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This month's applications are tools which help you save time and access desktop applications from your mobile device. While these apps might not seem like deserve to be called "revolutionary", almost all of the technology leaders I work with use mobile apps like these to perform tasks which previously needed human interaction or required the use of Windows-based computer hardware.

These apps are evidence that the "post-PC" era is available for implementation by early adopters today. Integrating mobile apps into traditional business processes may offer significant cost advantages and flexibility to those who are willing to consider moving to this brave new world.

## Fast Customer

Interactive Voice Response (IVR) systems have changed the way we all interface with our vendors. Navigating these systems requires users to select options and press buttons on a phone before you speak with a human being.

The menus have voice prompts such as *"For schedules, press one. For service, press two. To enjoy our bad music and infinite hold times, press three. For directions on how to safely vent your frustration with this incomprehensible phone system, press four."*

Although there are some tasks which don't require that you speak with a human, users frequently have to navigate a menu multiple times to find the option which will allow you to listen to the "on hold music" while you wait for a human being to address your issue.

A family member recently introduced me to a new tool for dealing with this frustration – it is called "Fast Customer". This free service allows you to initiate a call to customer service for many major corporations from a free smart phone app. The

Fast Customer app gathers the required information, navigates the menu, and puts

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line.

I was able to concentrate on my work instead of listening to music on hold, and the product worked wonderfully.

Fast Customer ([www.fastcustomer.com](http://www.fastcustomer.com)) is a free smart phone app for Android, iOS, the Amazon Kindle Fire. The service can also be accessed using text messaging from any phone and as an add-in to the Google Chrome browser.

## VMWare View and Citrix Receiver for iPad

Many firms are migrating their users to hosted or virtual desktop environments, where all data and applications reside on a server. The standardized Windows configurations on the servers hosting these activities reduce the administrative tasks associated with individual users.

Although most of the firms adopting this approach are using Windows computers with multiple monitors as “terminals” to access their programs and data, these hosting arrangements also make it possible to use a tablet computer to access these hosted resources, and allows tablet (or Mac) users to run software which is only available on the Microsoft Windows operating system.

Some users who are utilizing virtual desktop environments are experimenting with using a TV connector for their mobile device along with an external bluetooth mouse and keyboard for input.

Although these efforts push the limits of what can be accomplished with modern tablets and smart phones, there may be a point in the not too distant future where organizations will no longer issue laptop and desktop computers, and instead opt for using mobile devices with hosted desktop environments.

The hosting platforms, which include VMWare View and Citrix XenDesktop, require

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