

Top-Ranked UK Law Firm Boosts productivity and time capture with BlackBerry solution



Addleshaw Goddard is a major UK law firm with three offices in London, Leeds and Manchester. It is ranked 15th in the UK according to fee income, and sixth according to the number of FTSE 100 Clients. It has nearly 1,500 staff members, including 182 partners and over 500 other fee earners.

One of the ways the firm delivers great value and differentiates itself from its competitors is through its investment in technology. According to Dan Simms, Head of IT Technical Solutions at Addleshaw Goddard, they were one of the first law firms in the UK to deploy BlackBerry® smartphones. Today, over half the firm's staff have BlackBerry smartphones – a total of over 800 users – running through BlackBerry® Enterprise Server.

The Challenge

"We tried other solutions, but our staff always returned them back to IT asking for something more intuitive. When we completed the trial of the first BlackBerry smartphones the response was unanimous, 'you're not having it back,'" says Simms.

With such a large user base, Simms and his team quickly realised that the BlackBerry® solution was the ideal platform for implementing more business-enhancement tools to increase productivity, client service, ROI and income. "We've carried out several developments for BlackBerry smartphones over the years, including a CRM integration that lets users look up contact details from their BlackBerry smartphone and provides mobile access to our central phone directory," says Simms. These developments have given Addleshaw Goddard staff more immediate access to client information and as a result increased their productivity.

A major business challenge has been to accurately capture chargeable time whilst on the move and working out of the office. "Our people are increasingly working flexibly – from clients' offices, from home and from other locations. The BlackBerry solution enables us to work from anywhere, so we need the tools to capture time when out of the office," explains Simms. Enabling staff to work on a more flexible basis is a key strand of the firm's aim to attract and retain the most talented people.

Benefits

Enable flexible working

Improve client service

Increase chargeable hours

Reliable and secure

Ease of use and management

"Whether it's for time capture, communication, workflow or training, our BlackBerry solution lets our people and clients interact with our core systems in a decentralised way. It's one of the many ways we're identifiably different from our competitors."

Dan Simms, Head of IT Technical Solutions, Addleshaw Goddard

The Solution

After a successful pilot, the firm has started to deploy its BlackBerry time-recording solution. The solution is an internally developed application that fully integrates with all its systems giving Addleshaw Goddard the best possible set of features to match its requirements. The application lets staff log their time directly using their BlackBerry smartphones, which not only saves time, it improves billing details and reduces inaccuracy as time is recorded as it happens, rather than at a later date.

The updates entered on the BlackBerry smartphone are automatically entered into the firm's time-recording system via the BlackBerry Enterprise Server. "We believe it is of immense benefit for us," says Simms, "because it allows fee-earners to maximise chargeable hours and contribute to the firm's profitability."

The Benefits

The success of the time-recording solution for BlackBerry smartphones has further proven to Simms that the BlackBerry solution is the right choice for future projects. "The BlackBerry solution is such a versatile platform with a large body of third party developers behind it. It is reliable and secure, not to mention easy to administer and manage in a corporate context, all of which make the BlackBerry solution the natural choice," says Simms.

In the coming months the firm will be piloting several new applications for BlackBerry smartphones such as a corporate instant messaging system. Addleshaw Goddard is also exploring how it can bring some of its other innovations to BlackBerry smartphones to keep their competitive advantage. An example of this is the BlackBerry smartphone support for the internal workflows behind the firm's business processes.

"Whether it's for time capture, communication, workflow or training, our BlackBerry solution lets our people and clients interact with our core systems in a decentralised way. It's one of the many ways we're identifiably different from our competitors," concludes Simms.

For further information: www.blackberry.com/uk/mobilecrm