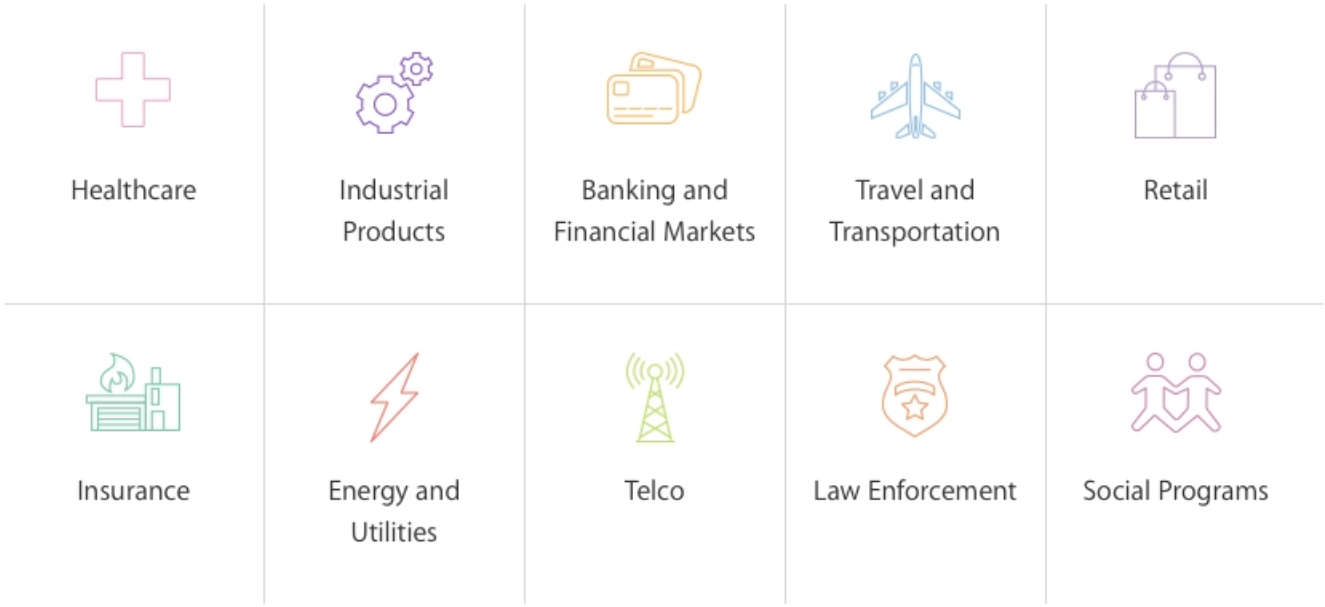
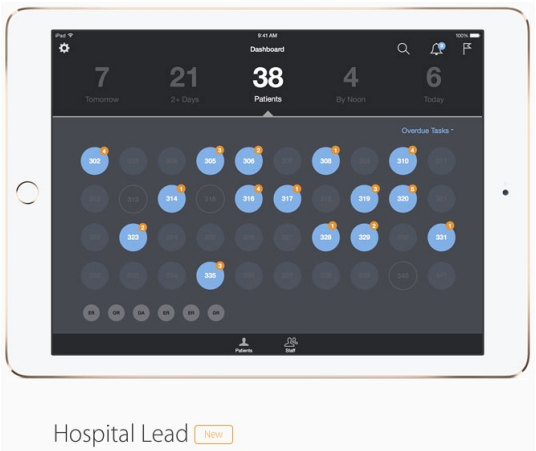


Another eight enterprise apps have emerged from the Apple and IBM partnership under IBM's MobileFirst banner. The full range of such apps now extends to over 100 industry-specific mobile solutions. This partnership was always likely to be a slow burner, but it does seem to be gaining momentum as time passes.

IBM's positioning for MobileFirst for iOS is to bring instant, turnkey access to best-in-class enterprise mobility. It plans to deliver solutions that will enrich customer service, strengthen brand loyalty, shrink operating expenses and produce new efficiencies.



In detail the partnership has enabled IBM to develop a rich suite of vertical and horizontal market apps with significant complexity to address areas such as logistics, travel, banking, energy, retail, and a major focus on healthcare - four of the eight apps just released are focused on health.

In each case the app is likely to be seen as a template for the industry, with IBM adding its extensive consultancy expertise and resources to integrate and customise the implementation to suit each client.

This is the perfect solution for Apple, as it has always struggled to integrate the requirements for a successful enterprise strategy with the highly complex and customised solutions needed to address this market. Resolving this internally would entail some very uncomfortable cultural adjustments which its naturally product and consumer-focused ethos would find hard to embrace. Conversely for IBM, which has decades of such experience, and is increasingly less focused on hardware (having sold its PC and rack server businesses to Lenovo), this is the perfect opportunity. It brings highly professional consultancy expertise and strong historical enterprise relationships while (unlike in the Wintel world) not having any major concerns about competing with the platform vendor.

Apple does not report segment sales, so measures of success in enterprise will most likely be anecdotal, or as touted by Tim Cook on the company's quarterly results calls. However all the signs are that the building blocks are in place with this partnership, and that IBM (which has stuttered lately) puts at least equal importance on its success as does Apple.

Apple resellers with aspirations into the enterprise would be well advised to build links with local IBM offices and sales teams.

Go IBM MobileFirst for iOS

Go IBM MobileFirst for Healthcare

Go Apple and IBM Bearing Fruit