

BlackBerry® Solutions for Local Government



Helping local government deliver service efficiency and transformation

All local government organisations face a pressing need to cut costs, achieve efficiencies and increase the visibility and effectiveness of the services they provide.

Many organisations in local government are already familiar with the way BlackBerry® smartphones keep mobile workers connected using mobile email. However Enterprising organisations are discovering that BlackBerry smartphones can unlock the goal of service transformation, bringing public service out into the community, raising the visibility and effectiveness of service provision, and leveraging existing systems to provide more value from them.

Many innovative software solutions already exist that can be installed on the BlackBerry smartphones of local government workers to enable them to use the applications they would normally use at their desks. This allows them to do more in the community, react faster to citizen needs, make more informed decisions, and capture more accurate data conveniently when out of the office. It also minimises travel time, removes the threat of duplicate or inaccurate data entering systems, reduces the overall administrative burden and increases the public visibility of service provision.

Across the spectrum of local government services, workers whose daily routine takes them out of the office can now connect to council systems on the move, record information directly into databases and applications, and complete more of their workload as they need to, be it from a car, a meeting room, a hospital, a council office or even a member of the public's home.

Cost effective to deploy and use

In all areas of local government, councils and organisations have already invested heavily in technology solutions which workers are familiar with. By mobilising these solutions onto BlackBerry smartphones, local government organisations can derive more value from their original investment, drive adoption and greater usage of the systems, and improve the efficiency and productivity of individual workers and teams. Easy-to-use mobile solutions for specific local government challenges can be installed and rolled out over-the-air in weeks or even days, often using interfaces that are already familiar from the desktop application, and therefore require no training.

Versatile enough for any local government worker

BlackBerry solutions have practical and time-saving applications throughout the local government sector, including solutions for:

- Regulatory, licensing and environmental services
- Social service workers
- Trading standards departments
- Planning and building control
- Fleet/asset tracking and management
- Maintenance and support services
- Neighbourhood, street warden and other community schemes

Typically, mobile local government users can use their BlackBerry smartphone to interact in real time with back office systems to access and record data as required. The built-in GPS and camera on the BlackBerry smartphone can help provide supporting evidence for licensing issues, compliance and other regulatory requirements. There are also panic button applications available to support vulnerable lone workers, as well as applications which can be used with mobile Bluetooth printers to issue on-the-spot licenses or notices. Wherever mobile workers deliver services to the public in the community, there are opportunities to use BlackBerry solutions and applications to help deliver better, faster services to the community.

Data Security Built-In

Inevitably when data leaves the security of local government networks, the safety of that mobile data is questioned as the integrity and security of citizen data is critical. Fortunately, the BlackBerry solution is inherently secure, having been created with data security in mind. Data stays encrypted at every point, both in transit and on the smartphone. Comprehensive IT management and administration tools enable IT departments to manage the security of individual smartphones and/or groups of smartphones remotely. Lost or stolen smartphones can be remotely wiped or locked, with data and contacts quickly restored to another smartphone. In fact, the BlackBerry® Enterprise Solution has been approved for storing and transmitting sensitive data by Government security organisations worldwide, including CESC in the UK who have approved the BlackBerry solution for use with restricted email and data. This means that the BlackBerry solution meets the Code of Connection compliance requirements for local authorities connecting to the Government Gateway.

Benefits

Take public services out to the community

Deliver workflow and process efficiency

Reduce wastage and inefficiency

Derive greater value from existing technology investments

Cost savings

Faster, more accurate inspections

Challenge

All local government organisations are responsible for various types of inspection and regulations enforcement, be it for buildings, health and safety, leisure services, licences, transportation or across almost all areas of their responsibilities. With their regulatory responsibilities increasing all the time, the need to perform these inspections accurately and appropriately is critical to the delivery of improved public service provision.

But mobile inspectors generally have little or no access to reporting and recording systems while they are out on duty. This means they often miss out on opportunities to conduct more meaningful, better informed on-site dialogue. Inevitably this lengthens the inspection process, and also limits the effectiveness of inspections, reducing them to a combination of form-filling followed by inefficient data entry in the office. As the regulatory framework becomes ever more demanding, the mountain of paperwork can only get bigger.

Solution

Mobile Inspection from Airpoint is an application which enables local government staff to carry out inspections and update central systems from their BlackBerry® smartphone in real time.

