

# **AUTOMATING BUSINESS PROCESSES WITH BLACKBERRY SOLUTION AND TRACKTECH SAVES THOUSANDS OF EUROS ANNUALLY**



The LED Group is the leading manufacturer and distributor of LED lighting solutions. Headquartered in Dublin, Ireland, LED serves customers in the UK, Europe and Australasia.

## **THE CHALLENGE**

With so many of its sales staff on the road, there was a lot of downtime due to travel between appointments. When the time came for LED to renew its company wide mobile phone contract in the UK, it decided to equip its field sales team with email-enabled mobile devices with the goal of improving business efficiency and turning some of the downtime into productive time.

The chosen solution needed to be user friendly and require minimal training so the sales team could feel confident using the mobile devices as quickly as possible, to avoid further downtime and potential loss of sales. The solution also needed to integrate with LED's own internal sales tools.

## **THE SOLUTION**

After reviewing the solutions available, LED decided on the BlackBerry® solution, in partnership with Tracktech, a mobile technology integrator and member of the BlackBerry Alliance program.

Tracktech initially equipped a group of Area Sales Managers (ASM) with BlackBerry® smartphones. As part of an initial training session during a monthly sales meeting, Tracktech provided homework to LED consisting of common tasks to be completed during the user's first week with the new device. "It was one of the best things I've seen. It gave us a great boost; the guys were confident from the start," says Gary Seery, IT Manager for LED. This level of confidence would play an essential role in the next phase of the BlackBerry deployment at LED.

Within a few months LED realised that mobile email alone wasn't going to make the company more efficient. The issue now was paperwork. As Seery describes the situation, "Our guys had forms to complete in triplicate for practically every business process, such as returns, orders or customer opportunity recording. The time they were focusing on this was time they weren't selling."

Seery sent members of his team into the field to interview the ASMs and see exactly how they handled the paper-based tasks. The feedback identified a number of processes that could be automated. He realised that if LED could achieve this automation with their BlackBerry solution, it would give the company a competitive edge by making the sales force more responsive and professional to their clients. In addition, automating the paper-based tasks would bring significant cost benefits. "None of our competitors had anything like it," he says.

Seery asked Tracktech to develop a BlackBerry application to automate the biggest consumption of time - product returns. As Seery says, "It was an administrative nightmare. Customers were debiting us for returns that the credit control department didn't know about, because the ASMs would wait until they had a stack of forms to mail before sending them back to headquarters."

Tracktech wrote a custom web-based application that now enables sales staff to fill in returns forms on their BlackBerry smartphones and instantly send them back to the office. The application was integrated into LED's SAP Business One database using BlackBerry® Enterprise Server for Microsoft® Exchange. When the ASM pushes the submit button, the form is converted into an email that is sent instantly to the credit control department and the customer.

## **BENEFITS**

**ANNUAL COST SAVINGS  
OF ALMOST €20,000**

**INCREASED EFFICIENCY**

**IMPROVED WORK-LIFE  
BALANCE FOR AREA  
SALES MANAGERS**

**COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE  
IN INDUSTRY**

*"If we didn't have BlackBerry, our growth wouldn't be as strong as it is now."*

Gary Seery  
IT Manager  
LED

The success of the returns application convinced LED to streamline six other critical business processes, including order taking, customer opportunities and customer complaints. Just recently the company rolled out a stock availability application for large orders. Although each process is different, the end result is the same: greater efficiency, fewer errors and a very professional corporate image. "We're always on the lookout for improvements we can make. Once a quarter we spend time on the road with the ASMs, looking for things to improve. Departments also come to us with requests," says Seery.

## THE BENEFITS

The returns application made it abundantly clear to LED just how cost-effective the BlackBerry solution was. As Seery explains, "We no longer use triplicate forms and it takes the credit control department a tenth of the time to process credit notes. We used to spend €15,000 annually on triplicate books and in the region of €4,000 on postage. We no longer have these expenses." The returns application, which was the most complicated and time consuming one to develop, cost approximately €10,000 and so has paid for itself in under a year.

From an IT administration point of view, Seery has nothing but praise for the BlackBerry solution. He describes BlackBerry Enterprise Server as "very stable," adding: "I can't remember any unplanned downtime."

User take-up of the BlackBerry smartphones has been enthusiastic, thanks to the usability of the devices, the reliability of the services and the confidence of the users. "I just feel that the BlackBerry smartphone is a lot easier to use than any other device on the market and the Tracktech training scheme makes users very confident" says Seery. "when you're trying to change processes and mindsets, confidence is critically important. The ASMs say it's made them more efficient and responsive. They're not wasting time doing administration. I'd say 70-80% of them have even told me that it has also improved their work-life balance."

According to Seery, the positive impact of the BlackBerry solution is clear, "if we didn't have BlackBerry, our growth wouldn't be as strong as it is now." A remark made by Mark Newton, Sales Director for LED, at the company's last annual sales meeting brought the message home for Seery. As Seery states, "Newton said: "it would be easier to take the company cars away from the sales team than it would be to take their BlackBerry smartphones.""

"Deploying a BlackBerry solution is a sizeable advantage for LED", concludes Seery, "it's a unique selling point that none of our competitors have. Some of our customers even go so far as to call our ASMs 'the guys with the BlackBerrys'."

For further information: [www.blackberry.com/go/success](http://www.blackberry.com/go/success)

**BLACKBERRY CASE STUDY**  
**LED GROUP**

