

Case Study

Remote Network Management using BlackBerry and Rove Mobile Inc.



Company: Worcester Polytechnic Institute (WPI) is located in New England, where its 4,000 students focus on technologically-based degrees.

Industry: Education

Region: Americas

Company Size: Medium Enterprise

Email Environment:
Microsoft® Exchange

Solution:
Network and Systems Management

BlackBerry Partner Solution: Mobile Admin and Mobile SSH from Rove

Business Challenge: A small IT group wanted a way to monitor and manage their Microsoft Windows administration systems to help support the Help Desk when they were not at work. They also wanted better ways to manage the growth in their BlackBerry deployment.

Solution: Building on The BlackBerry Enterprise Solution™, WPI deployed Mobile Admin and Mobile SSH from Rove. IT members were given the ability to troubleshoot network management systems from their BlackBerry devices.

Results:

- Efficient network management
- Extends capabilities of small IT team
- Secure, IT-friendly administration
- A solution that can grow with them



The Challenge: Solve Network Problems While Away from the Office

WPI is a university that prides itself on using science and technology to meet real-world problems. Their Windows® Administration group lives that philosophy every day; a small team looks for the best ways to use technology to keep 50 servers up and running for an email user base of 6,000 people.

The team uses two network monitoring systems – from Nagios and Microsoft – to determine basic system health information. Administrators receive emails and SMS pages when there is a problem and they troubleshoot fixes from their desktop or laptop computers.

The same team is also regularly contacted by the Help Desk, who responds to user issues such as system lock outs or printer issues. The approach had its limitations. “In off hours, I would get a call from the Help Desk that a service was down, and I’d have to call someone on my team to see if they could get to an Internet-connected computer,” says Jon Bartelson, Assistant Director of Computing Services. “It was not the best way to get things done.”

In 2005, they began looking for a wireless solution that would allow them to do critical network management tasks. The search for a remote management solution coincided with research into using BlackBerry devices for faculty and senior management.

Why BlackBerry?

In their search for a solution, WPI experimented with iPAQ devices and wireless LAN cards for their PCs. “It was a lot of work to get anything done,” says Ben Thompson, Director of Computing Services. “We had to carry a laptop around as well as an iPAQ.”

When they discovered the BlackBerry Enterprise Solution, they found a simpler way. The BlackBerry solution offers all-in-one converged functionality for email and calendar, so they could leave their laptops behind if they wanted. The solution also allows users to deploy extended data solutions through the BlackBerry Mobile Data System™ of the BlackBerry Enterprise Server™.

“We try to maintain a currency in leading edge technology at WPI because it does connect to the curriculum,” says Bartelson. “We knew ahead of time that BlackBerry was going to be in demand by faculty, staff and students. Having that in mind, we thought we might be able to use BlackBerry to improve our IT responsiveness.”

When WPI discovered Rove’s products, Mobile Admin and Mobile SSH, the decision was made. They realized they could securely perform a range of network management functions from their BlackBerry devices – resulting in better customer service and decreased load on the IT team.

“BlackBerry seemed like the most usable, most IT-friendly solution for communication, notification and fixing systems issues on the go,” says Chris O’Connor, Senior Windows Systems Administrator. “The excellent level of security that BlackBerry offers was also a factor.”

“BlackBerry has offered us a simplified solution with a central management function. Before this, I would have fought against expanding our user base for devices. Now I don’t worry. It’s opened the door.”

~JON BARTELSON, Assistant Director of Computing Services

Partner Profile:



Company: Rove Mobile Inc.

- A leading solutions provider for remote management of IT resources and infrastructure
- Products such as Mobile Admin and Mobile SSH allow IT administrators to monitor, maintain, and manage their networks from practically anywhere — streamlining operations, decreasing costly network downtime, and accelerating response times
- Rove serves a global customer base of more than 1,000 corporations

Featured Products: Mobile Admin and Mobile SSH

Application Type: Network and Systems Management

Business Value:

“There weren’t any other solutions on the market that compared with Rove’s. Mobile Admin and Mobile SSH provide the best functionality for the best price. They are the superior products and have been an excellent choice.”

~ JON BARTELSON, Assistant Director of Computing Services

For more information, www.rovemobile.com

BlackBerry and Rove Mobile Inc. Make Life Easier

The IT team at WPI gets emails and alerts on their BlackBerry devices when their monitoring systems detect a problem. Using Mobile Admin, they can remotely fix problems that occur with their Windows administration systems, such as:

- Viewing and clearing event logs
- Restarting and shutting down servers
- Viewing printers and print jobs
- Unlocking user accounts
- Managing drives, folders and files
- Viewing or editing shared folders and files

“Often it’s the Help Desk that takes calls about problems,” says Thompson. “We’re the service providers that are there to offer the highest levels of resolution. Mobile Admin helps us better support the Help Desk. We can remotely fix the most common problems, such as lock outs and resets, from virtually wherever we are so our users can continue working.”

Everyone has noticed the impact Mobile Admin has had on efficiency. “It’s made our lives easier for day-to-day management tasks,” says Bartelson. “By allowing us to solve problems when we are out of the office, we can usually get things going again within a couple of minutes. There’s a peace of mind in being able to address a problem when it happens.”

