Forbes
INSIGHTS

THE CONNECTED EXECUTIVE

MOBILIZING THE PATH TO PURCHASE

IN ASSOCIATION WITH: Google

CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In just a few years' time, mobile computing has become a de facto platform for many consumers, enabling a wide range of communications and transactions, from interacting with social media to purchasing tickets via smartphones or tablets. Now business leaders and decision makers—many of whom already conduct their personal day-to-day affairs on mobile devices—are recognizing the capabilities their devices bring to daily business operations. Increasingly, decision makers are using their mobile devices both inside and outside the office—on the path to purchase—to obtain information, conduct research and buy products and services for their organizations.

This survey of 511 senior-level executives reveals that most are embracing opportunities to communicate, to research products and services, and even to make direct purchases from suppliers through mobile websites and apps. Smartphones are ubiquitous, and, increasingly, tablets are emerging as a device of choice for transacting business, poised to soon supplant standard desktop and laptop PCs. At the same time, the move to mobile means more than simple hardware swaps—the migration to mobile business heralds a new era of flexibility and agility for businesses. Executives are already highly mobilized, and it's up to B2B services and vendors to meet this opportunity with mobile apps and websites that enable simple and seamless business transactions.

KEY FINDINGS

- Multi-screen access is now commonplace in executive offices. Nine out of 10 executives use smartphones on a day-to-day basis, and they are increasingly migrating to tablets for their business-related tasks.

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- Executives now bring "the office" with them wherever they go. Mobile computing is extending executives' business activities well beyond standard office hours. Executives not only report using mobile devices for work during business hours, but also report heavy usage during their own time, or while away on business travel.

……..

- Mobile devices are being employed as research tools that lead to high-value business purchases. More than a quarter of executives say they are using mobile devices to conduct research for purchases exceeding $100,000.

……..

- Most executives turn to mobile devices first when initiating the purchase process. A large number even indicate they prefer to use tablets over PCs for business research and purchasing. In fact, seven out of 10 executives report using smartphones or tablets to look up product or service information upon first learning of an offering, and more than a third say they are still referencing information from their mobile devices when a purchase decision needs to be made.

……..

- The shift from PCs to mobile devices for purchasing is imminent—a large number of executives indicate they would prefer to use tablets and smartphones if vendors make it easier to buy on mobile devices. Already, more than one-fourth of the executives say they have purchased a product or service directly from their mobile device over the past six months.

……..

- While many executives are embracing mobile access to do their jobs, issues with mobile websites or apps often prevent direct purchasing using mobile devices. The leading issue executives have with direct mobile purchasing is mobile websites or apps that are too difficult to navigate and use.

METHODOLOGY

This report is based on a survey of 511 executives conducted in March 2013 by Forbes Insights. All the executives are based in the United States. Executives' companies had at least $500 million in revenues: roughly one-fourth had revenues between $500 million and $1 billion, more than one-fourth had revenues of $1 billion to $5 billion, and the rest had revenues of more than $5 billion.

One-fourth were C-level executives, including 31 chief executives, presidents or managing directors. The largest group (194 executives) had roles in IT departments, followed by executives from general management (189) and other corporate functions (112).

Forbes Insights also conducted one-on-one interviews with executives, including:

Neal Campbell, Senior Vice President and Chief Marketing Officer, CDW

Jerry Irvine, Chief Information Officer, Prescient Solutions

Alicia Laszewski, Vice President of Marketing, C3/CustomerContactChannels

Nathan McNeill, Co-Founder and Chief Strategy Officer, Bomgar

Rich Mooney, Managing Director, Essence Digital

Subhasis Mukherjee, Director of the Claims Center of Excellence, Zurich in North America

Chad Oakley, President and Chief Operating Officer, Charles Aris, Inc.

Denis O'Dwyer, Chief Executive Officer, Wide Open Spaces

Cindy Rakowitz, Chief Executive Officer, Blackman Rakowitz Public Relations

Tracey Rothenberger, Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer, Ricoh Americas

Tasso Roumeliotis, Founder and Chief Executive Officer, Location Labs

Andrew Till, Chief Technology Officer, Symphony Teleca Corporation

Todd Walter, Chief Technologist for the Americas, Teradata

Forbes Insights and Google extend their gratitude to these executives.

