

Case Study

Champion EMS

Productivity Gains with the Help of BlackBerry Professional Software Gives New Meaning to 'Every Second Counts' Credo

Company: **Champion EMS** - With a fleet of 40 mobile intensive care units and more than 225 employees, Champion EMS, owned by Trinity Mother Frances Hospitals & Clinics and Good Shepherd Health System, is a rural emergency medical services provider in Texas. The company provides emergency and non-emergency services in 13 counties and covers more than 10,000 square miles.

Industry: Life Sciences / Healthcare

Region: Americas

Company Size: Medium-sized Organization
– 225 employees

Email Environment: Microsoft® Exchange

BlackBerry Solution: BlackBerry® smartphones and BlackBerry® Professional Software

Challenge

Champion EMS wanted to find a highly secure email solution so both directors and dispatch operations could leverage the productivity benefits of wireless email.

Solution

Champion EMS implemented BlackBerry Professional Software, to manage their BlackBerry smartphone deployment, and quickly realized productivity gains throughout their operations.

Champion EMS' Results:

- Greater productivity with highly secure wireless email
- Increased availability of emergency and supervisory personnel
- Helps to minimize IT burden and continuous reliability



The Situation:

Boost Dispatch and Executive-Level Productivity with Highly Secure Mobile Email

Champion EMS is an emergency medical service providing ambulance and 9-1-1 response services in rural northeastern Texas. The executive team of seven directors and assistant directors are responsible for the functional areas of the company including Operations, Communications, and Clinical Services. They also share on-call duties after hours for the management of Champion EMS.

When Champion EMS' 9-1-1 communications center needed to involve its directors in time-sensitive issues, phone calls were typically the first method of contact. This often resulted in lengthy conversations or the need for callbacks, creating a time burden for both communication officers and directors. Due to the time lag inherent in Champion EMS' existing Internet-based email environment, email was not a suitable alternative for delivering these messages that originated in the communications center.

Chad Richey, Director of Communications and the lone internal IT resource at Champion EMS, wanted to introduce a technology solution that would free up dispatch personnel and make the directors more productive in their day-to-day business operations.

The directors, already equipped with BlackBerry smartphones, were spending too much time confined to their desks manually synching devices, processing accumulated emails and manually adjusting or resolving out-of-synch appointments in their desktop calendars.

"Our BlackBerry® Internet Service introduced us to the productivity benefits of mobile email, but as we grew, we needed a business solution for mobile email in near real-time, to drive even more productivity," Richey explains.

One major caveat to any technology investment at Champion EMS was the ability to transmit sensitive data in a highly secure manner. Any technology solution with the ability to mobilize patient data over email had to have advanced security functionality built in.

Why the BlackBerry Solution?

The original motivation to adopt BlackBerry smartphones at Champion EMS began with one person using the BlackBerry smartphone. While other executives were using other traditional cell phones, Richey chose to use a BlackBerry smartphone for the benefits of mobile email. After witnessing these productivity benefits first hand, Champion EMS' six other directors and the CEO quickly chose to implement BlackBerry smartphones with BlackBerry Internet Service.

The directors immediately abandoned their pagers, which they used to carry at all times to receive on-call and emergency messages as part of the 9-1-1 communication center's escalation protocols. Pages were now replaced by text messages sent via BlackBerry smartphones.

"The low total cost of ownership, combined with immediate productivity improvements, makes BlackBerry Professional Software a highly valuable tool that I believe is perfect for small businesses."

~ CHAD RICHEY, Director of Communications, Champion EMS

Improved Productivity and Security

Champion EMS was very impressed with the functionality of their BlackBerry smartphones and the BlackBerry Internet Service, but Richey wanted to implement a solution that would meet Champion EMS' evolving business needs for central management of the technology, enhanced productivity and security. He quickly found what he was looking for with BlackBerry Professional Software.

BlackBerry Professional Software is based on the core functionality and supported security functionality of the BlackBerry® Enterprise Server, in a package that's easy to set-up, simple to manage, priced right and tailored to meet the needs of smaller organizations with up to 30 wireless users. It enables wireless email, calendar synching and mobile access to business data in a software-based solution that can run on an existing email server.

"BlackBerry Professional Software is a very affordable solution for our user base of eight BlackBerry smartphone users. I find the capacity for growth very appealing," Richey reports. "Most importantly, the advanced security features built into the software satisfied the compliance adherence interests of our CEO."

With CEO approval, Richey downloaded the software and installed it onto Champion EMS' existing Microsoft Exchange server, following the step-by-step installation wizard. "BlackBerry Professional Software is the easiest software I've ever installed," Richey says. "I just followed the on-screen wizard. There was no flipping through an installation manual, and we were up and running in a matter of hours."

With advanced encryption and other security enhancements built into BlackBerry Professional Software, Champion EMS can now send emails containing private patient data with more confidence. The solution gives dispatch personnel a new communication channel and has all but eliminated internal voicemails.

"This security enhancement let us change our communication protocols and saves us from wasting the first part of our morning confined to our desks, sifting through emails. Prior to coming into work, we've already checked our BlackBerry smartphones to identify what issues need our attention. That way we can start each day by making progress on priority tasks," explains Richey.

Expansion of BlackBerry Smartphone Deployment to Field Supervisors

After several months of having the BlackBerry solution in place at the executive level, Champion EMS has deployed 19 additional BlackBerry smartphones to their Station Captains, who supervise ambulance stations and crew members.

Equipped with BlackBerry smartphones, Station Captains will be able to receive and respond to emails from administrators, and the employees they supervise, helping to further reduce the burden on the communications center as a go-between for internal communication among Champion EMS staff. "With this new deployment, we expect to increase the overall speed of internal communications, as our Station Captains will now be accessible when they are away from their station or off-duty," Richey explains.

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Champion EMS' Results

Greater Productivity with Highly Secure Wireless Email: Highly secure mobile email in near real-time has streamlined the way Richey and his colleagues begin each day. All directors now receive email-based reports about both routine and extraordinary events that occur throughout the system. Receiving and reading these updates early in the morning, or throughout the weekend, allows directors to plan their work the following day. Wireless calendar synchronization allows meetings with other directors to be scheduled on the spot, despite the fact that they are not at their desks. "We all arrive at the office feeling more prepared than ever before and there's no email backlog. BlackBerry smartphones and BlackBerry Professional Software, eliminates untold hours of non-productive time every week," says Richey.

Increased Availability of Emergency Personnel: With the option to email directors on their BlackBerry smartphones, communications officers and field crews spend less time engaged in phone conversations and spend more time on the task at-hand. Richey observes faster resolutions to escalated issues, with directors better able to assess facts in a written email and respond almost instantly.

More time savings result by not having to log verbal transactions. Email communications via the BlackBerry solution provide their own audit trail. Ultimately, these time savings mean communications officers are more readily available to handle incoming emergency calls.

Helps to Minimize IT Burden and Continuous Reliability: For Richey, the easy and straightforward installation of BlackBerry Professional Software was a sign of things to come. As the lone IT resource, Richey is impressed with how the advanced technology has minimal impact on his time. He also praises its reliability. "In addition to bringing us minimal IT burden in terms of management, BlackBerry Professional Software has been near-problem free! There have been virtually no errors, no failures, absolutely no interruptions to our daily communications."

For additional BlackBerry customer success stories, visit www.blackberry.com/go/success

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