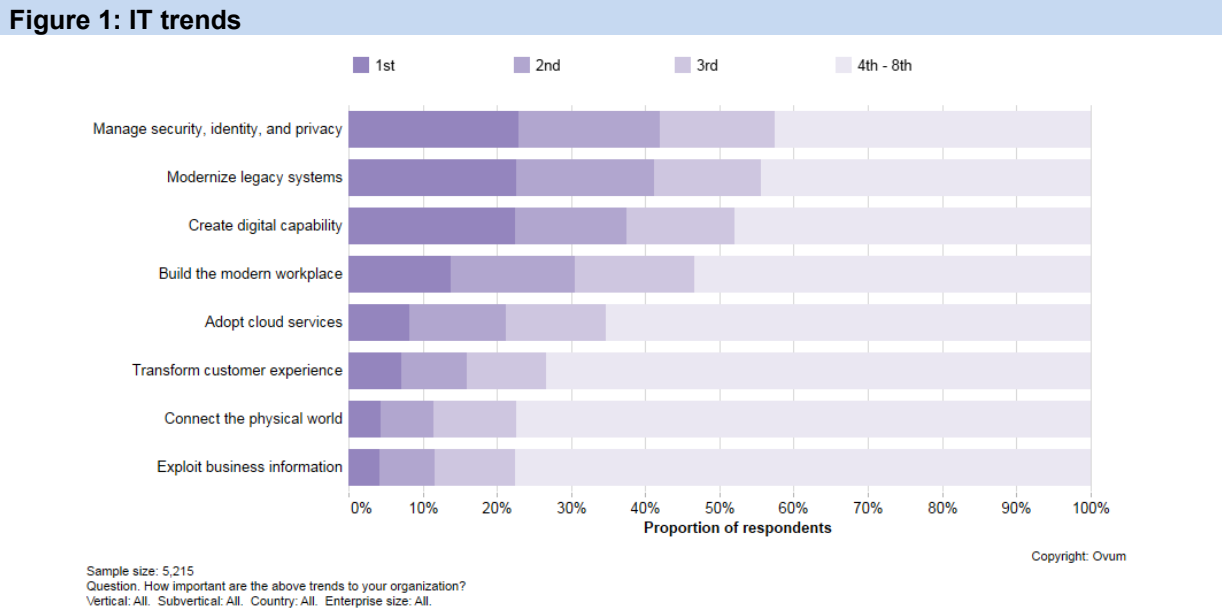
Why put PowWow Mobile on your radar?

The PowWow Mobile SmartUX solution provides organizations with a modern platform from which new mobile apps and workflows can be developed quickly and easily. Being successful against an enterprise mobility strategy requires more than just equipping a workforce with new devices – mobile apps are fundamental to success. SmartUX is a platform that can support organizations in evolving how employees interact with important business systems, helping heighten productivity levels and optimize the user experience delivered.

In addition to app development and modernization, the workflow management capabilities offered by the SmartUX platform will prove useful to many organizations. Many employees often interact with workflows that extend across multiple applications and business units. Being able to consolidate these workflows via a single system and interface has multiple benefits, including improving the user experience and optimizing business processes.

Highlights

Mobility continues to disrupt the enterprise as employees are increasingly seeking more intuitive and productive ways of working with technology. Mobile apps are a big part of this shift. In their personal lives, employees are used to working with a variety of different mobile apps, and the demand for similar experiences in the workplace continues to grow. The data in Figure 1 shows that the need to modernize legacy systems is on the priority list of most IT departments – ignoring and failing to act on this trend will put organizations at a disadvantage.