THE MULTI-SCREEN EXECUTIVE SUITE

Multi-screen viewing is now as common within today's offices as it is in homes.
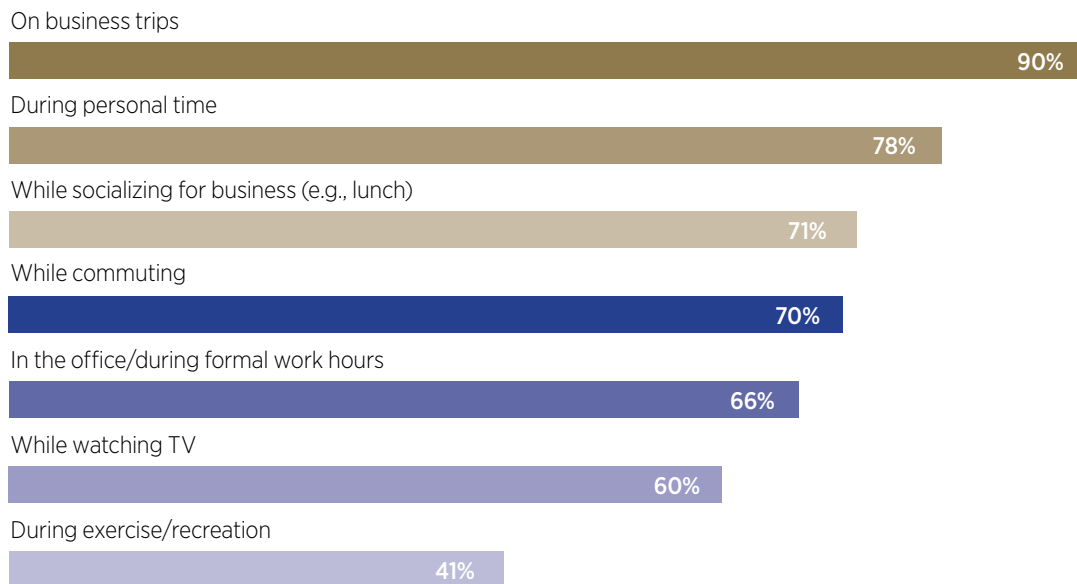
Two-thirds of the executives we spoke with indicate they use mobile devices in the office, and just over a third say they now use their devices all the time while at the office for computing and communications—presumably when a PC is also present at their desks. This is also validated in another industry survey of 1,252 executives, published by Google, which finds that 61% of decision makers who research business purchases on their mobile devices do so while at work.[1]

The relative simplicity and design of today's mobile devices has resulted in a wave of devices coming into enterprises not because companies are buying them, but because executives and employees have been using their own smartphones and tablets to accomplish their tasks. This "BYOD" (bring your own device) trend is opening up access and new opportunities for personal productivity previously unheard of in business.

Obviously, a great deal of executives' time is spent outside their offices. The availability of mobile access has enabled many to extend their workspace beyond the confines of the 9-to-5 office. The most prevalent use for mobile by executives is during business trips. Close to half of executives say they use their mobile devices for business purposes at home or while commuting. (See Figure 1.)

FIGURE 1. WHERE EXECUTIVES USE THEIR MOBILE DEVICES TO GATHER BUSINESS INFORMATION

On business trips
90%

During personal time
78%

While socializing for business (e.g., lunch)
71%

While commuting
70%

In the office/during formal work hours
66%

While watching TV
60%

During exercise/recreation
41%

One of the most compelling value propositions with mobile computing is that it provides decision makers the ability to maintain contact with their business, regardless of where they are or what time it is. This points to the advantages mobile devices provide for anywhere, anytime computing.

"I travel most times without my laptop, unless it is an extended trip of more than three days," says Tracey Rothenberger, executive vice president and chief operating officer for Ricoh Americas, a global technology company and part of the $23 billion (revenues) Ricoh Group. "This works for me, because in my role as COO, I'm not traditionally creating content. The majority of time I am viewing or presenting PowerPoint slides, viewing Excel documents and using email—so a tablet or smartphone fits my business needs."

[1] Source: Google & Compete B2B Customer Study, June 2012. Sample: B2B customers who research business purchases on their mobile devices.

There has been a notable shift away from desktop computers and toward tablet computers since a similar survey was conducted in 2010 by Forbes Insights and Google. At that time, 76% of executives indicated they used desktop PCs. Now less than half are regular desktop PC users. Laptop and notebook computers continue to be the leading type of computing device; however, a total of 46% indicate they are now users of tablet computers (including iPad-size devices, mini-tablets and "phablets"), up from 27% in the 2010 survey.[2]

When asked which single device they use *most frequently* for business purposes, executives indicate that tablet computers are poised to surpass PCs in the very near future as their device of choice. While 87% of executives today still have traditional PCs and laptop computers on hand as their primary machines for day-to-day work, they expect this to fall off dramatically over the next 36 months. By contrast, while 12% now rely on smartphones or tablets as their primary computing devices in their day-to-day work, a majority expect to be doing most of their work on smartphones and tablets within the next three years. (See Figure 2.)

