



BlackBerry Customer Success

Electric vehicle entrepreneur drives his latest business ventures with a BlackBerry smartphone

KEY BENEFITS

- Cost effective and simple to use
 - Unified email, voice, news and social media device
 - Real time information access
 - Supports flexible working
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BACKGROUND

Keith Johnston has been an electric vehicle pioneer since before electric cars were fashionable. In 2000 he left the marketing communications agency that he had founded to pursue a new career in a field that he felt passionately about: clean energy cars. He launched GoinGreen, a start-up that had secured the UK distribution rights for the Reva G-Wiz, a California-designed, Indian-made, electric vehicle (EV). With Johnston as managing director, GoinGreen's G-Wiz became one of the world's best-selling electric vehicles in 2006. In 2007, Johnston joined the Reva Electric Car Company, makers of the G-Wiz, as president of European Operations.

Recently, Johnston decided to combine his first love - starting a new business - with his second - electric vehicles. He left Reva to do consulting work and set up a communications agency. The aim of both activities is to bring his deep understanding of EV consumers to car and battery makers around the world.

“WORK IS A THING I DO, NOT A PLACE I GO TO”

When asked about the future of electric cars, Johnston says that “an electric vehicle isn't just going to be a mobility unit, it's also going to be an information and communication hub and an energy storage device. You will move seamlessly between home, the office and the car and that connectivity will always stay on. In the near future, the smart grid will draw electricity stored in electric vehicles to power the grid”

The concepts of mobility and connectivity are echoed in the way Johnston works. “I'm by heart an entrepreneur. I've always enjoyed turning ideas into businesses. And the businesses I've started have always been pretty disruptive in the sense that they tried to find new ways of doing things, whether better, cheaper or quicker.”

“A BlackBerry smartphone makes you a nimble operator. And when you’re small, being fast is very important.”

Keith Johnston
electric vehicle pioneer
and entrepreneur

Industry: Entrepreneur

Region: Europe

Solution:
BlackBerry® smartphone

So when he decided to go off on his own, the first device Johnston bought was a BlackBerry® smartphone. “I always say that work is a thing I do, not a place I go to. My BlackBerry is the primary enabler of that, because I can set up a business without requiring a huge IT infrastructure.” He considers it to be the most important investment he has made in a business tool. “I can’t think of a more cost effective tool for an entrepreneur. I have half a dozen email addresses that come through my BlackBerry. I’m able to keep them all organized.”

“WHAT’S THE POINT OF DRIVING TO THE OFFICE TO CHECK EMAIL?”

As a dyed in the wool environmentalist, Johnston also sees the BlackBerry smartphone as a means of avoiding unnecessary travel. “I am committed to walking the talk, as they say. So what’s the point of driving to the office to check email? I can avoid going into the office altogether because my BlackBerry smartphone is my office. And because it lets me work from where I am, it helps me minimize my impact on the environment caused by travel.”

I DIDN’T WANT TO LEAD A NINE-TO-FIVE JOB

Johnston credits his BlackBerry smartphone with revolutionizing his workday. “It gives me tremendous liberation in my life. I decided long ago that I did not want to lead a 9-to-5 lifestyle. I did not want to be tied to going to the same place in order to deliver the work that I do. BlackBerry connectivity is so robust and reliable, and all the tools and functionalities you need to run a business are built in,” says Johnston. “In addition to email and voice, I use it to update my blog, keep up on news, post to Twitter, take pictures and exchange files with anybody anywhere.”

“KEEPS ME AT THE CUTTING EDGE”

Finally, Johnston credits his BlackBerry smartphone with giving him a competitive advantage. “The other day I was in Germany for an important business meeting. The morning of the presentation, I checked my RSS feeds on my BlackBerry and discovered some important information relevant to the meeting. I updated my presentation and had info in the meeting that other people didn’t have. That kind of rapid response mechanism keeps me at the cutting edge of my field.” He adds, “I think of myself as a thought leader. A BlackBerry smartphone makes you a nimble operator. And when you’re small, being fast is very important.”

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