

BlackBerry Case Study - Legal



IT Team Offers Legal Team More Functionality in their BlackBerry Smartphones

Stikeman Elliott LLP

Stikeman Elliott LLP is recognized internationally as one of Canada's leading business law firms with over 500 lawyers in its offices in Toronto, Montréal, Ottawa, Calgary, Vancouver, New York, London and Sydney.

Success On BlackBerry

Industry: Legal

Region: Americas

Company Size: Medium Enterprise – 1,300 employees

Email Environment: Microsoft® Exchange

BlackBerry® Alliance Member Solution:
cDir and PINpoint by Tenet Computer Group Inc.

Challenge

A busy, mobile legal team needed a way to easily look up contact lists, to access internal information about their firm and to have an emergency communications system in place.

Solution

The IT team developed an application internally for the BlackBerry® smartphone that accesses information stored in the company's corporate directories. They augmented their internal solution by integrating their application with cDir and PINpoint, two applications created by Tenet Computer Group Inc.

Stikeman Elliott's Results

- Mobile access to valuable information contained in corporate directories
- The flexibility to combine three applications into one improving user friendliness
- A way to contribute to member productivity by allowing people to work offline
- An up-to-date emergency contact list for back-up communications

The Situation: Give the Legal Team Access to Company Data to Improve Their Efficiency

With offices across Canada, in Europe, USA and Australia, Stikeman Elliott LLP needs to keep its people connected and responsive to client needs. The company has been relying on BlackBerry smartphones to keep its 500 lawyers, law clerks and administrative personnel at the top of their game.

Recently, the IT team created an application for the BlackBerry smartphone that allowed people to look up general corporate information from their smartphones. The opportunity to access information in a mobile format was a hit with the firm members and convinced the IT team that they could go further with their mobile deployment.

The firm wanted to integrate their home-grown mobile application with other third party applications that offered the ability to:

- Pull contact information from multiple sources, including a CRM database
- Offer an up-to-date list of PIN numbers drawn from two BlackBerry® Enterprise Servers for emergency communications

"We have a lot of mobile personnel," says Jason Hachey, Technical Systems Analyst. "Applications on the BlackBerry smartphone give them the opportunity to continue working without needing a laptop."

Using BlackBerry Technology to Create an Application

Hachey built the company's in-house application called Stikeman Elliott Information (SE Information) - an application that offers information about the company's offices, useful links and maps.

Using developer tools from RIM, he created an application that took advantage of an easy development infrastructure that also offered flexibility in his approach to the project.

Hachey says getting this application off the ground, easily and quickly, was a spring board for thinking about what else could be done with applications on the BlackBerry smartphone.

"Our primary goal was to create a contact list with more information than a standard global contact list," he says. "To do that we needed ready-made applications that would complement the SE Information application."

"BlackBerry smartphones are essential for a global law firm - we deal with various time zones and it means we can stay in touch with our worldwide clients and associates."

~ Jason Hachey, Technical Systems Analyst, Stikeman Elliott LLP

How It Works.

Application Type:

Industry Specific Applications

BlackBerry Alliance Member Solution:

cDir and PINpoint by Tenet Computer Group Inc.

- The SE Information application is the main application on the BlackBerry smartphones at Stikeman Elliott LLP
- Users click on that application, which is also connected to the two Tenet applications: cDir and PINpoint
- The cDir application accesses information contained in LDAP directories, such as groups, servers, PCs and more
- The cDir application creates a contact list of email, phone, office locations and other details by accessing information from the company's CRM database and BlackBerry Enterprise servers
- The PINpoint application distributes an up-to-date list of users to the BlackBerry Enterprise Server, so people can communicate using PIN-to-PIN technology
- Users can look up a range of information, easily and quickly, on their BlackBerry smartphones to work while they travel

A Single Source of Information

Stikeman Elliott deployed the cDir application because they wanted mobile access to information stored in company directories and, in particular, their InterAction CRM system and BlackBerry Enterprise Servers. The application is designed to work with any LDAP compliant corporate directory.

"We have multiple BlackBerry Enterprise Servers and we had to get information from those servers and bring it to a central area," says Hachey. "That is what cDir is designed to do quickly."

Some customization was needed by the Tenet Computer Group to integrate cDir with the SE Information application already created. "We couldn't have multiple icons for the user to go to, so it was important that this looked like one application," says Hachey.

"We also made use of PINpoint's persistent data so the information cached on the device is up-to-date virtually all the time," he says. "That was very important because our users need to be able to look up information offline, if they're on a plane."

Hachey used the scheduling features of the PINpoint product to push out new data according to his specifications. That functionality helps reduce the administrative time and takes a load off the IT team.

"Our users really love the additional abilities they now have on their BlackBerry smartphones," he says. "If they need to look for somebody in one of our offices or our clients, they can use their devices to find a phone number, email, and in the future, we hope to include pictures of the individuals."

Emergency Back-Up Communications

The other application that Hachey deployed was PINpoint, also by Tenet Computer Group. It also works on the BlackBerry smartphone as part of the SE Information application. The goal of this application is to offer an up-to-date emergency contact list of PIN numbers.

Many companies rely on PIN-to-PIN communications when communication on their email servers is disrupted. PIN communications is often seen as a back-up because communications occur between two BlackBerry smartphones and does not rely on messages being sent through email servers.

For a select number of users at Stikeman Elliott, PIN communications is essential as part of a disaster recovery program. But the IT team did not want to have to manually maintain a list of current PIN numbers. PINpoint solves that problem by regularly pushing out PIN information from the BlackBerry Enterprise Server without an IT team member having to take on the job.

"It takes the load off the IT team and it also means we have an up-to-date PIN list in place, incase it's ever needed." says Hachey. PINpoint allows us to have a means of effective communication in the event of a crisis or emergency situation, even when the servers are down!

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

Summary of Stikeman Elliott's Results

- Mobile access to valuable information contained in corporate directories
- The flexibility to combine three applications into one for greater user friendliness
- A way to contribute to employee productivity by allowing people to work offline
- An up-to-date emergency contact list for back-up communications

"We now offer an application on the BlackBerry smartphones that contributes to lawyer efficiency. Using cDir, PINpoint and our own application together, we've made it possible for people to access information even if they don't have coverage."

~ Jason Hachey, Technical Systems Analyst, Stikeman Elliott LLP



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