FIGURE 2. PERCENTAGE OF EXECUTIVES USING MOBILE DEVICES AS THEIR PRIMARY BUSINESS PLATFORM, TODAY AND OVER THE NEXT THREE YEARS
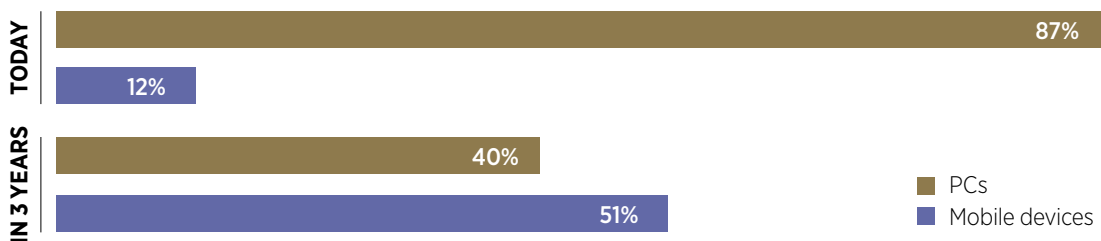
In some leading corporations, PCs have already become almost passe in the executive suite. "Most of our top-level executives have started using iPads, and don't use PCs as much," says Subhasis Mukherjee, director of the Claims Center of Excellence at Zurich in North America, a commercial property-casualty insurance provider.

"My smartphone and my tablet are my lifelines—I cannot fathom how I used to function without them," says Alicia Laszewski, vice president of marketing for C3/CustomerContactChannels, a customer management outsourcing services firm. "My job and my life here at C3 have me constantly in motion, so to be able to stay completely connected—beyond just email—without sitting at my computer helps me stay extremely productive while on the go."

Intriguingly, the shift to mobile isn't just a generational shift. Older executives (50 years or older) are just as likely to be adopting mobile devices as their primary computing devices as their younger counterparts. Currently, 18% of the executives over the age of 50 say their primary computing device is a smartphone or tablet, compared with 22% of the below-40 group. Over the next three years, the percentage of the over-50 executives expecting to be mainly mobile will surpass their youngest counterparts, with 62% of senior executives adopting mobile, versus 56% of the under-40 segment. This points to the growing prevalence of mobile device adoption among key senior decision makers, who often have the final word on significant B2B purchases. (See Figure 3.)

FIGURE 3. NO GENERATION GAP: PERCENTAGE OF EXECUTIVES USING MOBILE DEVICES AS THEIR PRIMARY BUSINESS PLATFORM, TODAY AND OVER THE NEXT THREE YEARS—BY AGE RANGE

[2] Source: The Untethered Executive: Business Information in the Age of Mobility, published by Forbes Insights in association with Google, 2010.

PURCHASING PATTERNS

Along with relying on mobile devices for business communications and information at all hours and from all locations, a large segment of executives purchase business goods and services directly from their devices.

The idea of making a direct purchase via mobile is not necessarily a new one for executives—more than two-thirds say they are comfortable with using their mobile devices for personal purchases. In addition, a majority, 52%, have no qualms about making business-related purchases on a mobile device. (See Figure 4.)

FIGURE 4. EXECUTIVE COMFORT LEVELS WITH PURCHASING VIA MOBILE
(PERCENTAGE AGREEING OR STRONGLY AGREEING)

