Consumerization of IT: How To Support All These Gadgets

By Randy George InformationWeek

There's a rule of thumb for most CIOs: When the CEO makes a request, the answer is YES. If you're a systems administrator, therefore, you're on the lookout for your CIO saying YES to mobile device support, because that means a big yellow school bus is getting ready to run you over.

The consumer effect is turning companies' IT labs into something that resembles the return bin at Best Buy, thanks to the variety of devices they're testing for business use. After CIOs make the call on whether to allow consumer tech into their companies in the first place, based on risks, costs, and benefits, the next big call is the glorious task of figuring out how to deploy, secure, and manage the gadget of the week.

Should you even offer IT support to employees bringing in consumer tech? The answer is all over the map, our survey of 551 business technology pros finds. Only 22% say their companies draw a hard line of no support, but another 20% offer only very limited support. About one-third don't have any policy, so IT helps where it can, while 23% encourage their device mavens to contact tech support.

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