

Smartphones a Boon to Small Business

DE Brown October 27, 2015



Small business owners report that using smartphones is their businesses time and money compared to land lines or old-style cell phones.

([Newswire.net](#) -- October 27, 2015) -- Last year 94 percent of small businesses were using smartphones, up from 85 percent the year before, according to the AT&T-SBE Council Small Business Technology Poll. Using smartphones is saving small businesses time and money, with small business owners reporting 1.24 billion hours of productivity gained and

\$32.3 billion saved over the course of the year. SBE Council president and CEO Karen Kerrigan says smartphones can help entrepreneurs manage their businesses better, increase productivity, cut costs and engage customers, with the time and money gained being invested back into innovation and increasing sales. Here are a few ways you can boost the business performance you get from your smartphone.

Knowledge is Power

Smartphones can help inspire ideas by making it easier for you to access information. For instance, Amazon's Audible app lets you listen to audiobooks to review business classics and catch up on the latest trends. You can then apply what you learn by using business intelligence apps such as [Qlik](#) that provide you with analytics data about your market, customers and competition.

Time Management

Time is money, and saving time is one of the biggest benefits mobile phones bring business. Task management apps such as [Todoist](#) let you and your team use any device to organize task lists, prioritize to-do items, collaborate and track progress. If you find your smartphone distracting you with non-work activity, as a Pew poll found 57 percent of users do, HubSpot's Scott Tousley recommends hiding distracting apps on the last page of your smartphone, activating Do Not Disturb mode on your iPhone or Silent mode on your Android, and turning off notifications for all apps except phone, calendar, email and chat. If you've got a task that absolutely requires you to get off your smartphone, you can use a physical cell phone cage to stay focused.

Outsourcing

Another way smartphones can help you make better use of your time is outsourcing. Apps such as [Thumbtack](#) make it easy for you to locate contractors, get quotes and hire help. With the global reach of smartphones, you can hire locally or find qualified contractors from anywhere in the world. To manage your outsourcing team effectively, project management apps such as Zoho Projects can help you keep your team on task.

Security

With the growth of cybercrime, data breaches, and identity theft, making sure your smartphone is secure is essential for protecting your business and keeping your customers' data safe. Security provider Kaspersky outlines some best practices for smartphone security. These include keeping your smartphone locked, encrypting sensitive data, paying attention to which information apps request, and using anti-malware software. PC Magazine provides a guide to top smartphone antivirus software options, which include Kaspersky Anti-Virus, Bitdefender, and Webroot Secure Anywhere Anti-Virus. To avoid becoming a victim of identity theft, [LifeLock®](#) recommends using secure passwords, keeping personal information off social networks, making sure apps come from trusted sources and monitoring your credit card use.

Financial Management

Smartphones can help you manage the financial side of your business by supporting functions such as payment processing, budgeting and accounting. Today's leading mobile payment apps are currently Google Wallet and Apple

Pay, says Best Mobile Payment Apps writer Jason Gardiner, with Samsung Pay recently joining the fray. One of today's most popular financial management apps is Intuit's [Mint](#), which includes budgeting, bill payment and credit checking features. Technology writer Jamie Bsales reviews other leading financial apps used by small businesses, which include QuickBooks Pro, QuickBooks Payroll, Intacct and FreshBooks.

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