

BLACKBERRY SOLUTION AND TRACKAPHONE DELIVER LONE WORKER PROTECTION AND REDUCE COSTS FOR SECURITY SERVICE FIRM



Manchester-based, but UK wide, Professional Witnesses Ltd is a security solutions company providing protection services to companies throughout the UK. Trevor Barton started the company in 1995, shortly after retiring as Chief Superintendent in charge of specialist operations for Greater Manchester Police.

THE CHALLENGE

Professional Witnesses protects both people and assets. An important part of this work is overseeing cash deliveries to financial institutions and preventing robberies. "Today we have 35 vans on the road watching over cash deliveries to banks and consequently we need to make sure the staff are properly protected," says Barton.

To this end, the firm developed its own lone worker protection system. The vans have been reinforced, staff wear a special uniform, and they are trained in detailed operating procedures. To provide an even higher level of staff protection, Professional Witnesses then started looking for a way to track the location of employees which allows it to alert the control centre in the event of an incident. "We tried various different phones and PDAs, but with no success," says Barton.

THE SOLUTION

Professional Witnesses worked with Trackaphone, an independent software vendor and BlackBerry® solutions partner, to develop the required tracking system. Trackaphone recommended using BlackBerry® smartphones. Barton explains, "The devices have first-class GPS chips. So we immediately jumped at the chance of rolling out the BlackBerry solution. The BlackBerry GPS gives us an accurate, real time picture of where our staff are located. This is absolutely vital as location is a prerequisite for lone worker protection and providing them help when they need it." The smartphones regularly push their location to the system via the BlackBerry® Enterprise Server. This allows Professional Witnesses to monitor the location of staff in real-time on the Trackaphone People Locator platform.

Trackaphone also added its BlackBerry® Alert Client software to the smartphones, enabling the user to activate green/amber/red escalation procedures and a panic button when in the field. "When they go into a dangerous situation, they activate the amber status. If after a set length of time they don't manually return to green status or extend the amber status, the system moves to red, which we consider to mean they are in physical danger. We can then listen in via the smartphone's microphone to what is happening and send rapid back-up using the BlackBerry smartphone's very accurate location information," explains Barton. The user can press a hot key "panic button" if they are attacked or need immediate assistance.

BENEFITS

**LONE WORKER
PROTECTION –
ENSURES STAFF SAFETY**

**IMPROVED QUALITY
OF SERVICE &
ACCOUNTABILITY**

**50% REDUCTION IN
COMMUNICATIONS COSTS**

"Now with the BlackBerry solution, I only need one device. It's a huge saving in terms of capital outlay for equipment. And the ability for staff to email and text instead of call has cut our mobile phone bill by half."

Trevor Barton,
Chairman, Professional Witnesses

THE BENEFITS

Staff protection is Barton's number one concern. In the year since the BlackBerry solution was deployed, it has proven successful and enabled the firm to provide immediate assistance to employees. Barton says that the need for personal security has vividly demonstrated the value of the BlackBerry solution to his staff. "They've wholeheartedly adopted their BlackBerry smartphones; it's the only device they carry. They can't start their work without logging on to the system, which prevents them from leaving it behind – an important point when it comes to ensuring their own safety," explains Barton.

The BlackBerry solution also lets Professional Witnesses demonstrate its credentials, which is vital in the security business. Barton says: "It enables us to show to ourselves, our staff, our clients and the police that we're meeting the high standards that we set for ourselves. At the end of every day we can show the client where our operatives were and what they did. It's transparent and totally accountable." Other companies have seen the solution that Professional Witnesses has adopted and are keen to replicate the system for themselves.

Barton also reinforced that a BlackBerry solution is ideal for small companies like his, "I used to carry a mobile phone, a lone worker protection device and a laptop with a 3G card. Now with the BlackBerry solution, I only need one device."

Barton concludes, "In my opinion, BlackBerry smartphones could end up being the holy grail of security work: the electronic pocketbook. It will allow us to practically eliminate all paperwork in the field whilst also keeping our operatives safe. This is the dream of everyone in the security services – a 100-percent reliable, dependable and true personal solution."

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

BLACKBERRY CASE STUDY
PROFESSIONAL WITNESSES