Access to records in back office systems enables inspectors to act more rapidly, perhaps requesting remedial action on the spot rather than having to return to base and then correspond. For each type of inspection or location, the solution enables a checklist form to be defined that prompts the inspector for all necessary data. If a check is failed, the inspector can create an action and allocate it immediately.

Each employee or contractor has a communication preference set, allowing actions to be sent automatically to them by SMS, email or fax. Inspectors can even tell if actions have not taken place, enabling them to handle situations more effectively with better information at their fingertips. Ultimately this enables them to reach solutions faster, and to improve their productivity.

The solution checks and updates actions to a central database accessible from a web browser. Outstanding actions can be viewed by building, contract, contractor, or employee, and the solution is so flexible it can be applied to virtually any inspection process. More specialised inspection solutions are also available, including Legionella Risk Assessments and Health and Safety Inspections.

Benefits

Conduct more meaningful inspections

Faster resolutions to issues as they arise

Capture inspections data quickly and efficiently

Full audit trail for all actions



Above: BlackBerry® Bold™ 9000 smartphone with a screenshot of the BlackBerry® Application by Airpoint.

Find out more

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About Airpoint

Airpoint specialise in delivering tailored applications for mobile devices that deliver efficiency savings for distributed workforces. This technology facilitates safe, secure, easy-to-use solutions that give the customer a first class user-experience.

Keep wardens mobile and up-to-date

Challenge

Local government organisations face increasing demands to reduce the incidence of environmental crime and achieve successful prosecutions. Crimes such as fly tipping, graffiti and littering are on the rise, so the pressure on environmental wardens as they race between different crime scenes is increasing.

For every incident they attend there is currently a significant amount of paperwork that has to be completed at the office and input onto central systems. Finding ways to reduce this burden on wardens is the key to improving response and clean-up rates, particularly in rural communities.

Solution

Local government organisations can now offer mobile wardens real-time access to existing APP back-end environmental services databases using the solution on BlackBerry® smartphones. Wardens are now able to view information about offences in real time and act immediately. They can also add new case notes and take photos thus recording information straight into centrally held databases from the field.

The application leverages existing IT infrastructures so there is no need for costly and timeconsuming development. The powerful BlackBerry security architecture means that only authorised users are able to gain secure access, and no data is actually downloaded on to the BlackBerry smartphone. Information is simply viewed from behind the local authority firewall, where it remains, so the possibility of data theft is eliminated.

As a result, environmental wardens are able to access, review and update information as required, enabling them to act more quickly, record more efficiently and attend more incidents without returning to the office.

Benefits

Use wardens' time better

Accurate and timely data

Secure authorised access

Cost-effective deployment



Above: BlackBerry® Bold™ 9000 smartphone with a screenshot of the BlackBerry® Application by NDL.

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About NDL

NDL specialises in delivering innovative solutions that enable existing systems to be used in new ways.

The company works with organisations to develop and deploy exciting projects that improve operations and service delivery. NDL has built a proud reputation on delivering rapid return on investment for clients.

More efficient property inspection and control

Challenge

Local government organisations are under constant pressure to find new ways of delivering efficiency in housing operations, whilst also improving the services they provide to their tenants.

However, housing and building officers working onsite with tenants or contractors generally find it difficult to access up-to-date centrally-held data. This means they may not be able to advise customers on maintenance work schedules, for example, or react quickly to tenants who have not met their obligations. Moreover, it forces officers to constantly return to base and manually update systems from paper forms, which officers find tedious, and which can lead to inaccurate reporting.

Solution

Local government organisations can now give Housing officers real-time access to existing housing databases using BlackBerry® smartphones. The solution allows mobile housing officers to access and update current tenant, rental and contractor details. It also enables action to be taken on the information immediately, even adding new case notes or photos from the field.

The application leverages existing IT infrastructures, so there is no need for costly and time-consuming development. Moreover, the powerful BlackBerry security architecture means that only authorised users are able to gain secure access, and no data is actually downloaded on to the BlackBerry smartphone. Information is simply viewed from behind the local government firewall, where it remains, so the possibility of data theft is eliminated.

Housing officers can therefore liaise with maintenance contractors much more effectively, while also providing a more efficient service to tenants. By reducing travel time and making staff more productive local government organisations achieve significant efficiency savings whilst improving their services.

