

Case Study

Russell Kennedy

Lawyers Use BigHand Mobile Dictation Application on BlackBerry Smartphones to Maximize their Valuable Time

Company: Russell Kennedy is a commercial law firm located in Melbourne, Australia. The firm offers legal expertise in banking and finance, building and construction, commercial litigation and a diverse range of other legal areas.

Industry: Legal

Region: Asia Pacific

Company Size: Medium Enterprise
- 190 employees

Email Environment: Microsoft® Exchange

Type of Solution: Digital Dictation

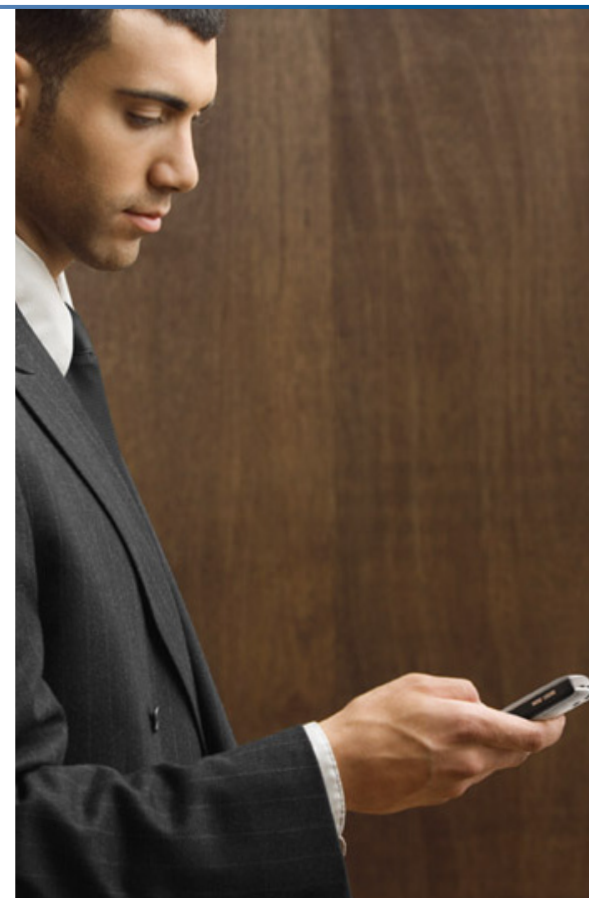
BlackBerry® Alliance Partner Solution:
BigHand Mobile - for BlackBerry® smartphones by BigHand Mobile

Challenge: Russell Kennedy wanted to replace the traditional recording devices lawyers use to record their case notes and letters for transcription with a solution that took advantage of the comprehensive capabilities of the BlackBerry® smartphones already used in the firm.

Solution: The BigHand Mobile application was deployed on the firm's BlackBerry smartphones to help lawyers record, edit and submit their dictations wirelessly and directly into the company's transcription group, without manually delivering tapes or digital files.

Russell Kennedy's Results:

- Makes the BlackBerry smartphone even more multi-functional
- Lets lawyers focus on the law
- Faster turnarounds, better customer service
- Plans to do more in the future



The Challenge: Keep Lawyers Focused on Billable Client Services

Time really is money in a law firm as traditionally, charges are calculated on an hourly rate. But case notes and letters are a key part of any legal operation. So it makes sense for firms to keep their lawyers free from administrative tasks, such as managing their notes.

The challenge for Australian law firm, Russell Kennedy, was coming up with a way to manage the transcription of legal communications without giving their legal staff more administrative work. They also wanted to speed up the turnaround times between a lawyer submitting a recording and having it transcribed. Accelerating this process would better serve their clients.

"Our tape-based dictation system was starting to break down and we were thinking of replacing it with a digital recording system," says Bruce Stafford, Information Technology Manager. "But we realized that there were delays associated with physically delivering tapes to the administrative team who transcribed them. So we decided we wanted to address both a workflow issue and a technology issue at the same time."

Russell Kennedy decided to see if they could leverage their investment in the BlackBerry solution by finding a way to use their BlackBerry smartphones as recording devices.

Why the BlackBerry Solution?

"We were using BlackBerry smartphones even before they were popular in Australia," says Stafford. "We tried them on a couple of lawyers and they just loved them because they realized how much time they could save by being able to answer emails from almost anywhere."

Much of the attraction of the BlackBerry smartphones was offering the legal team flexibility in the way they work. Because lawyers often work outside traditional office hours, in what's normally considered downtime, the BlackBerry smartphone lets them take care of business while not significantly interrupting their lives.

"We needed to provide flexible working arrangements," says Stafford. "Some of our staff work both in the office and from home. With a BlackBerry smartphone, they find they can better manage their days."

Stafford also looked into a range of other mobile solutions before choosing the BlackBerry solution for his firm. The manageability of the solution for his IT group won him over. "The BlackBerry solution reduces the support my team has to provide because our users can easily learn the devices, and we can centrally manage them from our IT office, which saves a lot of time," he says.

