

COMMUNICATIONS PROVIDER IMPROVES SERVICE AND SAFETY WITH BLACKBERRY SMARTPHONES AND BBM VIDEO

Industry

- Communications

Region

- North America

Company Size

- Small

Solution

- BlackBerry® 10 smartphones
- BBM™ Video
- BBM™ Groups
- Box by Box, Inc.

Novacom Wireless Communications (Novacom) designs, builds and services communications systems in and around southern Illinois. It provides 911 communication systems for police, fire and ambulatory services, and equips police cars and fire trucks with lighting, video, computer and communications capabilities. For hospitals, Novacom provides numeric, voice and alpha paging services, including email forwarding.

The Challenge

Novacom provides the essential link for people in distress to contact emergency services. “When you’re responsible for building and maintaining a community’s 911 network, you’ve got to have someone on call at all times in case an outage or issue occurs,” explained Brandon Watson, Head Engineer, Novacom Wireless Communications. “These systems can be complex, requiring input from more than one technician who is not on site. Our staff needs a phone that we can rely on to communicate with the team, and that can support our multitasking needs while we troubleshoot complicated issues.”

Safety is another big concern for Novacom’s staff. “Sometimes we’re answering calls in the middle of the night or going into places that are dangerous, such as climbing up a 500-foot cell phone tower or traveling down into a coal mine,” said Watson. “I need to be able to keep tabs on my staff so that I know they’re safe on the job at all times.”

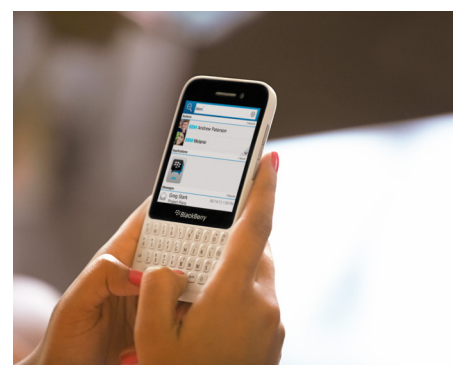
The Solution

Novacom outfitted its staff with BlackBerry 10 smartphones to meet its multitasking, productivity and safety needs.

“I’m rarely in the office because we service clients located up to two and a half hours in every direction,” said Watson. “To maximize my drive time, I take between 50 and 75 calls a day over my Bluetooth® in my car. On average, at least 10 to 15 of those require me to pull over to send an email or service report, login remotely to a computer or server of theirs, or conference in a call. My BlackBerry 10 allows me to do all of that from the device without having to fire up my laptop.”

BlackBerry 10 is also helping Novacom provide more efficient service to clients. “Some of our technicians are more senior than others. Junior staff on service calls may not understand what they’re looking at, so they use their BlackBerry 10 to have a BBM Video chat, which essentially puts us in the same room as them,” said Watson. “With BBM Video, we can see the screens or servers and then identify the issue to get it resolved much faster.”

Other features of BlackBerry 10 smartphones provide added safety for Novacom’s employees. “Our clients’ issues can occur at any time of day,” noted Watson. “I like to be able to keep tabs on my colleagues, especially when they’re fixing networks in the middle of the night. Using our BlackBerry 10 smartphones, we can submit our service reports in real time. If I know one of my employees is on a call and I don’t see the report come through in a reasonable amount of time, I can use the GPS feature to check his or her location.”



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Brandon Watson
Head Engineer
Novacom Wireless Communications

Novacom's Benefits

Novacom has found that the BlackBerry 10 is the only smartphone that stands up to the demands of its daily usage. It uses BBM Groups as its 24 hours a day on-call group. "My employees don't have to remember who's on call or look at a calendar," said Watson. "I set up a calendar in BBM that's just for the group. On Mondays at 8:00 a.m., the calendar alarm goes off so everyone can clearly see and easily access that week's schedule." Through the BBM Group, technicians also report any on-call requests to which they respond. "They list the customer they're servicing, detail what the issue is, and can easily alert the rest of the team if they need help," added Watson.

BlackBerry® Hub also makes it easy for employees to view all their messages, emails and texts in one convenient spot. This helps technicians see any requests for assistance at a glance and prioritize responses.

Other business applications on BlackBerry 10 have decreased paperwork and improved the accuracy and timeliness of client billing. "Before our BlackBerry 10 smartphones, we used paper service reports, which had to be returned to the shop. Sometimes our technicians would forget to bring the report or lose it before it was submitted, so they'd have to file a report via memory in the office," noted Watson. "Now we use the Box app on our BlackBerry 10 to accurately capture the time and materials spent, get the customer's signature onsite, and return the report to the home office within minutes.

The money savings from BlackBerry 10 smartphones has been significant for Novacom. "The ability to use BBM Video chat has saved our small company thousands of dollars," reported Watson. "When a technician on site can't troubleshoot a client's issue I don't have to pay a second person to drive two hours there and two hours back to assist. A BlackBerry smartphone is a second set of eyes on the problem and helps us resolve issues quickly and cost efficiently."

Key Benefits

- Reduced labor expenses
- Timely client billing
- Seamless business application integration
- Enhanced employee safety

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