



Leading professional services firm improves client service and meets strict security requirements with BlackBerry solution

KPMG Ireland is a leading provider of professional services in Ireland. The firm has 79 partners and 1800 staff in offices in Dublin, Cork, Galway and Belfast. It works with clients in all sectors of Irish business, providing a full range of audit, tax and advisory services.

The Challenge

The cornerstone of KPMG's business is the quality of its service, advice and people. But in recent years responding to clients in a fast and efficient manner was becoming more of a challenge to deliver. The firm's fee-earners were spending an increasing amount of time out of the office: "Sixty percent of our staff would at any given moment be on the road," explains Mikkel Finsen, Associate Director for IT at KPMG Ireland. "This included everyone from trainees all the way up to the partners."

Mobile employees were equipped with laptops but, as Finsen says, "It's not always possible to have internet access with the laptop, especially when you're travelling." Mobile access to email was becoming a necessity in order to communicate with clients. "More and more communications were email-based. And there were delays responding to these messages because users were offline for long periods of time."

Finsen recognised that KPMG needed a mobile email solution but as a member of KPMG International, there were strict security criteria that had to be met. All data transmissions had to be encrypted and all devices had to be password protected. Administrators also had to be able to wipe a device if it was lost and enforce changing passwords on a regular basis.

Benefits

Improved client service

100% compliance with security policies

Increased responsiveness

Fast and efficient communications

The Solution

KPMG's IT team began its search for a highly secure solution that would also be reliable and easy to use. "We didn't want to give them a device that they would have to reboot all the time," says Finsen, "or one that would require hours of training. We wanted them to have something similar to the mobile phones that they were already comfortable using." After identifying its needs, KPMG contacted its mobile carrier, Vodafone, to review the available solutions.

The only devices that met KPMG's requirements for security and usability were BlackBerry® smartphones. The firm tested ten devices with a select group of partners for a few weeks and their response was very positive. KPMG then rolled out BlackBerry smartphones to the KPMG executive team of managers, directors and partners.

The solution was deployed using BlackBerry® Enterprise Server for Microsoft® Exchange. Today KPMG Ireland has two servers with nearly 600 users spread evenly across both with a single SQL database, and is used for voice and email communications, calendar and contact management. To ensure service levels, the firm uses software from BoxTone, a member of the BlackBerry® Alliance Program, to monitor the performance of the server, mobile network and devices. BoxTone automates many of the tasks that IT used to do manually, when the fleet was smaller, and it also speeds up trouble-shooting by proactively finding and fixing service issues. All users received a one-hour 1-to-1 training session, while IT administrators were trained on BlackBerry Enterprise Server administration.

The Benefits

The BlackBerry solution enables KPMG's administrators to enforce their security policy. Finsen explains, "some of the transactions we handle are just as confidential as the ones you'd do with your solicitor. So a lot of the data that's transmitted to us by email is private." With the BlackBerry solution, KPMG Ireland's mobile email is protected against unauthorised access.

"The users are very happy that they can now communicate with colleagues and clients faster than they could before," says Finsen. "The result has been that KPMG users have turned downtime into productive time, with the ability to respond immediately to client mail, meeting requests and the like. The BlackBerry users can now communicate via email without having to come into the office, log in to the corporate email system from home or use internet access in a café or hotel."

This newfound responsiveness and flexibility has increased the billable hours by freeing up time that used to be lost when travelling. "Since being introduced, the BlackBerry solution has become an integral part of how KPMG works, ensuring fast and accurate communications across the whole organisation and allowing our staff to promote and keep the high level of service clients expect from KPMG," says Finsen.

Finally, the BlackBerry solution has proven to be very cost effective. "Mobile users no longer need to purchase internet access at the hotel or in a café to check email. Nor has there been a big uptake on 3G cards. And the fact that they're leaving their laptops in their bags means they're damaging them less, which is a saving as well," says Finsen.

www.blackberry.co.uk/casestudies

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Mikkel Finsen
Associate Director
IT at KPMG Ireland