"The benefits of the BlackBerry smartphone are that it fits people of all technical levels. Anyone can learn to use the device, which means we don't have to invest in a lot of training for our busy lawyers."

~ BRUCE STAFFORD, Information Technology Manager, Russell Kennedy

The Solution. How it Works.

Company: BigHand Mobile

- BigHand develops digital dictation & voice mobility software

Application Type: Digital Dictation

Featured Product: BigHand Mobile for BlackBerry smartphones

BigHand Mobile is installed over-the-air onto the BlackBerry smartphone. The user records, edits and submits dictations using this intuitive application, which takes advantage of features like the trackball, convenience buttons and touch screen. Dictations are uploaded over the mobile data services channel via the BlackBerry Internet Service or the BlackBerry Enterprise Server. The BlackBerry Gateway component receives the BlackBerry dictations and submits them to the BigHand3 server.

The BlackBerry Gateway is hosted on an IIS server: if your firm uses BlackBerry Enterprise Server this IIS server communicates internally with the BlackBerry Gateway; if you use the BlackBerry Internet Service, the IIS server must face the internet and be routable by the BIS provider. BlackBerry dictation submissions are processed by the BigHand server in the same way as dictations submitted by any other means, making them instantly available for transcription.

Taking the Legwork out of Legal Transcription

Russell Kennedy deployed BigHand Mobile – for BlackBerry smartphones. By doing this, they saved the cost of buying new digital recording devices and built on their investment in the BlackBerry solution.

The biggest change for the firm was removing the need for lawyers to deliver tapes of their recorded messages to the administrative staff. "With a tape-based device, or even a digital device, someone has to come into the office and physically hand over the recording, which defeats the purpose of remote working arrangements. It also wastes time," says Stafford. "The BigHand application automatically sends the recording to our server over the air."

Stafford says that this workflow improvement has greatly sped up the transcription process. Letters and case notes are delivered to the back end database, where a transcriber can immediately find them, making the turnaround times on transcriptions faster.

"No one has to deliver the tape anymore, put it in a tray, wait for someone from office services to pick it up and carry it to the right person," says Stafford. "A lot of the delays have been removed with this solution, which ultimately benefits our clients who get more immediate service." The new process has also helped to reduce the backlog of work that happened in busy times. With work being transcribed as soon as it arrives, Russell Kennedy helped cut down their administrative overtime.

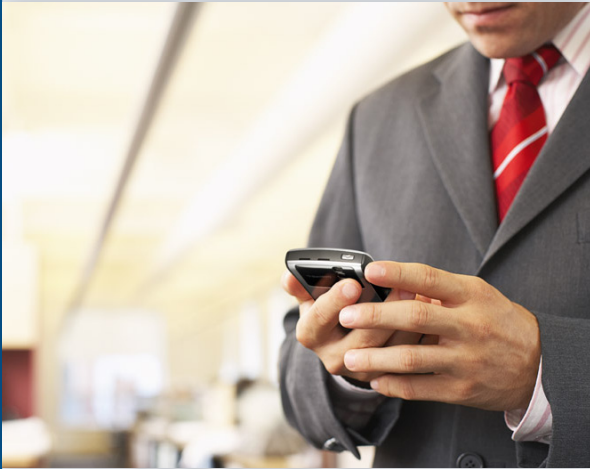
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~ BRUCE STAFFORD, Information Technology Manager, Russell Kennedy

Next Steps

Russell Kennedy is now considering more ways it can build on its investment in the BlackBerry solution to help its legal team and company work better. One plan is to deploy an application to help with document management.

Right now, documents are pulled from the company's document management system and shared between people as attachments to emails. Stafford wants to let people go directly to the document management system from their BlackBerry smartphones and pull up and edit exactly what they need. This would reduce the amount of duplicate files being created and shared. The other application he's considering is one that allows lawyers to log their time and billing from their BlackBerry smartphones which would connect to the company's back end billing system.



"BigHand Mobile on the BlackBerry smartphone allows the almost immediate transmission of dictations and that's invaluable to us. Our lawyers just record, press send and the administrative team has the file ready to work on."

~ **Bruce Stafford**, Information Technology Manager, Russell Kennedy

"Previously, we weren't using too many third party applications but now our lawyers are so much more comfortable with the BlackBerry smartphones, we've started to look at what else we can do with them."

~ **BRUCE STAFFORD**, Information Technology Manager, Russell Kennedy

Russell Kennedy's Results

Makes the BlackBerry Smartphone Even More Multi-functional: Instead of carrying many devices, lawyers can use their BlackBerry smartphones for email and personal information management as well as a convenient dictation device; one device that does it all is more cost effective than buying multiple devices.

Lets Lawyers Focus on the Law: By removing the manual task of submitting transcriptions, lawyers are free to focus on billable work that benefits the firm's bottom line.

Faster Turnarounds, Better Customer Service: Because dictations are automatically sent to the transcriber, work is done quicker, there are fewer backlogs, overtime hours are reduced, and clients are served more effectively.

Plans to Do More: New applications will soon be deployed at the firm to streamline document management and wirelessly record time and billing from the BlackBerry smartphones.

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