Facing the Business Challenge

Over the last fifteen years, mobility solutions have evolved from cell phones and pagers to wireless email and mobile business applications. Businesses and other large organizations have begun to critically re-examine how they maintain communication with traveling executives and their mobile workforce. As a result, many of these organizations recognize that they can achieve considerable business value with applications that go significantly beyond wireless email and implement solutions that can extend traditional applications to the wireless realm. The mobile handhelds that primarily helped executives stay in touch could also be used to schedule and support field service personnel, empower the mobile sales force and help employees become more productive through wireless access to relevant information and back-end data stores. More importantly, organizations are re-inventing how critical business processes are performed—using mobile solutions to improve efficiency, boost productivity, generate additional revenues and gain competitive advantages in the market.

Identifying and deploying an application beyond email can be more challenging than creating simple email, contacts and calendar tools, but using proven development techniques and numerous third-party mobile solutions, the challenge can be met in a very reasonable manner.

Unlocking Opportunities

Once organizations make the decision to move beyond email, what are the prospective opportunities? These are some of the areas in which mobile solutions can improve integral business processes and enhance overall productivity:

- **Mobilize Field Service and Sales Force Operations**: Give remote sales or field service representatives the ability to manage account information, as well as to submit and review sales orders, product orders and so on. Notifications generated by push technology can also alert sales reps to fresh opportunities or issue work orders to field service reps. The timely reporting features of the BlackBerry® platform keep the mobile workforce connected to key business developments. Mapping and location-based capabilities—tracking personnel by physical location—can also be extremely useful for organizing and scheduling field operations.

- **Mobilize and Enhance IT Operations:** Many organizations have successfully implemented remote network systems management—solutions that typically deliver a very quick return on investment. IT administrators gain the ability to log in and monitor activities through a BlackBerry device and execute server commands. Some solutions from partners provide advanced monitoring and reporting for the BlackBerry Enterprise Server™ and BlackBerry devices, gauging the performance and efficiency of devices in the field.

- **Mobilize Enterprise Operations**: The range of enterprise operations is very broad and BlackBerry devices suit many situations where traditional applications are extended wirelessly. More frequently, executives have begun to receive data on corporate operations while traveling, through executive dashboards, business intelligence reports and analytics data on operations. Large-scale enterprise applications, including enterprise resource planning and supply chain management, can be adapted as mobile solutions. Approval management and workflow tasks can be effectively managed by executives away from their desks. Continuity of operations and emergency planning can be greatly enhanced through the notification features and timely information access offered by BlackBerry devices.

- **Mobilize Industry Professionals**: Many mobile solutions are targeted to specific categories of industry professionals, providing tools to make them more productive and knowledgeable in their daily activities. In the finance and insurance industry, solutions enable wireless portfolio management, accessing stock quotes and financial data, near-real-time trading and customer relationship management. Legal professionals can perform time-and-billing and gain access to document repositories. Healthcare professionals gain mobile tools to manage patient care, issue prescriptions and view medical references. In the public safety and law enforcement field, mobile solutions provide access to national police databases and dispatch systems. The scope of solutions for mobile professionals is extensive and growing— BlackBerry devices bring timely information and communication capabilities to these groups to enhance productivity.

Capitalizing on the Business Benefits

The business benefits of mobile solutions vary according to the nature of the application. Organizations interested in exploring the possibilities and identifying areas where they can improve business processes should investigate the *Enterprise Solutions Guide for BlackBerry 2005-2006,* which lists third-party applications in different categories. Among the categories included are:

- Mobilizing sales force automation

- Mobilizing field service

- Mobilizing IT operations

- Mobilizing enterprise operations

- Mobilizing industry professionals

Investigating the ways in which these solutions might be integrated into your business is the first step in capitalizing on the business benefits.

Mobile Solutions with BlackBerry Alliance Partners

To obtain exceptional long-term benefits and maximize return on investment, many organizations work closely with BlackBerry Alliance Partners. These partners can help simplify the integration of mobile solutions into a company's infrastructure and determine the most effective ways—both in terms of cost and efficiency—to extend existing applications to the mobile workforce.

The extensive BlackBerry partner ecosystem includes the wireless carriers (who offer the BlackBerry devices and the service), system integrators; solution providers who design custom solutions and management operations, independent software vendors and others who contribute to developing and deploying robust, practical, secure solutions.

::: BlackBerry.

Taking Advantage of BlackBerry Capabilities

The BlackBerry device provides many built-in capabilities that strengthen the business case for wireless solutions, including:

- **Single-device mobility solutions**: A single BlackBerry device performs a full range of functions: network access, phone communication and web browsing.

- **Integrated tools for exceptional productivity**: BlackBerry applications are well integrated, simplifying common tasks for the mobile workforce, such as opening a web page from an email message or calling a contact from within a business listing.

- **Ease of use**: Mobility solutions have been optimized for the BlackBerry interface, extending mobile access to vital business data.

- **Push technology**: The BlackBerry platform incorporates push technology, which sends data, messages and alerts to BlackBerry device users automatically.

- **Industry-proven results**: The BlackBerry Enterprise Solution™ has been implemented worldwide, spanning over 95 wireless carriers across 40 countries. Thousands of organizations have achieved better communication and enhanced productivity with BlackBerry.

Developing the Business Case

Consider these factors when investigating a mobile solution for your organization:

- **Understand your existing business problems**: How effectively is your organization's business data being used? Are mobile workers able to access this data easily?

- **Determine the potential savings of a mobile solution**: To calculate the likely cost savings of a wireless solution, consider the productivity and revenue gains that can be achieved through extended mobility and timely data access. Keeping mobile workers connected and informed can have significant benefits that translate to productivity.

- **Getting support from IT**: Decision makers in your organization's IT group will want to fully understand the deployment costs and the anticipated return on investment. If there is an existing BlackBerry platform in place, costs can be greatly minimized.

For further information, the *Enterprise Solutions Guide for BlackBerry 2005-2006*—an interactive CD-ROM with flexible search options—offers a detailed view of the various solutions available for the platform from BlackBerry Alliance Partners.