

FAST GROWING SOUTH AFRICAN RETAILER ADOPTS REAL-TIME, NON-STOP COLLABORATION WITH THE BLACKBERRY SOLUTION AND GOOGLE



Beauty Warehouse is the retail arm of a South African manufacturer and distributor of professional beauty products. Run by a small team of highly mobile managers led by Ricky Pearl, the company's owner, Beauty Warehouse has three retail stores, a manufacturing facility and an e-commerce store.

THE CHALLENGE

According to Pearl, doing business in South Africa can be very challenging, especially for small companies. While the economy is growing fast, many business services remain expensive compared to other countries. In addition, recent economic expansion has put unforeseen demand on the country's infrastructure. This has led, for example, to near-daily power cuts, euphemistically referred to as "load shedding," which can bring a company's PC-based collaboration to a halt. These challenges prompted Pearl to look for a cost-effective, highly reliable mobile solution that would enable him to keep working and stay in touch with his team, even if the power went out.

THE SOLUTION

Pearl decided to equip himself and his business partner with BlackBerry® smartphones using BlackBerry® Internet Service. He also chose to make the BlackBerry solution the backbone of his team's online collaboration. Instead of investing in an in-house email server, Beauty Warehouse relies on Google mobile applications for email, calendar and contacts. BlackBerry Internet Service provides virtual real-time delivery of Gmail messages to the devices, and Google Sync synchronises the built-in BlackBerry calendar with Beauty Warehouse's online Google calendars. The company also use NimBuzz unified chat software for instant messaging with Skype and MSN users adapted for the BlackBerry solution. Finally they rely on Viigo software to access RSS feeds on their BlackBerry smartphones.

THE BENEFITS

"BlackBerry allows us to run a highly efficient operation with a very loose, responsive management style," says Pearl. The company's two partners are its senior managers. They spend nearly all their time between their offices, stores and their customers. "We're constantly in touch with other, whether by voice or by instant messaging," adds Pearl.

Pearl estimates that two thirds of the 200 plus emails he receives daily are important and need to be handled immediately. "Thanks to BlackBerry I never get behind on my email. I deal with them as they come in. This kind of responsiveness is very important for a company of our size. It gives us an advantage over the competition," says Pearl. The BlackBerry solution has also enabled Pearl to manage his company in real time. For example, when an order is received in the e-store, it appears automatically in a special RSS feed on his device. "I can then send out instructions to manufacturing, packaging and shipping to ensure that the order is fulfilled as promptly as possible," adds Pearl.

BENEFITS

IMPROVED EFFICIENCY

**REAL-TIME RESPONSIVE
MANAGEMENT**

**REDUCED SYSTEMS
DOWNTIME**

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Beauty Warehouse

In fact, the BlackBerry solution has become such a central part of his way of working that Pearl rarely needs to turn on his PC. He estimates that he can perform 90 per cent of his office tasks from his BlackBerry smartphone. "Occasionally I'll need a file that's on my laptop. When that happens, I use Avvenu remote desktop software to access the file from my BlackBerry smartphone," says Pearl. But for Pearl, undoubtedly the biggest advantage of the BlackBerry solution has been overcoming the downtime created by the country's load shedding programme. "The power can be out for up to 4 hours a day, 3-4 times a week. This wreaks havoc with phone and IT systems. We're able to keep working while other company's grind to a halt," concludes Pearl.

For further information: www.blackberry.com/go/success

BLACKBERRY CASE STUDY
BEAUTY WAREHOUSE