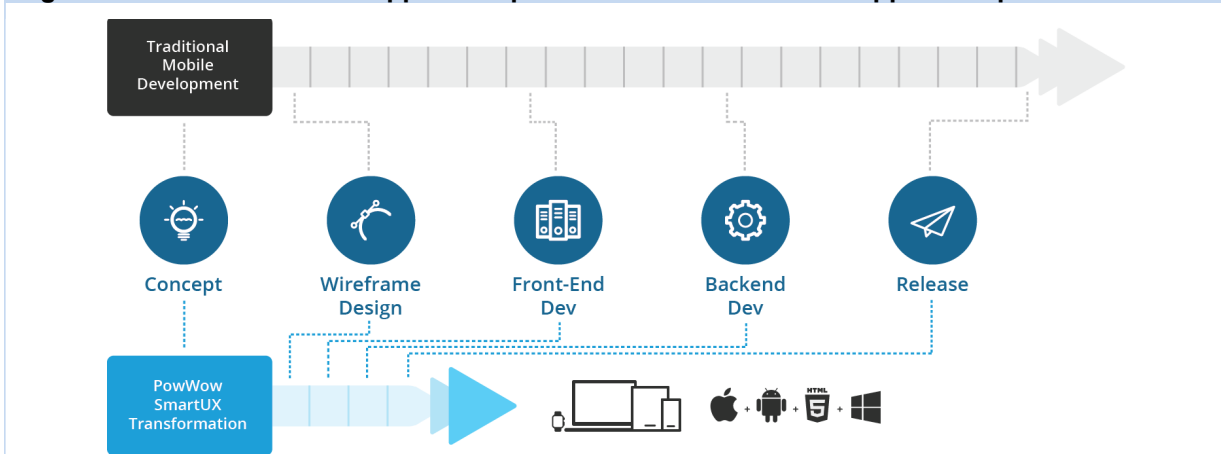


Source: ICT Enterprise Insights 2016/17 – Global: ICT Drivers and Technology Priorities

However, for enterprises, this presents an issue as many legacy enterprise systems were developed before the mobile revolution, and as such they are far from optimized for the mobile use case. Costs associated with the redevelopment of many enterprise apps has made this transformation difficult for organizations. As a result, employees often resort to sourcing their own apps without the knowledge of IT, often exposing organizations to greater risks, including sensitive data leakage.

In SmartUX, PowWow Mobile offers a platform that can help enterprises modernize a critical estate of Windows and web applications and workflows. Additionally, the platform can be used to develop entirely new apps that can connect to any third-party data source, API, or SQL. The apps created on the platform can run on any device and multiple operating systems, including iOS, Android, Windows 10, and HTML5. Supporting a more connected employee experience, one that enables people to access work resources, data, and apps on any device and at any time, represents an important digital transformation objective, and solutions such as SmartUX can help organizations succeed in achieving this objective.

Figure 2: Traditional mobile app development vs. PowWow Mobile app development



Source: PowWow Mobile

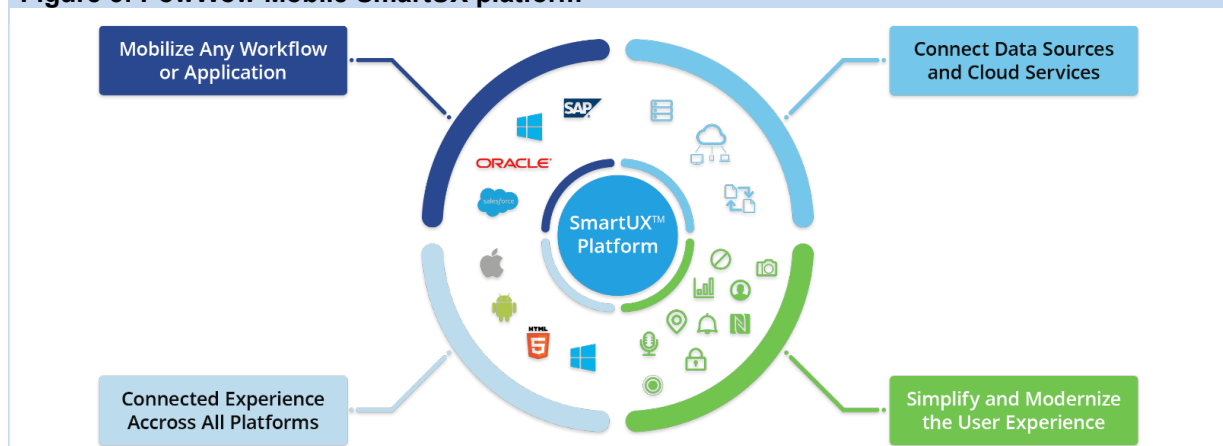
In being truly transformative, mobile apps should do much more than simply provide a new interface from which interaction can take place. In leveraging mobile hardware capabilities and a wealth of contextual data and insight, mobile apps can help organizations optimize business processes and workflows. The workflow capabilities of SmartUX are especially valuable as they enable enterprises to unify workflows that extend across multiple systems via a single interface. For example, the process and workflow associated with setting up new employees with the relevant access to the required enterprise systems involve activities undertaken by multiple employees in multiple business applications (HR, IT, and so on). With the SmartUX platform, organizations can combine activities and tasks that extend across different applications and business departments into a single workflow and interface. This means that employees do not have to manually navigate multiple applications and interfaces to undertake a common task – it can be done via a single interface within SmartUX and via any device. In unifying a workflow in this fashion, and by integrating tasks that would normally have to be undertaken in different enterprise systems, important business processes can be made more efficient.