Comfortable making personal purchases on a mobile device

67%

Comfortable making business-related purchases on a mobile device
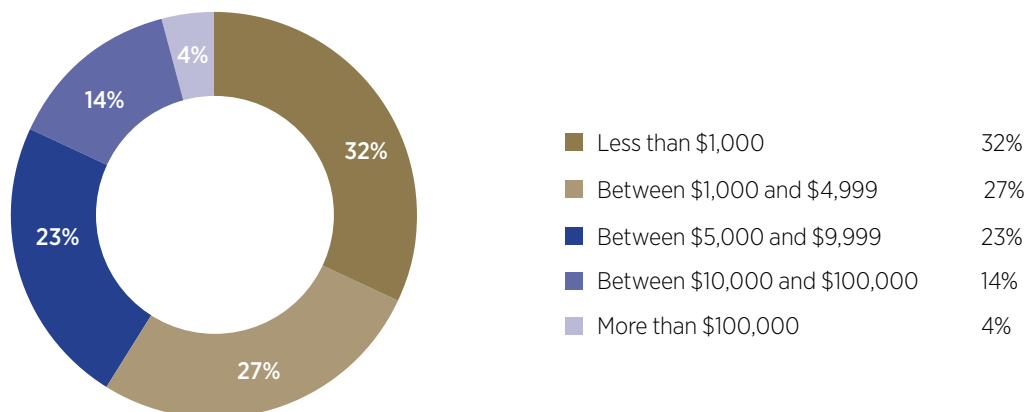
52%
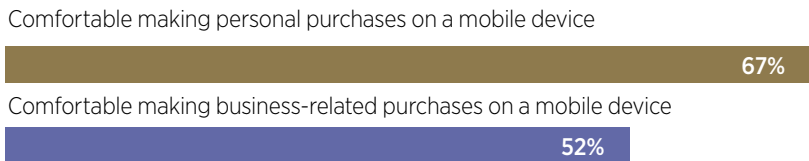
Executives were asked if they had made any purchases directly from their mobile devices in the six months prior to participating in the study. More than one-fourth say they made a direct business purchase from a mobile website during this time.

In many cases, the mobile-based purchases were sizable. Half of the executives who made mobile-based purchases report these purchases were in the range of $1,000 to $10,000.

Another 18% made purchases of greater than $10,000. (See Figure 5.) Such processes are greatly enhanced when B2B suppliers ease the process with mobile-optimized websites and apps. "We've made supply purchases. We've paid vendors via PayPal, right off the tablet," says Denis O'Dwyer, CEO of Wide Open Spaces, a privately held online sporting goods retailer. "When they send us an invoice, it's just a one-click pay affair."

FIGURE 5. LARGEST BUSINESS PURCHASE MADE ON MOBILE DEVICE IN PAST SIX MONTHS

■ Less than $1,000	32%
■ Between $1,000 and $4,999	27%
■ Between $5,000 and $9,999	23%
■ Between $10,000 and $100,000	14%
■ More than $100,000	4%

Although the majority of executives we spoke with did not make direct purchases from a mobile website to acquire business products and services, this was not from a lack of interest or desire. *The lack of a mobile-friendly interface is the leading reason these corporate decision makers did not use their devices for this purpose.* More than one-third of this group, in fact, say too many of their suppliers' sites or interfaces are non-mobile optimized websites or apps that are hard to see, read or navigate. Another one-fifth indicate that their corporate purchasing systems do not support mobile devices. Other obstacles executives cite include security concerns and the need for additional sign-off on purchases. Some executives complain that their vendors' mobile sites or apps are too slow. (See Figure 6.)

FIGURE 6. REASONS FOR NOT MAKING PURCHASES VIA MOBILE WEBSITES OR APPS

Mobile websites or apps are hard to see, read or navigate on a mobile device	34%
My device is not supported by our purchasing system	21%
I don't trust the security on mobile devices	11%
I needed to confirm with someone else before purchasing	11%
It takes too long to purchase on mobile devices/the pages load too slowly	7%
Vendors' websites or apps do not allow me to purchase	4%
Other	12%

Says Jerry Irvine, CIO of Prescient Solutions—a Chicago-based IT outsourcing firm—who relates that he has used every mobile device on the market, including an Apple iPhone, the Android-based Samsung Galaxy, an iPad and a Microsoft Windows Phone, as well as the Microsoft Surface RT and Surface Pro: "While these full PC version sites can usually be accessed using a mobile device, the user experience is not as good. Additionally, many mobile-optimized sites do not allow all the same functionality or options as the full PC website, decreasing the user experience and limiting the user's accessibility" and utility.

Some executives feel mobile devices are still too cumbersome for detailed investigations. "For in-depth research projects, the PC is still superior," says Nathan McNeill, co-founder and chief strategy officer for Bomgar, a provider of remote support solutions for enterprises, with a world-wide customer base of 7,500 companies.. "Some of this has to do with the wider screen, but the ability to tag and save content is also crucial." Mobile platform developers recognize these types of issues, and now include utilities that help ease the research process and facilitate entering information into mobile websites or into mobile apps.

