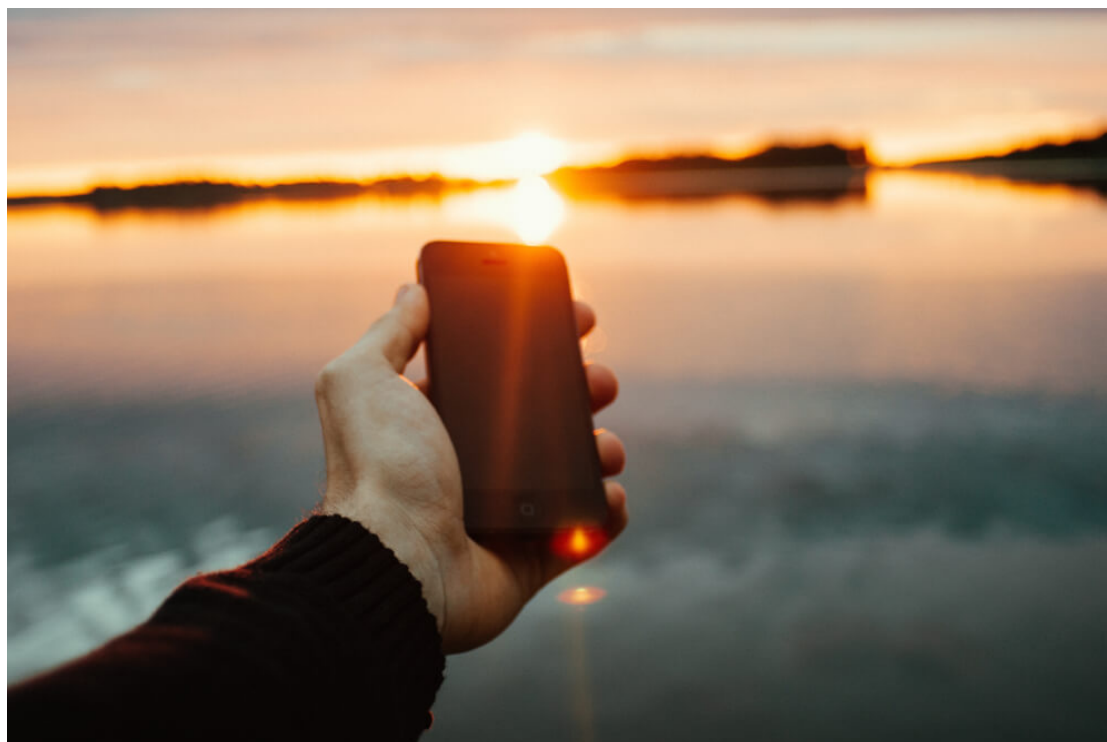


Are FX brokerages now in the age of disruptive Mobile First platforms, and must they act accordingly?

“MetaTrader 4 on a Linux VPS, looks, and acts, like MetaTrader 4 running in a Windows environment.”
Sheldon Gardner, President, SkyDesks Inc.



By Sheldon Gardner, President, SkyDesks.com

For over a decade Windows Server has been the 'go to' technology in Forex VPS solutions.

The primary reason was the fact that MetaTrader4 is a native Windows application and has since its launch been the most popular trading platform in retail FX.

Recently, through a perfected Wine emulation, SkyDesks offered MT4 from a web platform with no downloads, no RDP, providing a MetaTrader 4 platform fully available in any web browser and is currently SkyDesks is planning to offer a companion smartphone app called MobileFirst.

The question that we, just as any other technology developer for the FX industry should ask is, whether this type of disruption is a means of retail brokerages gaining an edge over their competition whilst at the same time engaging increasingly mobile-led traders globally, is essential at this point.

Several recent examples of this direction have manifested themselves very recently, in that despite mobile platforms having become ubiquitous, actually positioning them as the sole method by which a trader interacts with a brokerage is a very recent dynam

Nowadays, ergonomics are such a priority for retail traders, especially with ability to gain all of their data and market information as well as trade execution on one device.

On this subject, FinanceFeeds recently spoke to Kim Cramer Larsson, [Procurement](#) Technical Analyst, Saxo Bank, who explained “I don’t think the multi-screen desktop environment will be the end but more and more of our trades are coming from mobile phones. That’s why we offer same features across all devices including this new Trade Signals tool.”

Trading on the go is vital for many, thus with the availability of every function on one system, the end of the multi-screen trading environment for retail traders could be nigh as the mobile-first era is now here, hence traders being able to access actionable content via all devices, on just one platform.

Just a matter of weeks later, a discussion with regard to mobile led technologies was held at last week's [iFX EXPO Asia 2017](#) FX industry conference produced by ConversionPros and industry news and research group [Finance Magnates](#) in Hong Kong, where Leverage's CEO for APAC Itai Damti chaired a panel discussion involving several global senior FX industry executives, during which he focused on a dominant topic within China, that being the comprehensive use of mobile technology.

“With regard to numbers, some brokers such as Plus500 have got 40% of all activity coming from mobile and 70% of all signups coming from monbile which is staggering. Paul, what makes us lag behind Facebook, Alibaba and Amazon in terms of that type of engagement model?”

Paul G Smith, CEO at Mobile Trading Partners then added “We have seen moves from within two aspects. In certain parts of Asia we have seen situations in which the mobile broker is yet to arrive, but there are now markets in the same continent in which no desktop is used at all, and the entire business is conducted via mobile. I have seen so much activity in which automation is important around mobile, including the development of push notifications, and systems which are designed around activating the client, mainly because if these systems exist, less staff are required and [technology can replace them.](#)”

Hence from a user engagement perspective, my opinion is that MobileFirst has value, however it also benefits brokers from an operational efficiency perspective.

The technical aspects of WINE

“Wine, originally an acronym for “Wine Is Not an Emulator, is a compatibility layer capable of running Windows applications on several POSIX-compliant operating systems, such as Linux, macOS, & BSD.

Instead of simulating internal Windows logic like a virtual machine or emulator, Wine translates Windows API calls into POSIX calls on-the-fly, eliminating the performance and memory penalties of other methods and allowing you to cleanly integrate Windows applications into your desktop.”

The version of WINE currently running in the Linux operating system is just about perfect!

Consequently, MetaTrader 4 on a Linux VPS, looks, and acts, identical to MetaTrader 4 running in a Windows environment. The fact that MetaTrader 4 runs seamlessly in a web browser, or a webapp, upsets the technology balance in the VPS world, which in my opinion is very important.

“A disruptive innovation is an innovation that creates a new market and value network and eventually disrupts an existing market and value network, displacing established market leading firms, products and alliances. The term was defined and phenomenon analyzed by Clayton M. Christensen beginning in 1995.

In the early 2000s, “significant societal impact” has also been used as an aspect of disruptive innovation.

Can developers such as SkyDesks have a ‘societal impact’- like Facebook? This has not yet happened. So, the answer to this question is maybe.

Two-way communication, using WebRTC, enables the smartphone app to control the EA parameters on the Virtual Machine, and this paves the way forward for completely integrated EA control via its parameter window. This can ‘disrupt’ the way Forex trading is conducted, thus I would welcome industry feedback on this matter.

[#Forex VPS](#), [#Kim Cramer Larsson](#), [#Linux](#), [#metatrader 4 platform](#), [#mobile trading](#), [#mt4](#), [#Platforms](#), [#Saxo Bank](#), [#Sheldon Gardner](#), [#SkyDesks](#)