Benefits

Efficient housing management

Better customer service

Secure authorised access

Cost-effective deployment



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More effective licensing control

Challenge

The 2003 Licensing Act placed additional responsibilities on local government organisations to supervise the sale of alcohol. But to enforce the act, licensing officers require real-time access to live information from existing systems. Licensing inspection often has to take place outside normal working hours, therefore giving licensing officials access to the relevant data has proven challenging. As a consequence local government organisations need a cost-effective solution that offers fast and secure access to key information, enables immediate data updates, and is available when it is needed.

Solution

Licensing control from NDL allows local government staff to now access existing licensing databases via a BlackBerry® smartphone. This allows mobile licensing officers to view license and third-party details, activities, decision conditions, notes and code paragraphs about specific properties whilst on duty in the community. They can also add new case notes and photographs, regardless of their location or time of day.

The application uses existing IT infrastructures so there is no need for costly and time-consuming redevelopment work. The system can be implemented rapidly and fits seamlessly into existing frameworks. The powerful BlackBerry security architecture ensures that only authorised users are able to gain secure access, and no data is actually downloaded on to the BlackBerry smartphone. Information is simply viewed from behind the local government organisation's firewall, where it remains, so the possibility of data theft is eliminated.

This solution enables enforcement officers to manage licensing policies and decisions much more effectively, while also providing a more efficient service for the community. It can also provide invaluable assistance to Licensing Officers when asked to support the police in their operations.

Benefits

24/7 Access to licensing data

Secure authorised access

No data on smartphone

Cost-effective deployment



Above: BlackBerry® Bold™ 9000 smartphone with a screenshot of the BlackBerry® Application by NDL.

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Convenient photo management

Challenge

Many local government organisations face the need to be able to quickly record a scene at a particular moment in time in order to provide accurate and evidential records. This may be for housing, environmental, licensing, traffic, neighbourhood, social services or any number of other reasons. Officials may need to quickly capture and record when and where environmental crimes, license violations, housing issues or any number of types of incident have taken place.

Compliance inspectors may want to record evidence they find, and officials may also need to monitor the standard and performance of maintenance contractors in a variety of possible situations, in order to comply with relevant legislation such as Health and Safety standards. In all of these cases, local government officials need a convenient way of recording this information and the photographs they take need to be validated by a reliable time and location stamp in order to be of use to local authorities.

Solution

Hand-e-pix from Handheld PCs is a convenient solution which gives remote workers the ability to easily capture photographs alongside an accurate GPS location and contextual data using a BlackBerry smartphone. This enables them to leverage the robust and reliable BlackBerry smartphone for its photographic capability, meaning that officers do not need two pieces of hardware (a phone and a camera) to be able to record what they uncover.

As photos are taken, the system automatically updates a back-office database that stores the images, along with a time and date stamp, user identification and GIS overlay, providing reliable evidence of the photo's details. This means that even if the smartphone is subsequently lost or damaged, the photo evidence is secure. This solution integrates fully with existing back-office databases (integration with Lagan CRM is available as standard).

The solution is already used by local government agencies and law enforcement bodies in neighbourhood and street warden schemes; neighbourhood and community policing initiatives; scenes of crimes; regulatory and environmental services; trading standards; planning control; building control, and CRM. Using the solution local authorities can promote more reliable and quicker issue resolution, which in turn delivers evidence of the improved community service that councils are obliged to produce.

Benefits

Accurate and convenient photo data capture

Full audit trail of actions and photos

Improved issue resolution with better evidence

Better productivity for inspectors

Phone and camera functionality on one device



Above: BlackBerry® Bold™ 9000 smartphone with a screenshot of the BlackBerry® Application by Handheld PCs

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About Handheld PCS

Since 2002, Handheld PCs have grown to be a leader in deploying mobile working solutions in the public sector. The company is a BlackBerry ISV Partner and now offers a unique range of simple and inexpensive technology that helps local government agencies comply with government initiatives.

Mobile data capture and filing

Challenge

In every area of local government, workers frequently have to capture information accurately and reliably whilst in the field. Historically this has involved different methodologies for paper-based data capture, followed by an administrative task to process and file that information, often leading to delays in service provision.

Local government organisations looking for process efficiencies that will help them make dramatic cost savings while maintaining and improving service provision, should look to new ways of digitally capturing written information in the field, as well as ways to import that information automatically into back-end systems.