Once the data sources of multiple applications have been imported and a new workflow has been created, new business logic can also be created to further extend the functionality of an app. Newly created apps can be published via common app stores, or via mobile device management (MDM) technologies. Iterative changes and updates can also be made to any app created, without any disruption.

Background

PowWow Mobile's SmartUX platform was announced in May 2016. SmartUX is a solution developed to support organizations in extending Windows and web applications to any endpoint. The apps and workflows can be made available to people to utilize across numerous endpoint operating systems, including Windows 10, iOS, Android, and HTML5.

Figure 3: PowWow Mobile SmartUX platform



Source: PowWow Mobile

PowWow Mobile currently works with customers across multiple industries, including financial services, healthcare, telecoms, software, consulting, and public sector. The company is headquartered in San Francisco. Since 2014, the company has secured \$8.27m investment from three rounds of funding. The acquisition of StarMobile in October 2016 is the company's first. The leadership team comprises founders Andrew Cohen and Jonathan Kaplan, and CEO Kia Behnia. Behnia brings experience from his roles in BMC Software, where he served as the CTO, and Tivoli Systems, where he was a principal technologist.

Current position

PowWow Mobile's SmartUX platform is an open, low-code enterprise mobility platform, purpose-built to rapidly design, build, run, and analyze cross-platform apps. SmartUX Studio allows customers to develop mobile experiences. This visual editor aims to make development of mobile experiences simple and intuitive by offering pre-built templates and drag and drop development controls. It is low-code and fully extensible via JavaScript. Mobile app experiences can also be connected to any third-party data source, API, or SQL. Apps can be run on-premise, or via any public, private, or hybrid cloud. Security is preserved via device authentication and through the capability to deploy developed apps using EMM and MDM solutions or via an app store. The solution also offers capabilities that enable organizations to gather detailed insights into mobile app adoption, usage, and activity. Development of customized reports is also possible.

In October 2016, PowWow Mobile reached an agreement to acquire StarMobile, Inc. The acquisition and integration of StarMobile's capabilities will further strengthen the SmartUX platform, particularly around reporting and analytics. The further investment in the platform is an encouraging move and further strengthens PowWow Mobile's position to support organizations in overcoming some of the challenges associated with enterprise mobility. In addition to costs, a common challenge faced by organizations interested in mobilizing an app estate is a lack of mobile-focused development skills. As a result, there is increasing enterprise interest in solutions that can help organizations more easily and quickly develop mobile apps and workflows.

Data sheet

Key facts

Table 1: Data sheet: PowWow Mobile

Product name	SmartUX	Product classification	Platform
Version number	4.6	Release date	January 15, 2016
Industries covered	All	Geographies covered	North America, EU, Asia-Pacific
Relevant company sizes	Global 2000	Licensing options	Subscription
URL	www.powwowmobile.com	Routes to market	Direct, partners
Company headquarters	San Francisco, California, US	Number of employees	35+

Source: Ovum

Appendix

On the Radar

On the Radar is a series of research notes about vendors bringing innovative ideas, products, or business models to their markets. Although On the Radar vendors may not be ready for prime time, they bear watching for their potential impact on markets and could be suitable for certain enterprise and public sector IT organizations.

Further reading

2017 ICT Enterprise Insights in Enterprise Mobility, IT0021-000217 (December 2016)

2017 Trends to Watch: Enterprise Mobility, IT0021-000212 (November 2016)

How-To Guide: Ensuring a Successful Enterprise Mobility Management Implementation, IT0021-000188 (August 2016)

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