



IBM provides real-time employee collaboration and global information access with BlackBerry solution

IBM is a multinational computer technology and services corporation with technological leadership that dates back to the 19th century.

The Challenge

With 400,000 employees doing business in over 170 countries, and 40% of their workers considered mobile, IBM wanted to extend and enhance its collaborative and innovative culture by introducing a strategic wireless solution. The ability to share information quickly and easily among a geographically disbursed enterprise community was considered to be IBM's most important core requirement when developing their mobility strategy.

"One thing we know is that people are not always able to use a personal computer in certain situations," says Bill Bodin, Chief Architect for Mobility Innovation at IBM. "Many of our employees work remotely, have long commutes and spend much of their time on the road engaging with customers."

The Solution

The IBM Global Technology Services (GTS) team was tasked with analysing; developing and deploying IBM's mobile strategy. The team led the organisation in the project to deploy BlackBerry® smartphones across key business groups, globally.

"The BlackBerry solution met our global requirement because we needed a solution that worked on multiple carriers, adhered to our security policies, integrated with our Lotus Notes environment and could be managed across thousands of users worldwide," says Kevin McConnell, Chief Technology Architect for IBM Mobile Enterprise Services.

Dan Papes, General Manager of IBM Mobile Enterprise Services, recalls the informal adoption of BlackBerry smartphones as the preferred device at IBM. "People were naturally attracted to the BlackBerry platform – our users just couldn't resist it because of the productivity gains they realised from the push e-mail function," he says.

Today, the BlackBerry® solution is considered the cornerstone of IBM's mobile strategy, overseen by the IBM Mobile Enterprise Services IT Delivery team within GTS, which manages, deploys and supports the BlackBerry solution for IBM employees globally.

Benefits

\$2 billion cost savings to date over the past decade

83% realise more than one hour extra time per day

Supports flexible working practices

Fosters innovation to drive growth

Best practices shared with customers

Along with mobile email, IBM employees rely on their BlackBerry smartphones for accessing key enterprise applications, such as IBM Lotus Sametime®, which provides enterprise instant messaging, presence and web capabilities, and IBM Lotus Connections®, which is social software for business that enables users to collaborate on projects by using dynamic networks of co-workers, partners and customers.

In addition to mobilising the Lotus suite of products, GTS has deployed and enabled other key business applications for BlackBerry smartphones. Many of these applications were internally developed. For example, a browser-based application offers access to the company's entire software product portfolio from the BlackBerry smartphone. Another is a translation application that taps into IBM's server-based voice recognition system allowing people who speak different languages to use their BlackBerry smartphone much like a human translator where no typing is required.

"With so many users, in so many locations, it was also important to keep the BlackBerry solution manageable," says McConnell. "At IBM, we have enabled a variety of self-help and diagnostic tools resulting in the ability to manage a larger set of users without increasing costs." Because of the manageability of the BlackBerry solution, and its deployment-friendly features, McConnell says, "IBM has been able to double its user base every year since 2004, with the aim of building to 200,000+ employees in the future."

The Benefits

By extending their business borders with a BlackBerry solution, GTS has enabled the IBM culture of innovation and collaboration to flourish, supporting and fostering an "always open, always there" community. Moreover, the solution is estimated to have saved IBM \$2 billion over the past decade in real estate, employee relocations and driving expenses.

"Today, the first medium of communication in IBM is Sametime," says Manish Singh, Program Director for Product Management, IBM. It provides users with the ability to access their full buddy lists, send and receive real-time instant messages, and have presence awareness. In addition, people are relying on the "Profiles" part of Connections which is a graphically driven tool for an address book. It allows users to look up employee names, see how they're pronounced, and single-click call an individual, all now accessible on BlackBerry smartphones.

"Our culture at IBM thrives on collaboration, and of particular interest in the mobile field is the social computing aspect," continues Bodin. "When you're able to connect a vast social network and give them the ability to share real-time information, it's a winning combination. As you can imagine, there are many mobile applications and services that are very specific to local geographies, and we are developing a new social framework so we can harvest local knowledge from places such as India and Africa. Our employees can contribute their ideas, and we can deliver the best mobile resources to every employee's BlackBerry smartphone. This will improve productivity and enhances their ability to innovate."

Finally, the BlackBerry solution is helping IBM better serve its customers. IBM learns from its internal BlackBerry smartphone user population, which acts as a test environment, to further develop its mobility solutions and services capabilities, and IBM clients benefit from this process. IBM also shares its own management and deployment best practices with customers to shortcut their development and deployment times.

www.blackberry.co.uk/casestudies

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