By removing the need to return to an office to file paperwork, organisations can maximise the amount of time that workers spend in the field delivering public services, as well as speeding the flow of government processes and improving overall and individual productivity.

Solution

PaperIQ from DevelopIQ is a digital pen solution which provides Local Government workers with a simple and intuitive way of collecting information from the field using a Digital Pen. The Digital Pen works like a normal ink pen, with the user writing out notes, forms or assessments (or even capturing signatures) as they do now, but capturing every pen stroke as they write. It is also able to translate handwriting into useable data for any back office system.

As all users are familiar with how to use a pen, the requirement for training is minimal. The BlackBerry® smartphone allows local government workers to transmit written information directly into back office systems within seconds, enabling colleagues to react faster and make faster progress with workflow.

The DevelopIQ solution can be adapted to work with virtually any type of paperwork, which means that there are practical applications for any local government organisation with any type of form or paperwork to complete in the field. When used on a BlackBerry smartphone, the solution allows field workers to file information quickly, and even receive immediate feedback on the screen.

Benefits

Rapid data capture, storage and filing from the field

Deliver form data directly into back end systems

Easy to adapt to any paperwork or form



Above: BlackBerry® Bold™ 9000 smartphone with a screenshot of the BlackBerry® Application by DevelopIQ

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About DevelopIQ

Founded in 2005, DevelopIQ Limited is a long standing BlackBerry ISV partner focussed on developing enterprise software applications for the BlackBerry. In 2009 DevelopIQ won the largest digital pen contract to date in the UK public sector and were also a finalist in the BlackBerry 2009 awards for innovation in the public sector.

Keep operations running in emergencies

Challenge

Appropriate emergency planning and operational contingency preparation are key responsibilities for all local authorities. If internet or wireless access is unavailable, or even if access to the BlackBerry® Enterprise Server is disrupted, there is still a need for key staff to be able to access up-to-date emergency plans and procedures, and communicate with each other as they deal with an emergency.

Solution

In the event of BlackBerry® service failure, the solution can step in and automatically default communications to PIN-to-PIN messaging, allowing important individuals to contact each other directly. This enables local authorities to plan for operational continuity knowing that key individuals will be able to use any suitable wireless network to communicate securely and quickly in emergency.

In addition, the workflow feature in the solution ensures that relevant individuals are always kept up to date with the most recent plans, documents and contact lists, ensuring that even in the total absence of wireless connectivity, individuals can operate in an informed and up-to-date manner.

During an incident all communication is recorded on the organisation's server, providing valuable auditable evidence of what actually happens. The solution also features a PIN messaging service that will communicate critical information to everyone on a defined list, enabling authorities to reliably and quickly reach all relevant individuals. Mobile users can also generate emergency messages and communicate them to all mobile and desktop users from their BlackBerry smartphone.

Regardless of the size of deployment, this is an ideal solution to help organisations meet and exceed required levels of preparedness for emergency situations and threats to continuity of service.

Benefits

Mobile continuity planning

Always up-to-date

Reliable emergency communications

The right information in the right hands



Above: BlackBerry® Bold™ 9000 smartphone with a screenshot of the BlackBerry® Application by Xenium.

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About Xenium

Xenium Solutions is a provider of Mobile Data Applications for the BlackBerry smartphone. Xenium works closely with developers of BlackBerry mobile data applications and the major UK and Australian networks.

Simple document printing for mobile workers

Challenge

BlackBerry® smartphones have already brought efficiency gains to the daily operations of many mobile workers in the local government sector. Many of those efficiency gains have come from the removal of the need to carry paperwork. However, printing documents is still a requirement for some mobile workers such as senior management wanting to print attachments on the road, to the issuing of notices and charges by wardens or inspectors.

Solution

The BlackBerry smartphone's support for Bluetooth v2 enables local government users to print whilst mobile, simply by installing Cortado Basic Print on smartphones and BlackBerry® Enterprise Server.

The solution offers the user the ability to choose which printer to use, from network-based printers to small portable Bluetooth-enabled printers. Local government officials are able to print locally wherever they are, regardless of whether they are in the field or simply in another part of the office to their own desk.