Other factors may also still be at work when it comes to corporate purchasing, as pointed out by Cindy Rakowitz, CEO of Blackman Rakowitz Public Relations, a New York-based public relations and business development firm. "The purchases I make for my office are usually while I'm at my office, where I use the PC," she says. "This is probably psychological. Now that I'm feeling more confident doing business in the cloud—I will probably replace my PC with something more modern." She adds that she wants to see as many of her suppliers as possible offering easier and more effective ways to do business via mobile: "Most of my suppliers have developed apps, and if they haven't, I tell them they ought to consider it."

THE CHALLENGE:
ENGAGING WITH AN INCREASINGLY MOBILE BASE

While many executives are embracing mobile to purchase business goods and services, issues with B2B companies' mobile websites or apps often hold back research and direct purchasing using mobile devices. Executives would like to see mobile-optimized websites that are simple to use, yet as feature-rich as desktop sites.

FIGURE 7. THE LASTING IMPACT OF MOBILE WEBSITES AND APPS

73% of executives confirm that a bad mobile experience makes them less likely to engage with a company
61% say a bad mobile experience makes them more likely to go to a competitor's site or use their app
66% say a mobile-friendly site makes them more likely to buy from or engage with a vendor
41% say mobile apps make them more likely to buy or engage
35% say even if they like a brand or product, they are less likely to engage with a vendor without a mobile-friendly site
26% say even if they like a brand or product, they are less likely to engage without a mobile app

These days, the availability of mobile capabilities means the difference between using a particular vendor or not using that vendor. For example, Chad Oakley, president and COO of Charles Aris, Inc., a global executive search firm, reports that his company based its selection of a new candidate-tracking system on mobile capabilities. "My job is to get to know different executives and to build profiles on them," he says. "Part of the reason we chose this system is they have an app, which we can download from the Apple store or from the Android store, that gets us immediate access to everyone at the snap of a finger. Historically, we had to use a web browser from our phones, but the system wasn't built for that. It was challenging to the point that we never did it."

When a website has not been developed with mobile access in mind, it becomes a major headache for many executives. "There are still many websites out there that have large graphics, download a lot of data to the client rather than fetching on demand," says Andrew Till, CTO at Symphony Teleca, a tech innovation and development services company with 6,000 employees and 32 offices worldwide. Another issue he encounters is "complex navigation layouts that make it hard to select options on a smartphone display."

Corporate decision makers seek both mobile-optimized websites and apps, and one-fourth report they have used a mobile app provided by their most frequent supplier. However, executives want a highly functional mobile experience—regardless of whether that is coming from an app or a mobile website. "Ideally, if there is a native app for something, I'll go that route for function and capability," relates Neal Campbell, senior vice president and chief marketing officer for CDW, a provider of technology solutions for business, government, education and healthcare with annual sales of $10.2 billion. "However, I think more companies are embracing HTML5, so there isn't much of a distinction anymore."

A majority of executives using mobile websites, 63%, expect an experience similar to what they get from their PC: a functionally rich experience, with access to various resources at the touch of a button. While executives want mobile sites to be just as functional as PC-optimized sites, they also feel mobile sites should be better designed for the mobile experience and form factor. (See Figure 8.)

FIGURE 8. WHAT EXECUTIVES SEEK FROM MOBILE WEBSITES

The functionality of a full website, comparable to PC-based experiences	63%
Real-time information updates	43%
A simpler site that has specific information	43%
Option to call or contact the company	39%
More information on products/services	26%
Opportunities to buy products and services	23%

When it comes to mobile apps, a different set of needs emerges. PC-like functionality still leads the list among just under half of executives. A like number say they want a well-focused, simple view of the information they need. (See Figure 9.) The challenge now is to be able to provide advanced functionality, such as business intelligence, which helps executives make on-the-spot decisions, says Todd Walter, chief technologist for the Americas at Teradata, a provider of analytic data platforms with $2.7 billion a year in revenues. "The first effort at business intelligence on the tablet was just taking reports and formatting them to fit on the tablet. That was okay, but that wasn't really what a user wanted or expected. The next generation needs to take you all the way from your questions about what's going on for your job function, all the way to the action, and all on the same screen. You need to be able to look and see you have an inventory problem, and then just go over to the other half of the screen and do your ordering."

