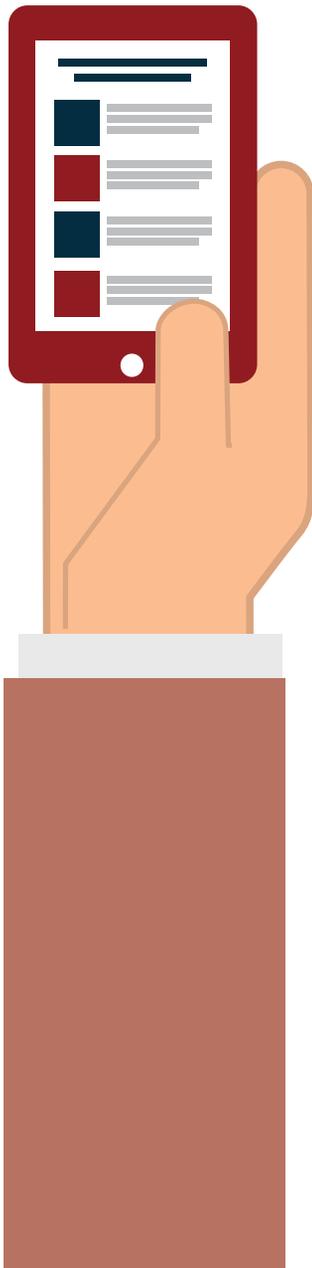
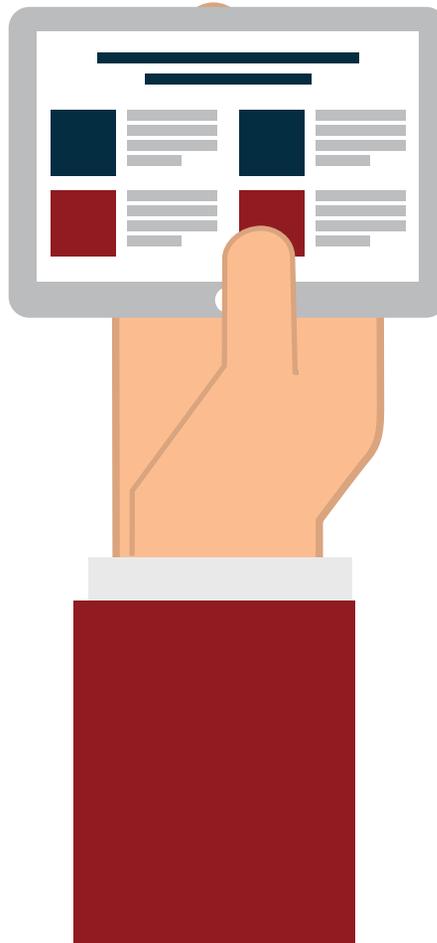


THE COST BENEFITS OF **BYOD**

**BY MIKE REMER, FOUNDER AND PRESIDENT,
COMPUTERCARE LLC**



Most business owners have heard or seen the phrase “Bring Your Own Device” at some point recently, but what does it mean and why should you care? Bring Your Own Device, or BYOD, refers to company policy regarding the acceptable use of portable electronics during the execution of work tasks. Essentially, these are the rules for allowing your



employees to use their personally owned equipment (usually cell phones or laptops) to access, store or otherwise retrieve company data, be it email, data stored on a local server or data in the cloud. A newer term in the same vein as BYOD is CYOD, or Choose Your Own Device. This refers to a policy where the company provides the device to the employee, typically giving them a choice of a few different models, but retains ownership over that device. Unlike BYOD, should an employee be separated from the company, the device stays with the company.

With a BYOD policy, measures are typically enacted on the employee’s device to make them more secure. This can be as menial as a passcode but can include remote tracking and wiping capabilities for the entire phone (read: everything on the phone could be wiped).

The benefit of BYOD over CYOD is primarily cost. BYOD saves the company money by allowing employees to use their personally owned devices and can sometimes increase productivity, as the employee will continue to use the device they are already comfortable with. A solid system needs to be in place, however, to ensure that these devices are secure and that the internal policy is followed. Simply making the employee sign a piece of paper is not enough.

CYOD, on the other hand, provides the company the greatest amount of control. The company decides what hardware it will offer and can place limits on that hardware to ensure that it is secured and only being used to for legitimate company activities. The

downside, however, is in the cost — since the company provides, the company must purchase. Additionally, employee satisfaction may take a hit, as they may not be happy with the selection of the devices or the limits and controls being placed on them.

Why should you care about either of these policies (or the third option: no policy at all)? Well, because your business information will at some point flow through these devices and, in some cases, can be stored on them. Contacts, emails, attachments, proposals and sensitive intellectual property are just some of the things that can wind up on your employee's device. Having a policy that spells

out how data will be accessed, how it will be stored and what rights the company will retain over the device and its contents will be key to the success of the company and the overall satisfaction of the employee.

There is no right or wrong policy to enact. The only folly would be not enacting a policy at all. The company's assets should be protected, and the rights of the employees should be clearly spelled out.



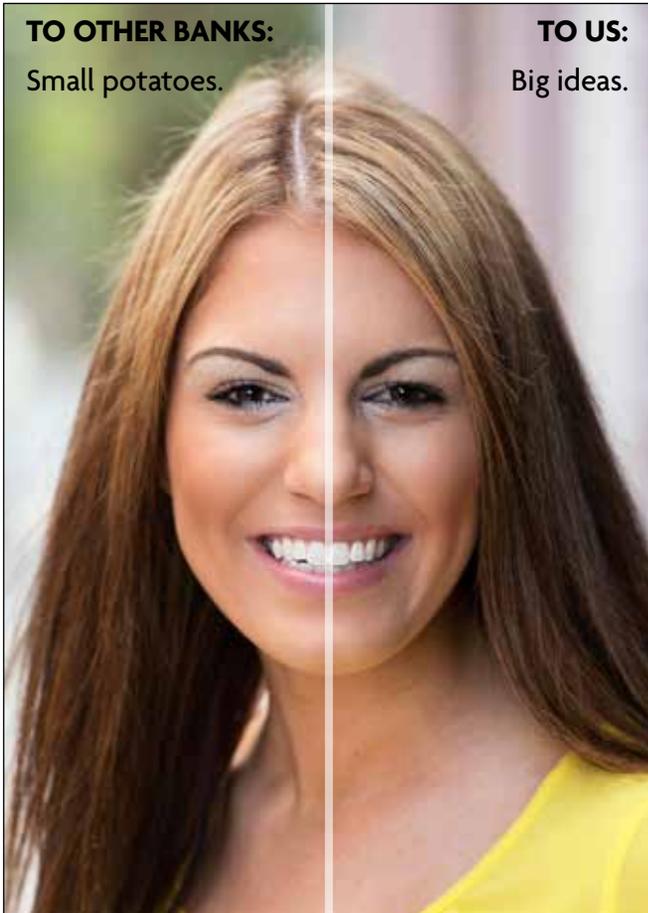
MICHAEL REMER is founder and president of ComputerCare LLC, an IT services company providing a full spectrum of IT solutions and services to small and medium businesses.

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