The printer output is in the same format as delivered by the source document, only limited by the capabilities of the target printer. The solution includes a printer Software Developers Kit (SDK) that enables the formatting of printed material such as mobile forms, parking tickets, on-the-spot fines or receipts to be easily replicated.

Local government organisations can combine this technology with mobile forms for the BlackBerry smartphone to provide a complete solution for a mobile user to fill in and print forms and other documents in exactly the same way they would if they were in the office.

Benefits

Print to any printer

Print attachments in original formats

Fill out and print forms

Custom print options



Above: BlackBerry® Bold™ 9000 smartphone with a screenshot of the BlackBerry® Application by Xenium.

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About Xenium

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Tough BlackBerry® casing with onboard barcode and signatures

Challenge

Mobile workers in the logistics field of local government often require ruggedised equipment to withstand the pressures of everyday operation in harsh environments. These workers frequently have to capture barcode and signature information at points of delivery as well. Until now, fulfilling all of these requirements has meant multiple two-handed devices and complex systems of data transfer.

Solution

The EnterMoCase™ ruggedised case from Xenium is an innovative solution to this challenge, providing a slim and usable casing for the BlackBerry® Curve™ smartphone and the BlackBerry® 8800 series which is tough enough to stand up to demanding daily use, but handy enough to support one-handed operation.

As well as protecting the BlackBerry smartphone, the case provides signature capture functionality using a screen overlay, and barcode reading using either a 1D or a 2D barcode reader. In addition the EnterMoCase also has its own torch. Everything in the case is powered by a battery that provides 60 hours of standby battery power, and when necessary will even power and charge up the BlackBerry smartphone.

Even when the BlackBerry smartphone is secured within the case, all its features are still available to the user, including GPS, camera, and web access. When the ruggedised case is combined with mobile forms, mobile workers can record incidents and capture signatures on mobile forms in situations such as building inspections or issuing penalty notices. If used with a mobile printing solution, it can even print receipts and acknowledgements on the spot that feature the relevant signatures.

Benefits

Barcodes And Signatures

Low Cost Ruggedised Solution

Ideal For Mobile Forms



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Ruggedised cases to protect smartphones in the field

Challenge

Local government organisations are increasingly equipping officers in the field with sophisticated and feature-rich smartphones, to enable them to interact with other back end systems whilst they fulfil their duties in the community. These devices can be hugely beneficial when it comes to enabling staff to work more efficiently, capture information in the field more easily, improve performance statistics, and increase visibility.

With such benefits on offer, many organisations have already made significant investments in smartphone technology. But local government workers like social workers, fleet managers and inspectors often work in challenging environments that can test the durability of these devices. Smartphones that are dropped or subjected to rough treatment can often be damaged, sometimes irreparably. This can be both expensive and inconvenient. Local government organisations need a solution that will enable them to equip staff with feature-rich smartphones, confident that they can stand up to the pressures of everyday public service provision.

Solution

The OtterBox Defender Series™, available from Frequency Telecom, is a range of ruggedised cases for BlackBerry® smartphones which can safeguard the smartphones against damage that might occur during normal operational duties. It provides a physical safeguard for smartphones without adding significantly to the size of the smartphone itself, giving the device a slim and sophisticated look whilst adding enough protection to ensure staff can be confident in their equipment.

OtterBox Defender Series cases combine three layers to offer superior-quality protection to smartphones:

- A thin, thermal-formed sheet which covers and protects the screen and keys against scratches and wear
- A strong polycarbonate shell which gives added protection and reduces damage to smartphone
- A silicone skin which wraps around it all to absorb impact shock.

Benefits

Better-equipped mobile workers

Protect valuable technology investments

Reduced damage



Above: BlackBerry® Bold™ 9000 smartphone with an OtterBox Defender Case.

These cases therefore protect councils' smartphones from everyday damage like scratches to the screen and general wear-and-tear, as well as impact shock for devices that are dropped or get hit. The result is to prolong the usable life of the devices, minimise the number of smartphones which need replacing, and to derive more value from the overall investment in mobile wireless technology.

Customers with specific requirements can also work with Frequency Telecom to develop bespoke Otterbox solutions, ensuring that if a particular refinement is needed, their equipment protection needs can be met.

Find out more

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About Frequency

Established in 2002, Frequency Telecom is a £20m turnover group and is recognised within the mobile channel as being one of the leading independent mobile communications distributors.

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