The functionality of a full website, comparable to PC-based experiences	48%
A simpler presentation that has specific information	47%
Option to call or contact the company	37%
The functionality of a PC-based application	34%
More information on products/services	26%
Connectivity with product/service providers	25%
Opportunities to buy products/services	24%

Still, for some executives, the availability of mobile capabilities from their vendors and partners can't come too soon. "Outside the real big suppliers, we deal with a lot of small and mid-tier manufacturers, who barely optimize the web, let alone a mobile site," says O'Dwyer of Wide Open Spaces. "For the most part, 80% aren't there yet. Among our larger suppliers, the top 20% have dedicated mobile sites to make that easier. And only the top 5% have mobile apps we can access." In a world in which customers demand information and capability wherever and whenever they need it, it will be ever more imperative for B2B vendors to keep up by providing these capabilities.

PURCHASE RESEARCH AND DECISIONS VIA MOBILE

Of course, the business purchasing process is not limited to the actual transaction itself—it's the culmination of an extended process that begins with decision makers either identifying needs in their organizations or learning about new products or services offered through online channels, sales channels, colleagues or trade journals.
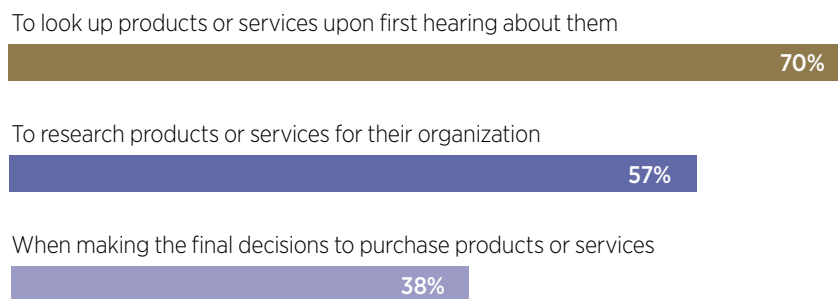
A key strategy for B2B companies is to ensure that the right information is provided to decision makers as early in the process as possible.

For a majority of executives and their teams, mobile devices have become powerful tools for gathering information that leads up to business purchase decisions. Most will turn to mobile devices first when initiating the purchase process. A large number even indicate they prefer to use tablets over PCs for business research and purchasing.

The use of smartphones and tablets is strongest at the product or service research stage. Seven out of 10 executives report using smartphones or tablets to look up product or service information upon first learning of an offering. A majority, 57%, report that they use mobile devices to conduct deeper research into vendors' products or services, and more than one-third say they are still referencing information from their mobile devices at the time a decision needs to be made about a purchase. (See Figure 10.) As discussed earlier in this report, many executives cite issues with vendors' sites or apps that make such activity cumbersome on mobile devices.

FIGURE 10. WHEN ARE MOBILE DEVICES USED IN PRODUCT OR SERVICE RESEARCH?

To look up products or services upon first hearing about them
70%

To research products or services for their organization
57%

When making the final decisions to purchase products or services
38%

Executives were asked to estimate the amount of time they spent in the week prior to the study conducting research for business purposes on their mobile devices. Nearly three-quarters, 72%, report using a smartphone for product research during this time, and 56% used a tablet computer. Executives using tablets tend to dive deeper and spend more time doing product research—just under half of those using tablets report spending more than an hour doing research, versus 30% of those using smartphones. This preference may also be a result of a lack of mobile functionality on vendors' websites, which inhibits smartphone access. (See Figure 11.)

FIGURE 11. AMOUNT OF TIME SPENT RESEARCHING BUSINESS PURCHASES PER WEEK (BASED ON THE WEEK PRECEDING THE TIME THE RESPONDENT TOOK THE SURVEY)
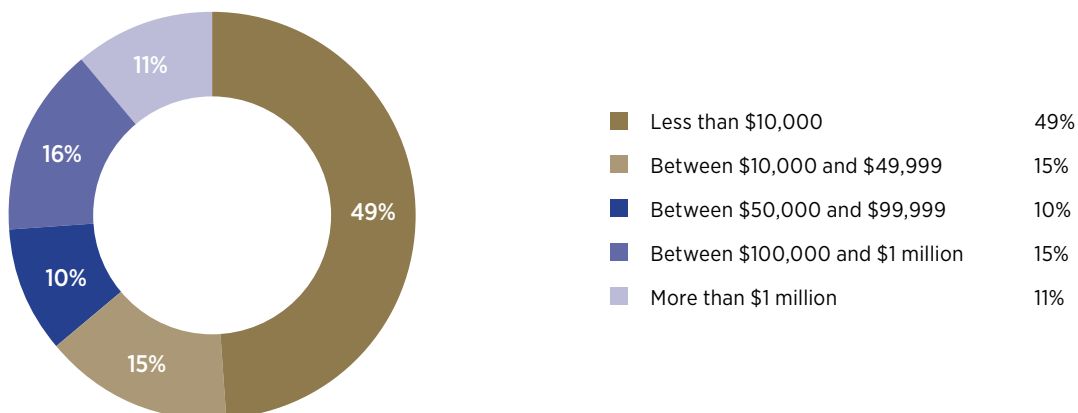
	Smartphone (72%)	Tablet (56%)
<30 minutes	32%	15%
30 mins.-1 hour	19%	14%
1-5 hours	19%	22%
>5 hours	3%	5%

