



## Is BYOD Bring Your Own Debacle?

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As the never-ending stream of the latest and greatest technologies come out, employers would be wise to consider whether or not to permit a Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) practice. With the ever-growing options in smartphones, tablets, and other personal computing devices, many employees are choosing to shed corporate-issued devices in favor of their own cutting-edge technology for both work and personal purposes.

The BYOD trend has obvious benefits for both the employer and the employee. For employees, it may result in greater efficiency, fewer devices to manage, and the ability to use the most up-to-date technology. For employers, it presents opportunity to reap substantial benefits from lower costs in software, hardware, and IT support.

However, in spite of these benefits, there are risks and costs that must be considered. Though cutting-edge technology is just a click away, employers may not be as tuned in when it comes to understanding the legal and practical risks of embracing BYOD in the workplace. When it comes to BYOD, an ounce of prevention and advice for clients is certainly worth far more than a pound of cure.

To prevent and or reduce liability risks, companies must thoughtfully prepare or carefully scrutinize existing BYOD policies. And because technology is constantly changing, these must be fluid and recurring processes. Policies that must be considered include those that address security and antivirus protection, password requirements, encryption protocols, acceptable use of devices, wireless access, remote access, and reasonable expectation of privacy. In addition to comprehensive BYOD policies, there is also a growing availability of technology that employers can utilize to improve the security of its business data.

The legal implications of BYOD are profound and cannot be ignored. Utmost importance must be placed upon educating, informing, and training employees about privacy, security, and evidence recovery implications associated with the use of personal devices for work. While BYOD may be well on its way to becoming the new normal, putting these policies in place now can help mitigate the risks and protect employers from significant liability.

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**Annie Lau**  
Partner  
415.490.9023  
[Email](#)