



South African IT firm increases efficiency of field staff by 70% with BlackBerry solution

Click IT is a medium-sized Information & Communication Technology (ICT) solutions provider in South Africa with a workforce comprised largely of mobile technicians and sales consultants. The firm provides a broad range of services in three fields: ICT infrastructure, technical services and business solutions.

The Challenge

Click IT was faced with the challenge of getting up to date information to its technicians and sales consultants in the field. They would leave the office in the morning with a printout of their calendar, customer records and job cards. During the day the call centre would send them updates and scheduling changes via text messages.

As the firm's business grew, this solution became increasingly unwieldy. "When we needed to communicate with field staff, it always cost us the price of a SMS and we had to retype the information into a mobile phone," says Daniel Turtledove, director of Business Solutions at Click IT. Conversely, the technicians and sales force had no way to send information back to the call centre, other than texting or calling. This also led to incorrect information due to the manual, labour-intensive way of updating the customer records.

Click IT needed a cost-effective mobile solution which would provide secure and reliable real-time information to their field staff, giving them access to corporate and customer information from a user-friendly handset.

The Solution

"We're a small business with 25 staff members, so budget is always a key factor for us," explains Turtledove, who could see that "everybody needed a smartphone if we wanted to take communications with our field staff to the next level." In 2008, Click IT decided to implement a BlackBerry solution to offer mobile communications and data access for its field staff.

Benefits

70% increase in efficiency

No increase in per-user operating costs

Integrates seamlessly with CRM

Foundation for future mobile application deployment

The Benefits

According to Turtledove the number one advantage delivered by the BlackBerry solution with the mobile CRM application is improved efficiency. When the Click IT call centre schedules new appointments in GoldMine the technicians see them immediately on their BlackBerry® smartphones. They also have wireless access to customer records and the incident report. "When appointments are rescheduled, they are automatically updated," says Turtledove. "The BlackBerry solution has eliminated the time wasted by texting and unnecessary trips to the office with scheduling changes, and resolved errors from incomplete information."

The technicians also use BlackBerry Messenger to brainstorm solutions to tricky problems. The upshot has been a 70% increase in efficiency, according to Turtledove. "They make better use of their time with the BlackBerry smartphone, which means they can handle more jobs."

The BlackBerry solution has also proven to be cost effective. It delivers greater, more effective, communications and productivity than the previous SMS-based solution, yet with similar per-user operating costs.

"The BlackBerry solution has undoubtedly increased our efficiency, communication and teamwork and spread knowledge efficiently, effectively and instantly, throughout the entire organisation," concludes Turtledove.

Future Plans

In phase two of the implementation, scheduled for later this year, Click IT will push business process efficiencies even further. Technicians will be able to update the call centre on their status and close job cards while in the field. This process will be linked with the billing system, with the aim that invoices may be issued automatically when the job is closed.

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"I used to spend an hour a day updating the CRM database at the end of the day, now it's 15-30 minutes at most, and this gives me the ability to do what I do best, which is be in front of customers – and having instant access to up-to-date information allows me to be my most effective."

Daniel Turtledove
Director of Business Solutions
Click IT