When asked about the scope of the largest purchases to result from their mobile research, 15% of executives report using mobile technology to research or support purchases between $100,000 and $1 million. For more than one-fourth, the largest purchase ever resulting from mobile research topped the $100,000 mark. More than half say their use of mobile led to B2B purchases of at least $10,000 and more.

There is also a segment of executives, 11%, who have actually facilitated purchases exceeding $1 million, based on research via mobile devices. (See Figure 12.)

FIGURE 12. LARGEST BUSINESS PURCHASE RESEARCHED ON A MOBILE DEVICE

■	Less than $10,000	49%
■	Between $10,000 and $49,999	15%
■	Between $50,000 and $99,999	10%
■	Between $100,000 and $1 million	15%
■	More than $1 million	11%

Who are the executives who are already using mobile devices to research large purchases? Technology executives are the biggest buyers, with more than two-fifths of this group reporting they used mobile to research transactions greater than $100,000. In addition, 21% of corporate vice presidents across a variety of industries report purchases in this range. (See Figure 13.)

FIGURE 13. PERCENTAGE OF EXECUTIVES REPORTING TRANSACTIONS GREATER THAN $100,000—BY TITLE

Technology executives
41%

Senior vice president
28%

CEO/president
23%

Vice president/director
21%
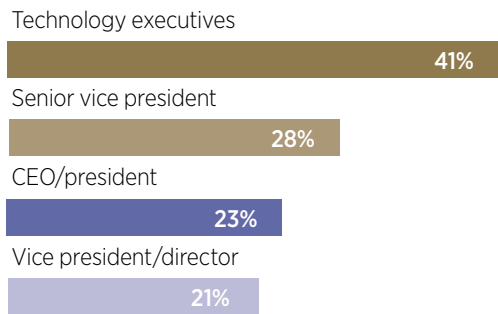
While there is no generation gap in the use of mobile devices for business overall, there is a greater tendency for younger executives to use mobile devices to research or support larger business purchases. More than one-third of the youngest executives (under the age of 40) say they have made purchases exceeding $100,000, versus one-fourth of the executives age 50 or older. The younger group of executives have been exposed to computer technology and mobile phones for most of their adult lives, while those in the 50-and-up age bracket experienced personal comput-ing technology later in life. (See Figure 14.)

FIGURE 14. LARGE BUSINESS PURCHASES ($100,000 OR MORE) RESEARCHED ON MOBILE DEVICES—BY AGE GROUP

Under 40
34%

40-49
26%

50-plus
25%
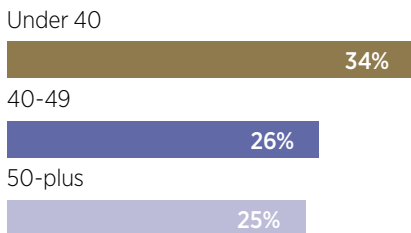
Overall, 92% of executives expect to be spending the same amount of time or increasing the amount of time they spend on mobile devices for product purchasing research. In terms of the frequency with which they visit mobile sites or use apps for this research, more than a third say they have visited sites three or more times in pursuit of information for a particular purchase. One out of four executives uses apps for more information on trading partners and vendors. (See Figure 15.)

FIGURE 15. PERCENTAGE OF EXECUTIVES MAKING FREQUENT VISITS OR MOBILE APP USE (THREE OR MORE TIMES) IN PURCHASE DECISIONS

Mobile websites
34%
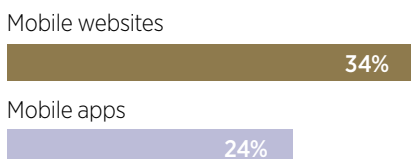
Mobile apps
24%

The availability of mobile apps and websites for exploring new products or services speeds up executive decision making, which often happens on a moment's notice. "Ultimately, it's down to the immediacy of my need. If someone's just told me about a product or service I've never heard about, I'm going to whip out my mobile or pick up the closest tablet to find out more, rather than try and remember it for when I'm next sitting in front of a desktop," says Rich Mooney, managing director of Essence Digital, a global marketing and business development firm. "I think it can be extremely effective for certain types of transactions, especially where immediacy is important—for example, wanting to take advantage of a real-time price fluctuation, or wanting to buy office supplies or stock when you realize the need rather than run the risk of forgetting."

