

BMC Reimagines IT: New IT, Mobile, Social and Apple-Like

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One of the interesting things I observed over the last decade was how much better Apple support seemed to be from the standpoint of the user, compared to the kind of support most Windows users got. This had little to do with Microsoft or Apple and everything to do with how most of the IT shops I followed dealt with Apple users before BYOD became a craze. BMC has apparently taken the core concepts from this Apple support model and updated them with current thinking and technology to give everyone, even Apple users, a better IT experience. **BMC is calling this new IT.** I'm calling it revolutionary.

The Apple Model

The reason for the creation of a very different model to support Apple users is that Macs were non-standard. Organizations that used them tended to be relatively specialized in some creative area. Artists, architects and designers often preferred Apple and good ones were valuable enough that they got to pick their own hardware long before we knew what **BYOD (Bring Your Own Device)** stood for. IT didn't want to have dedicated support people for these staffers, so they would set up internal forums where users could help each other. With the forum and increasingly better online resources, users found that their peers understood their problems better than IT typically did; the peers had often experienced the same issues and were far more understanding and often even more responsive.

The end result: Even though Apple hardware often cost more, this cost was just as often more than offset by the massive reduction in support cost. The users were self-supporting; this provided a huge cost/resource benefit to using Apple. Were it not for sustained compatibility issues with critical and legacy apps, and the fact that users really don't like change, I would have expected far more Apple deployments than we got.

But the model really didn't have anything to do with the hardware, it was focused on the process. No one seemed to want to move the working Apple process to Windows or anything else. Until now.

BMC New IT

New IT is based around an extension of a product that BMC brought to market some time ago called MyIT. This program allowed a user to configure a support experience around his or her department or individual needs. BMC has taken the next major step and looped in a variety of offerings, including the Remedyforce offering, to create a comprehensive program. It still focuses on the user but uses current tools like social networking and gam-

ification to encourage contributions. It also keeps costs low and engagement high so even Apple users see an improvement.

The service is designed to be delivered and monitored over BYOD devices like cell phones and encompass these devices at the same time. This allows both the user and service manager to have views of the information they need to assure their unique needs are met. Folks responding to inquiries are recognized socially as experts, which improves their status and motivates them to participate, much like you see on specialized forums on the web today. Interaction scales with the screen so the parties using both ends of the solution get the view that best fits their favored or most convenient device.

Capabilities include an internal curated app store for approved user applications, scheduler with maps for facilities like conference rooms that can be reserved, asset loan forms for things like projectors, and a service page that shows outages and projected uptimes to reduce avoidable calls to IT for already known problems. New IT improves on what we learned during our Apple support years to provide a simple and elegant way to get users to help themselves, and the users actually prefer it this way. That's a two-fer: lower cost and happier users.

Wrapping Up: Lessons Learned

It surprises me how regimented we are. We often know better ways to do things but because those ways aren't in wide use, we don't make the needed improvement. The case in point is that we've known for years from our Apple support experience that there is a far less expensive way to support users, and users actually prefer it, yet we avoided adopting that method. Well, BMC is stepping up and stepping in to fix that problem. The testimonials I've seen from users who have tried this product suggest BMC has hit the nail on the head, though I'm kind of curious what it has in store for us with IT 3.0.