

## PRODUCT FLASH

### Employees or Independent Actors?

### GSG's Mobile Manager Confronts the Confusion of a Wireless World

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#### IN THIS PRODUCT FLASH

This IDC Flash contextualizes the release of Mobile Manager, a Web portal that automates the back-office work that supports wireless devices. GSG, the creator of Mobile Manager, is a multishore telecommunications analytics company that offers outsourcing services enabling businesses to resolve complex telecom expense challenges through Web-based business intelligence tools and advanced reporting. Founded in 2003, GSG delivers end-to-end telecom support services to several midsize and Fortune 500 clients across the United States.

#### SITUATION OVERVIEW

These are confusing times for both employers and employees. In the wake of the Great Recession, wage earners seem to have morphed into independent actors, increasingly entrepreneurial and, in many cases, less loyal. Today's workers have responded to often unpredictable circumstances by associating less with their employer's brand and focusing more on developing their own; many are twittering or blogging in and out of the office. Individuals spend less time at a company office and more time homeshored or fully mobile (for more on the homeshoring theme in customer care, see *U.S. Home-Based Agent 2009–2013 Forecast: The Enigma of Arrival*, IDC #221053, forthcoming).

The dynamic of employee as independent actor is perhaps best glimpsed when IDC considers the category of wireless expense management. At the same time that professionals are less tied to the office, they've become more reliant on mobile devices. While many employees purchase those tools themselves, at other times organizations control the purchasing. In either case, all kinds of devices are used for everything from personal calling, messaging, blogging, and other forms of entertainment to supporting streams of business information and applications. The enterprise ends up being responsible for the business portion of all the confusing bills that result. Yet too many companies have no strategy for the high costs associated with the proliferation of so many gadgets and their usage.

In essence, chaotic processes produce inefficiencies. But it's also true that controlling wireless usage and costs presents countless challenges. Too often, companies' wireless inventory appears chaotic, with new and existing users adding or changing phones, plans, and device accessories. Byzantine invoices become difficult to audit. Challenges grow as organizations wrestle with economic and technological change and puzzle over an array of services, devices, and features. IT directors brood over an economy gone haywire; they stress over workers gone wireless.

The Solution? Outsourcing provider GSG addresses these challenges through its new Mobile Manager offering. This Web management product offers tools to capture the "big picture" of a wireless environment and organize all the confusion inherent within it. As a Web portal, Mobile Manager solves two main management challenges: controlling wireless expenses and automating the back-office work related to supporting wireless devices. At the same time, it enables the faster adoption of self-help via user-friendly technology. In other words, when it comes to a wireless world, Mobile Manager empowers enterprises to organize employees and their activities within a core customer framework. IDC finds the following:

- ☒ **Adopting the product is easy.** To get started, clients send GSG three months of invoices or letters of authorization to communicate with their vendors. GSG then handles initial inventory build, the monthly loading of invoices, and the ongoing maintenance of data.
- ☒ **The tool is flexible and scalable.** Mobile Manager's interface fluidly establishes new wireless users, devices, and accounts. Management can add a new user and assign him/her to a cost center, department, or GL code with a click of the mouse. Changes are instantly logged to the database, and reporting is automatically updated.
- ☒ **Coverage is comprehensive.** Clients can build and maintain a detailed and accurate inventory of all their corporate-liable devices and services, along with information on users, departments, cost centers, and rate plans.
- ☒ **The solution is hosted.** Mobile Manager is a hosted application, so there is no need to set up servers or install complicated software, updates, or patches. Any Web browser suffices for log-in and management of wireless services.

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- ☒ **Cost savings are significant.** GSG reports that small, midsize, and large companies can reduce their telecom spend by 20–40% without switching carriers or changing contract terms. The product can discover cost reduction opportunities that save customers an average of \$200 per device in the first year.

#### FUTURE OUTLOOK

It will be essential for enterprises to better understand their universe of employees through powerful reporting and analytics, not unlike IBM's recent initiative to analyze client customers with the help of RedPill Solutions (for more on the innovative potential in customer analytics, see *In Pursuit of Innovation: IBM Daksh Goes Deeper into Analytics Services*, IDC #220758, November 2009).

Ultimately, amid the confusion of a wireless world, it appears that a new paradigm is emerging. Today's worker is much more an independent actor than yesterday's brand of employee. Therefore, when it comes to wireless expense management, IDC feels that organizations should stay attuned to a changing workforce in the following ways:

- ☒ **Anticipate.** How much visibility and control will enterprises cede to their employees in 2010? How does a company measure the expenses associated with so many devices and so much text messaging, data usage, and long-distance voice usage?
- ☒ **Develop a CRM-like strategy for information.** Manage the pain points and costs of a mobile and homeshored workforce (the challenges of mobile devices, voice and data, international roaming, and applications associated with mobile devices and cell phones).
- ☒ **Secure the environment.** Protect the privacy of both an employee's conversations and corporate data as devices become more portable, mobile, and dispersed.