Executives who employ multiple screens extensively in their day-to-day work are drawn to B2B sites that are designed with better mobile experiences in mind. "I've done some form of research on each of my mobile devices," according to CDW's Campbell. "For example, there is a reader function on the iPhone that can give anything you designate a nice, clean reading format, making it look more like a book. If I'm traveling, I'll use it a lot."

There is a proactive way in which B2B companies can help with executives' mobile research, and that is through well-targeted outreach efforts, such as mobile advertising. To answer this issue, we examined the propensity of corporate decision makers to view and respond to sponsored mobile messaging. Executives are open to advertising as a way to help point to business products and services. Approximately one-fourth of executives report they view mobile advertising and outreach as a resource that aids them in their purchasing decisions.

In most cases, mobile advertising is reaching its intended mark, at least in regards to senior-level executives. A majority of executives overall, 55%, indicate they take note of advertising on their mobile devices.

Often, these advertising efforts lead to direct engagements. Well over one-fourth of executives report they have gotten in touch with a vendor after learning about it via a mobile ad. Just as many indicate they frequently conduct searches on advertised products after seeing mobile ads. (See Figure 16.)

FIGURE 16. EXECUTIVES' PERCEPTIONS OF MOBILE ADVERTISING (PERCENTAGE AGREEING OR STRONGLY AGREEING)

Have gotten in touch with a vendor after learning about it via a mobile ad	28%
Frequently conduct searches on advertised products after seeing mobile ads	25%
Prefer mobile ads because they are more targeted to individual needs than other ads	23%

When it comes to such mobile outreach, the generation gap between younger and more senior executives is more evident. Younger executives tend to be more receptive to mobile advertising than their more senior counterparts. For example, close to half of the executives under 40 report that they frequently conduct searches on advertised products after seeing mobile ads. More than two out of five of the under-40 executives have gone as far as to have gotten in touch with a vendor after learning about it via a mobile ad.

# **CONCLUSION**: CHARTING THE PATH TO PURCHASE IN THE MOBILE B2B ECONOMY

Mobile computing—smartphones and tablets—has opened up a new mode of doing business, providing for rapid access to online services via simple interfaces. This survey of 511 senior-level executives finds that mobile devices have become a key tool within the executive suite, and are rapidly replacing laptops and PCs for computing and communications.

For executives, the ability to research business services and products from their mobile devices provides a high degree of flexibility and responsiveness. It doesn't matter whether they are on the road, at home or in the office—they can transact business and serve their customers anywhere, and at any time. In order to accomplish this, they need capable, mobile-optimized websites and apps that provide the same functionality as vendor websites—with the added benefit of mobility.

For business-to-business providers, such executive mobility provides an opportunity to deliver mobile web experiences and apps that enable customers to research and ultimately purchase their products and services. The ability to provide enhanced mobile experiences to business buyers means a competitive edge in today's fast-paced global economy. Most executives now prefer to work with suppliers who provide effective mobile websites or apps.

This requires a rethinking of the design of these mobile experiences with an eye toward simplicity and utility. It means designing websites and apps that perform well within small-screen environments, that support transactions at the speed of business. These days, most executives are not camped out in front of PCs. They are constantly on the move; the world is now their office. Mobile devices are their computing platforms of choice. Information and the ability to act on purchase requirements needs to be accessible at the touch of an on-screen button.
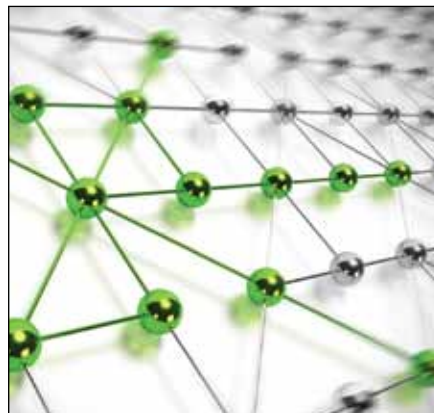
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