



SA's office workers now spend an hour a day on mobile devices, preference for smartphones

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South Africa's office workers spend nearly an hour a day working on their mobile devices despite having access to more powerful computers.

And they see smartphones as preferable to tablets when it comes to doing work on a mobile device.

This is according to a recent survey of 12'000 office workers nationwide by Inspiration Office, an Africa-wide office space and furniture consultancy. The survey quizzed South African office workers on their technology preferences in the workplace.

Richard Andrews, Managing Director of Inspiration Office, said: "The results show how mobile devices are making greater inroads to just about everyone's working life. Even if people have access to desktops and laptops, they spend an hour a day working on their smartphone. We expect this number to climb."

When asked which mobile device was most needed for work, 52% said a smartphone while 38% said a tablet. Interestingly people in both categories said they would prefer to bring their own devices to work (the bring your own device (BOYD) phenomenon as it is called), a global trend in which workers associate greater enjoyment in using their own devices.

The survey also asked about workers' preferred operating system. When it came to desktop computers, 80% said they preferred windows while only 11% preferred macOS, Apple's desktop operating system.

When asked the same question about laptops, 79% said they prefer windows while 15% preferred Apple's operating system.

On smartphones however, 41% prefer Apple's IOS operating system to Google's Android at 50%. For tablets, Apple comes top at 49% compared to Android's 37%.

"Interestingly the survey also showed that when people work on smartphones or tablets, 77% prefer to do it away from their desks, even if they are still in the office."

"It's a habit - people think of smartphones and tablets as mobile tools so they often use them elsewhere."

"Many of our clients are now setting up more casual areas of chairs, couches and mini desks where people can nip away from the desk and work elsewhere for a while."

"This is especially true for millennial workers who tend to be less inclined to sit at their desks all day and love using mobile devices," Andrews noted, further saying that given the rise of mobile devices offices would have to change to accommodate the demand for working away from the traditional desk.

When asked which were the 'most important IT features', 73% said remote access, 50% said high performance machines, 44% said an ability to access applications offline while 32% said some sort of protection for their devices against weather and / or dirt.

Finally, people were asked about something every office worker has strong views on: IT Support.

"The survey asked people where they turn to for IT support: 35% said the IT help desk, 21% simply Googled the problem while 13% asked colleagues," Andrews concluded.