

PLAZA ATHÉNÉE HOTEL DELIVERS PERFECTION WITH BLACKBERRY SOLUTION



As a luxury hotel, Plaza Athénée prides itself on faultless customer service. By equipping its staff with BlackBerry smartphones, it has achieved faster interaction between employees and the very best customer service.

THE SITUATION

Located on avenue Montaigne, Plaza Athénée is one of the most prestigious hotels in Paris. Customers who stay in one of the 188 suites expect nothing less than perfection. Staff from thirty different disciplines including front-of-house, catering, house-keeping, purchasing, and IT work together to achieve faultless service. "With five hundred members of staff, our communication needs are tremendous," explains Marie-Christine Vittet, Information Systems Director of two Parisian hotels in the Dorchester Collection chain (Plaza Athénée and Le Meurice). "Everything must be done quickly, so that there are no hiccups and customer's needs are fully satisfied. For this reason we required a mobile solution that allowed us to communicate with each other in real-time". In 2002, the hotel opted to deploy the BlackBerry® solution, and has not looked back since.

THE SOLUTION

"The fact that push-email technology allows us to be notified of a message as soon as it arrives in the mailbox was a key factor in our decision to select the BlackBerry solution" adds Marie-Christine. "But it wasn't the only reason. As the majority of our customers use BlackBerry® smartphones we wanted to convey that our attitude reflects their needs and expectations of a prestigious hotel."

While the Plaza Athénée wanted a solution that allowed messages to be exchanged in real-time, it was also seeking an architecture suited for sharing diaries, and one that could be interfaced with Opéra, an integrated software package dedicated to luxury hotel management.

The BlackBerry solution was integrated with the hotel's messaging server, Microsoft® Exchange, and the Microsoft® Active Directory to retrieve the profiles and level of authorisation for each user. "As far as integration goes it would be difficult to get any easier," adds Marie-Christine. "I simply connected the BlackBerry® Enterprise Server up to the existing system, handed out the BlackBerry smartphones to my colleagues and we were in business."

At the same time, with the help of the software developer, Micros Fidelio France, and its service provider, P&T Consulting France, Plaza Athénée developed an interface enabling the BlackBerry Enterprise Server to interact with Opéra. This allowed the sales team who often travelled to various parts of the world in search of new customers to access vital business information at any time: hotel occupancy rates, turnover, etc.

The Plaza Athénée uses BlackBerry smartphones which communicate over UMTS and EDGE networks provided by the telephone operator SFR.

BENEFITS

**MAJORITY OF OUR
CUSTOMERS USE
BLACKBERRY SMARTPHONES**

**EASY INTEGRATION TO
EXISTING HOTEL SYSTEM**

**ACCESS TO VITAL HOTEL
BUSINESS INFORMATION**

**IMPROVED CUSTOMER
SERVICE**

**HANDLE BUSINESS AT
ANY TIME DURING THE DAY
WHILE ON THE MOVE**

"When I was away on business in London, I organised a booking for an important group, by using the BlackBerry smartphone to communicate with the hotel's different departments. The customer was very impressed with our responsiveness and efficiency, which is obviously very important for our image."

Julia Pelte, Client Relations Manager
at the Plaza Athénée

"The BlackBerry smartphone is a reassuring device. I know that the moment I pick it up, I have the entire hotel in hand..."

Guy Bertaud, Assistant Manager
of the Plaza Athénée

THE BENEFITS

Highly satisfied with the architecture set up, Marie-Christine Vittet is constantly singing the praises of the BlackBerry solution. "We tried out several different rival offers and none came close to BlackBerry solution".

And indeed, the use of BlackBerry smartphones in key positions around the hotel has resulted in numerous advantages, with the improved customer service brought about by real-time communication being just one example. "We have gained freedom," explains Marie-Christine Vittet. "I no longer have to stop by the office at regular intervals to check my messages. I can handle business at any time of the day while on the move. A hotel needs to be managed around the clock. We must always be available, particularly as our customers come from all over the world. As we are going to sleep, some of them are just waking up and they wouldn't understand if we didn't answer them simply because of the time difference. Our BlackBerry smartphones bring us peace of mind because we know we will always be on the ball."

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

BLACKBERRY CASE STUDY
PLAZA ATHÉNÉE HOTEL

