



# BlackBerry Customer Success Story

## A Big Four Accounting Firm Creates Cutting-Edge Mobile Apps with Help from Research In Motion's Corporate Developer Program



PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP is the second-largest professional services firm in the world. PwC Canada has more than 23 locations and 5,200 partners and staff who provide industry-focused assurance, tax services, consulting and deals to public, private and government clients in all markets. PwC Canada's Mobile Application Development team is tasked with finding IT solutions to improve employee efficiency through custom application design, development, testing and deployment.

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**Industry:** Finance/Insurance

**Region:** North America

**Company Size:**  
Large - 5,200 employees

**Solution:**

- Research In Motion® (RIM®) Corporate Developer Program (CDP)
  - BlackBerry® WebWorks™ Platform
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### THE CHALLENGE

PwC Canada's Mobile Application Development team recognized an opportunity to help the company's large number of off-site consultants with new productivity apps. The team also realized that embracing mobile tools could become a significant feature of PwC Canada's branding and recruitment strategy.

"We needed to show that we were constantly innovating and taking advantage of existing trends because investing in technology and mobility has become a recruitment factor for us," said Eric Chan, Manager, Mobile Application Development at PwC Canada.

A series of mobile apps would improve upon existing programs that PwC Canada had already developed on the company's network and intranet. "When people are off-site they may not have connectivity and it might take them a while to access the database of information they need right away," said Chan. "It was natural to extend these programs to leverage mobile technology."

Developers at PwC Canada had a number of ideas for new apps, but were unfamiliar with developing in Java®. As a result, mobile application development required significant time and resources and PwC Canada was averaging only two apps per year for the first few years.

### THE SOLUTION

PwC Canada's Mobile Application Development team reached out to Research In Motion (RIM) for assistance and were directed to the Corporate Developer Program (CDP), which gave them regular access to RIM's specialized Enterprise Solution Consultants. The CDP provided the PwC Canada team with ongoing guidance and development support throughout the development life-cycle.

"Before we joined the CDP, we invested a lot of time and effort into understanding how everything worked," said Chan. "After we joined, we had very easy access to technical resources at RIM and guidance on our specific application development."

The introduction of the BlackBerry WebWorks SDK allowed the PwC Canada team to use standard web technologies to develop BlackBerry® applications, simplifying the development process.

"It takes a huge investment for a firm to start developing apps, so it has to be as easy as possible," said Chan. "The APIs that RIM has released has made it really easy for us." The PwC Canada developers could also leverage BlackBerry WebWorks' full integration into the BlackBerry ecosystem, creating Super Apps that are constantly on and that push relevant information to the user.

“Working with the Corporate Developer Program provides us with the timely technical support and easy-to-use software that we need to make great mobile apps for our employees.”

Eric Chan  
Manager,  
Mobile Application Development  
PwC Canada

To date, the Mobile Application Development team has built more than 11 apps for employees to download internally. These include:

- PwC Canada News, an RSS reader for internal news and information
- Conference Agenda, which helps employees navigate the agenda of internal training events and conferences
- Today’s Opportunity, designed to spur creativity by pushing out a message to consultants asking them to contribute fresh ideas to the team
- Tax Rates, a consumer application that explains Canadian personal and business tax rates and is available on the BlackBerry App World™ storefront

Because they were working with the CDP, PwC Canada’s team received loaner devices, which they used to test their applications on a variety of BlackBerry® smartphone models instead of using simulators. “We didn’t have the hardware resources for testing,” said Chan. “Being able to test our applications more accurately was a huge advantage.”

## PWC CANADA’S BENEFITS

Since PwC Canada has partnered with the CDP, in-house mobile application development has increased significantly. Apps used to take months to complete, but a standard turnaround time for a prototype is now closer to two or three weeks. “We went from developing two apps per year to more than ten since we were introduced to the CDP last year,” said Chan. “That’s a lot of growth.”

The ability to use BlackBerry WebWorks SDK has allowed PwC Canada to develop simple applications internally, therefore avoiding the additional expense associated with a third-party developer. “BlackBerry WebWorks and the set of APIs included allow us to leverage an existing web development skill set where we don’t have to relearn other coding languages, which takes time and resources,” said Chan. “Not only is the cost of developing in-house substantially lower than using an outside company, but we also don’t want to release any of our sensitive data to a third party.”

The use of the BlackBerry WebWorks SDK also allowed the Mobile Application Development team to create Super Apps that are fully integrated with the BlackBerry smartphone. Super Apps can run constantly in the background, provide location-specific features and push customized content to users. For example, when an employee downloads PwC Canada’s Conference Agenda app, session information is automatically loaded into their calendar and a notification is sent prior to the start time. This level of integration makes the applications run seamlessly, from the user’s perspective.

The feedback has been overwhelmingly positive. “It’s about targeting the right kinds of applications to make people realize that there is a lot more you can do on your BlackBerry than just email and the calendar,” said Chan. “Company leaders and staff love our apps and they’re always asking me about what we’ll be developing next.”

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



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