Mobile Admin saves the day on a regular basis, but Bartelson recalls one time when it was extremely useful. The electronic locking system that manages building security failed. Using Mobile Admin, Bartelson was able to diagnose the problem and restore access to the campus buildings.

He also uses another Rove product, Mobile SSH, to manage the university’s Linux® and UNIX® systems. Mobile SSH offers terminal emulation capabilities so he can troubleshoot his own server monitoring systems that run on UNIX servers. “It’s come in handy when I’ve run into problems on that server,” he says. “It sends out email notifications if the modem isn’t working properly and I can fix things from my BlackBerry device.”

“It’s taken a process that took up to 45 minutes per person down to a few minutes over the phone or on email. I also like that I can remotely wipe a device if it’s lost by the user.”

~JON BARTELSON, Assistant Director of Computing Services

The Advantages of Centralized IT Management

Beyond the many benefits of having a remote network management solution on their devices, WPI finds the BlackBerry Enterprise Solution offers them control. Before they chose BlackBerry devices, they were faced with the possibility that faculty would carry a range of devices. The idea of managing different systems caused them some worry.

With the BlackBerry Enterprise Solution, they gain a centralized approach to managing one reliable device. The time that it saves this busy IT team is immeasurable. "If we had to manage a lot of different devices, I would have had to hire another person just for that job," says Bartelson. "Centralized services are more efficient and painless."

"From a support perspective, you always feel like you should try and support everything every user wants," says Thompson. "BlackBerry has offered us a simplified solution with a central management function. Before this, I would have fought against expanding our user base for devices. Now I don't worry. It's opened the door."

They are also enjoying the over-the-air deployment capabilities that are part of the BlackBerry Enterprise Server. While they were piloting BlackBerry, Chris O'Connor was personally visiting each user to set up their BlackBerry software. With over-the-air services, the users can now self-provision, saving him a great deal of time.

"Before, it was time-consuming to go to each person's desktop and set things up," says O'Connor. "Now I just send them the link and they handle it. It's taken a process that took up to 45 minutes per person down to a few minutes over the phone or on email. I also like that I can remotely wipe a device if it's lost by the user."

* The above information regarding third party products and services is provided in this document for your information. Since third parties provide the information to Research In Motion Limited ("RIM") and RIM relies on the information without performing any independent investigations, RIM makes no warranty or guarantee concerning the features, reliability, or pricing of the third party products or services, or their compatibility with any RIM products.

Check with service provider for availability, roaming arrangements and service plans. Certain features outlined in this document require a minimum version of BlackBerry Enterprise Server Software, BlackBerry Desktop Software, BlackBerry device software and/or BlackBerry devices and may require additional development or third party products and/or services for access to corporate applications. Prior to subscribing to or implementing any third party products and services, it is your responsibility to ensure that the airtime service provider you are working with has agreed to support all of the features of the third party products and services. Installation and use of third party products and services with Research In Motion's ("RIM") products and services may require one or more patent, trademark or copyright licenses in order to avoid infringement of the intellectual property rights of others. You are solely responsible for determining whether such third party

licenses are required and are responsible for acquiring any such licenses. To the extent that such intellectual property licenses may be required, RIM expressly recommends that you do not install or use these products and services until all such applicable licenses have been acquired by you or on your behalf. Your use of third party software shall be governed by and subject to you agreeing to the terms of separate software licenses, if any, for those products or services. Any third party products or services that are provided with RIM's products and services are provided "as is". RIM makes no representation, warranty or guarantee whatsoever in relation to the third party products or services and RIM assumes no liability whatsoever in relation to the third party products and services even if RIM has been advised of the possibility of such damages or can anticipate such damages.

© 2006 Research In Motion Limited. All Rights Reserved. The BlackBerry and RIM families of related marks, images and symbols are the exclusive properties of Research In Motion Limited. RIM, Research In Motion, BlackBerry, BlackBerry Enterprise Server are registered with the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office and may be pending or registered in other countries. All other brands, product names, company names, trademarks and service marks are the properties of their respective owners. MAT-12059-001

Results:

Efficient Network Management: WPI can respond to Help Desk requests from virtually wherever they are on their BlackBerry devices, solving network management problems and reducing network downtime.

Extends Capabilities of Small IT Team: A small team can maintain a better work-life balance while away from the office. WPI finds it easier to schedule vacations and off-time since they can monitor systems from their BlackBerry device virtually wherever they are.

Secure, IT-friendly Administration: By taking advantage of simplified administrative features of the BlackBerry Enterprise Server, WPI was able to wirelessly provision devices, remotely update software and manage the security of lost or stolen devices.

A Solution that Can Grow with Them: Key IT members see a future that includes more extended solutions on BlackBerry devices. "BlackBerry devices are universal," says Bartelson. "It's extensible far beyond what we have now. As more people on campus join the BlackBerry community, I can see our solutions framework growing, too."

For more information on solutions for BlackBerry, visit www.blackberry.com/go/success