

# BLACKBERRY KEEPS MAPLE LEAF SPORTS & ENTERTAINMENT IN THE GAME

## Industry

- Sports and Entertainment

## Region

- North America

## Solution

- BlackBerry® 10 smartphones
- BBM™

Much like how Canadians love their hockey, Maple Leaf Sports & Entertainment (MLSE) loves its BlackBerry gear.

Privately-held MLSE, with an estimated value of \$1.66 billion, also depends on BlackBerry for everything from applications and services to the powerful organizational features found on the BlackBerry Z30 smartphone.

“The daily pressure of the event-based business requires a lot of details,” said Dave Hopkinson, Chief Commercial Officer for MLSE. “I use my BlackBerry Z30. When not in my hand, it’s in my pocket, attached to me from sun up past sun down. You can’t stay organized in this business without electronics help.”

One of the world’s foremost sports and entertainment companies, MLSE owns multiple teams and arenas: the Toronto Maple Leafs (NHL), the Toronto Raptors (NBA), the Toronto Marlies (AHL), Toronto FC (MLS), Air Canada Centre and Maple Leaf Square. Additionally, it runs three digital channels: Leafs TV, NBA TV Canada and GOLTV Canada.

“Our customers aren’t just customers of the business, they’re also fans, and they want us to do everything we can to deliver a (sports) championship here in Toronto,” said Hopkinson. “And so we remember the purpose of what we’re trying to accomplish, and that’s a lot of pressure. But truthfully, if you can’t take the pressure, this is just the wrong business for you.”

### Rock and roll all night (after working every day)

That pressure doesn’t come in eight-hour chunks, either.

“Our business starts when everybody else’s day starts, but it doesn’t really get going until what is typically the end of the day, when our guests come to see the Leafs or the Raptors or watch a band they want to see,” said Hopkinson. “That’s when we’ve really got to be on, and that makes for some very, very long days. We joke that this a 24-hours-a-day job, but it’s more like a ‘25-hour day’ because they do tend to blur from one into the next.”

Sasha Puric, the VP of Technology at MLSE, agrees. “It’s a not a place for the faint-of-heart. It’s a fast-paced, moving, dynamic environment,” he said. “The nature of our business is changing every day. We’re always looking for new technology to support and grow our business.”



**“Losing touch isn’t an option. Leading the team at Maple Leafs Sports Entertainment isn’t a 24-hour-a-day job. Through early meetings, lunch meetings, afternoon meetings, dinner meetings and in seat at the game, I need 25 hours of battery life.”**

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### Dave Hopkinson

Chief Commercial Officer  
Maple Leaf Sports and Entertainment

## Beyond modernization lies innovation

That drive to modernize their operations and technology is leading to some exciting developments, as MLSE plans to develop new BBM Channels and apps for the BlackBerry 10 OS, giving fans real-time updates and exclusive content from the company's roster of pro sports teams.

"Trying to provide a technology that covers operations as well as supporting 20,000 fans in the bowl is a unique challenge in the sports and entertainment field," said Puric. "We're just going through a process of implementation of a wireless infrastructure that's going to give our fans in the bowl the ability to engage in some unique experiences around video replays and internet browsing."

## Secure, reliable, and ready for the future

While the customer-facing technology is exciting, MLSE certainly hasn't forgotten the importance of employee features such as security, particularly for executives, scouts and others traveling the globe on a regular basis. With the possibility of devices being lost on the road, the looming threat of sensitive information getting into the wrong hands has to be addressed.

"You can imagine travelling around the world, people lose and forget stuff," Puric said. "Having the ability to actively manage those devices and make sure that they're fully secured is important, knowing that if somebody forgot the mobile device on a train, a person picking up the device will not be able to get some of those trade secrets."

That peace of mind, along with the reliability and cost efficiency of BlackBerry's portfolio, has led MLSE to remain a steadfast customer over the years.

"When we decided to enable mobility for our end-users, we looked at the platforms that were available at the time," said Puric. "We felt that BlackBerry Server was the most secured platform. You also have to take a look at the capability of the BlackBerry devices to actually compress the data and minimize the charges that we get on air for using the devices."

## Simplified solutions for managing complex challenges

BlackBerry's marriage of larger infrastructural capability with the more personal capabilities of the handsets is a winning formula for MLSE.

"My BlackBerry keeps me organized," said Hopkinson, by letting him easily see all the threads that connect to a particular meeting: who, what's the topic, the relevant email correspondence.

The MLSE team also can't afford to lose touch with each other, even for a minute.

"Being on the road doesn't mean that you're disconnected from the operation in the office," explained Puric. "One of the requirements that our workforce has is to ensure that at any given time, they can be in touch with the head office or with each other regardless of where they are in the world or on the road."

## "I need 25 hours of battery life"

All that usage demands a powerful battery.

"Battery life is arguably the top priority for me in deciding which phone I would go with," said Hopkinson. "I just can't be chained to this desk. Weak battery life would be murderous in this business. We couldn't do it."

With the work day extending into the evening and beyond, Hopkinson doesn't have the luxury of a recharge. "If my phone goes dead at five so does my career," he said. Through constant meetings and events, the fact that he can get through the entire day is, as he puts it, "incredibly important. It's absolutely mission-critical."

Hopkinson added, "Losing touch isn't an option. Leading the team at Maple Leafs Sports Entertainment isn't a 24-hour-a-day job. Through early meetings, lunch meetings, afternoon meetings, dinner meetings and in seat at the game, I need 25 hours of battery life."

## Synthesizing everything

"One of my guests at lunch asked me how I liked my new BlackBerry Z30," Hopkinson said. "I said this is literally the best phone I've ever had. I've had lots of BlackBerry devices and this is the first BlackBerry that seems to synthesize everything: Your contacts, your calendar, your email, your dialog and your conversations are at your fingertips."

Hopkinson concluded: "So I told him, if he really wants a powerful business tool, this is the right machine for him."

### Key Benefits

- Extended battery life on BlackBerry® Z30
- Simplified device management
- Top-notch security, and peace of mind

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