



Leading automotive supplier enhances transparency with BlackBerry solution

The Canadian-Austrian company Magna is the world's biggest and most diversified automotive supplier. Magna has 72,000 employees who work in 242 manufacturing operations and 86 product development, engineering and sales centres in 25 countries on five continents. 50 sites are located in Germany alone. Magna designs, develops and manufactures automotive systems, assemblies, modules and components, and engineers and assembles complete vehicles, primarily for sale to original equipment manufacturers (OEMs) of cars and light trucks.

The Challenge

Magna was looking for a solution that would provide higher transparency and a better flow of information in their customer service management. Due to the international orientation of Magna, the company's executives travel frequently and sales representatives spend a lot of time with their customers on site. The company therefore needed a mobile handset with a matching operating system that would provide phone, email and calendar features as well as mobile access to and management options for CRM-data in real-time. In an international company with a complex client base such as Magna's, the constant updates of customer data and order details is mandatory to ensure a smooth work flow.

The Solution

Magna had already successfully used BlackBerry® smartphones in their Canadian operations. The company therefore decided in 2003 to enhance the deployment of the mobile solution by launching it in Germany, too. At that time, BlackBerry smartphones were already the unquestioned market leading devices for mobile communications and Magna's IT decision makers were primarily convinced by the numerous possibilities presented by the BlackBerry® platform and its push email technology, such as automatically synchronising emails, calendar entries and contact information in real-time.

Benefits

Mobile access to customer data and additional databases

Real-time updates of CRM- and ERP data

High transparency

Improved customer service

Easy, self-explanatory installation



It was mainly the executive level and sales representatives, who work out of the office a lot, that were equipped with BlackBerry smartphones. To make the mobile access to various databases and the management of customer data even smoother, it was not long before Magna was looking for a content management system that would be compatible with a wide range of CRM and ERP-systems and would run in the existing BlackBerry environment.

Magna chose FlowGate by GFI Informationsdesign, a member of the BlackBerry® Alliance Program. FlowGate provides access to all requested data stored in the most diverse systems via the users' BlackBerry smartphones. Users can access the data needed any time on their mobile device, edit it and save it back on to the enterprise server.

"No other solution provides the flexibility and productivity of FlowGate," explains Tilman Berg, IT Application Manager at Magna. "The solution we had in mind had to unite many applications and had to be compatible with systems such as SAP, too. Only a BlackBerry infrastructure in connection with FlowGate could meet this demand."

The Benefits

The integration of FlowGate into the BlackBerry environment went without any problems and took only two days. Initially, 25 employees were equipped with the application on their BlackBerry smartphones. Thanks to the intuitive use of FlowGate and the BlackBerry smartphones there was no need for any additional staff training, meaning everybody could start working with the new solution right away.

"The various benefits of the BlackBerry solution are quite obvious," Berg continues. "Be it the push email technology, the high security standards or the easy, intuitive use of the handset – the BlackBerry smartphone simply covers all our needs. Used together with FlowGate, it also allows for optimised management of our customer data."

The use of the BlackBerry platform increased the transparency within the company considerably. By constantly updating the database, every employee can now get the latest information on the status of any order or customer service activity at any time. Decisions can now be made in real-time and the efficiency of business processes has visibly increased. "With the BlackBerry solution, we simply can act much quicker and provide the best possible service for our customers," concludes Berg.

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"Since we started using the BlackBerry solution in connection with FlowGate, we have visibly increased the transparency in our business processes. For us, there was no alternative: only the BlackBerry platform would offer us the necessary range of features and the functionality we needed."

Tilman Berg,
IT Application Manager,
Magna

GFI Informationsdesign GmbH has been offering IT services and solutions since 1995. GFI supports customers across a wide range of branches.

Customers benefit from GFI's extensive knowledge, gathered over many years as partner of the major providers, as a business partner of IBM and of course as a member of the BlackBerry® Alliance Program.

Our know-how guarantees the required support during the implementation of your projects. GFI supports the customer from the consulting stage, via planning, implementation and integration right through to commissioning. Ongoing support and hosting can also be offered when required.

GFI FlowGate is the Content Management System for the BlackBerry® solution, enabling access to any database from a BlackBerry® smartphone.

With GFI Flowgate you can have mobile access not only to your notes applications and relational databases but also to SAP.

Whether CRM, ERP, shop systems, contract and fleet management or any other application – with GFI FlowGate you can always have your resources "at hand", quickly, reliably, safely and presented in a manner suitable for all user groups.