

Case Study

BlackBerry Solution Application Takes the Headache Out of Logging Time for Florida Firm's Lawyers

we deliver creative and effective business solutions and counsel
BERGER SINGERMAN
attorneys at law

Company: Berger Singerman is a Florida business law firm specializing in commercial law, real estate, healthcare, tax and estate planning.

Industry: Legal/Professional Services

Region: Americas

Company Size: Small to Medium Enterprise – 125 employees

Email Environment: Microsoft® Exchange

Type of Solution: Industry Specific Application, Time and Billing

BlackBerry Partner Solution: A4P-Enterprise by AIRTIME-Manager®

Challenge: Berger Singerman wanted to make it easier for their lawyers to capture billable time from mobile phone calls and emails so client accounts are always kept up-to-date.

Solution: The firm built on their existing BlackBerry® Enterprise Solution with A4P-Enterprise from AIRTIME Manager, an application that automatically clocks client time spent on the phone or email and routes that billable information into the Berger Singerman's ProLaw™ accounting database.

Results:

- Faster, more reliable time entry
- On-the-job efficiency
- Recovery of forgotten hours
- User-friendliness



 BlackBerry®

The Challenge:

Mobilize the Way Billable Time is Recorded and Tracked

The ability to accurately track billable time is significant to any law firm's solvency in the marketplace. Berger Singerman's lawyers are busy engaging in excellent client service so calls or emails that are billable events can be easily forgotten. Add up these small segments over time, and the firm may begin to miss revenue.

"Abraham Lincoln said it best when he said, 'a lawyer's time and advice is his stock in trade,'" says Arthur Spector, a lawyer with Berger Singerman. "If you don't track your time, you're losing money. And your firm is putting all these resources around you so you can bill time."

But lawyers like Spector were having to write down what they did on paper or remember to log it into the desktop ProLaw accounting application at the end of the day. "If I don't log that call right away, and I wait three days, then I have to try and recollect what that conversation was about. I may only remember some of what we talked about. That may not be satisfactory to the client once you bill them."

Since the firm's lawyers were already using BlackBerry® smartphones for their daily communications on email, Berger Singerman began the search for an easy way to mobilize time tracking using the BlackBerry Enterprise Solution.

Why a BlackBerry Solution?

Berger Singerman attorneys were already familiar with BlackBerry smartphones for their email, calendars and contacts. "Email has become one of the most mission critical applications in law," says Rey Leon, Director of Information Technology. "We knew that our lawyers liked using the technology and felt we could build on that user acceptance."

"I don't know how we would do our jobs without our BlackBerry smartphones," says Spector. "I use everything on it, including the browser from time to time."

Berger Singerman set out to find a time tracking application that would work with the BlackBerry Solution and would connect to the firm's ProLaw database. They discovered that A4P-Enterprise, a time tracking application by AIRTIME-Manager works seamlessly with BlackBerry smartphones and their current set up for accounting.

The solution gave them the ability to extend the value of their current BlackBerry solution investment and introduce new functionality to a device that was already well-accepted.

"With A4P-Enterprise on the BlackBerry solution, fewer attorneys get emails from the accounting department asking them to get their time sheets in."

~ REY LEON, Director, Information Technology

Partner Profile:



Company: AIRTIME Manager

- Designs, develops, and delivers a suite of mission critical applications for wireless devices
- AIRTIME's applications fall into three product groups designed to meet the needs of professional services firms and business enterprises by mobilizing their offices on wireless devices
- Products include: A4P-Enterprise, A4P-Professional and A4P-Lite

Featured Product: A4P-Enterprise

Application Type: Industry Specific Application, Time and Billing

Business Value:

"AIRTIME Manager has been phenomenal. Their support is excellent. If I have an issue, I can be sure to get two or three emails back so I know someone is working on my problem."

~ REY LEON
Director, Information Technology



For more information, visit www.airtimemgr.com

Logging Time the Easy Way

A4P-Enterprise is an application that resides on the BlackBerry smartphone. When a lawyer is helping a client on the phone or in an email, a prompt comes up at the end of the event. It shows how much time was clocked and the lawyer can use a drop down menu to apply that time against client accounts stored in the ProLaw database. No one has to rely on their memory anymore to capture all the time applied to a client's case.

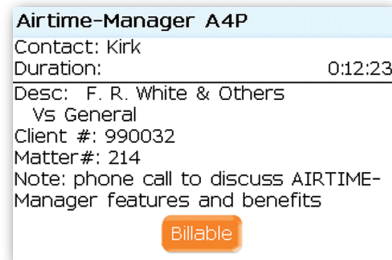
"At the end of the day, when you're supposed to log your time, you often wind up having another emergency," says Spector. "You then have to go back two days later to record what you did and you don't get the same detail. This approach helps me be more timely because I'm doing it immediately after ending the call or sending the email."

"We've figured out that if we recover just six minutes of an attorney's billable time every month – time that would have been lost – this solution has paid for itself," says Leon.

Leon found a way to make the solution extra easy for his users by customizing the solution to each user. When they log their time, the lawyers see a drop down menu that has the entire list of the specific accounts they're working on. With just a few clicks, they can apply the billable time to the account without having to spend time looking things up.

Another feature of the solution that makes it user-friendly is the application's memory. Once time has been logged from a particular email account or phone number, the system remembers the client account and automatically prefills the logging information on the next event, saving the user's time by avoiding duplicate key strokes.

The ProLaw database, which the firm's accountants use to bill clients, is updated every night with all billable time so the accounts department is always up-to-date. That makes it easier for the firm to bill its clients faster.



Sample screen shot of the A4P Enterprise Application

Helping People Work Smarter

The application has several features that can maximize a lawyer's valuable time. Spector uses a few of them to speed up his data entry even more.

He's created his own auto text codes in the application for commonly used phrases that relate to his cases. For example, when he types 'XEM' and hits the spacebar, his BlackBerry smartphone automatically fills in the phrase "exchanged email communications with", saving him keystrokes and time when he's busy.

"When I travel, it's really convenient to know that I've logged most of my time as I've used it, rather than having to go back and look through records at the end of the day," says Spector.

Another feature of the solution, which other lawyers use, is the ability to turn a time clock on or off. If they're working on a case file at their homes, they can use the application to mark when they started and when they finished and have this time recorded in the ProLaw database.

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

Results

Faster, More Reliable Time Entry: Because lawyers are recording their time as they use it, instead of waiting until the end of the day, the accounting system keeps more current accounts for billing their customers

Recovery of Forgotten Hours: Berger Singerman estimates that the solution pays for itself if they recover only six minutes per month of a lawyer's time that would otherwise be forgotten

On-the-job Efficiency: Lawyers are busy enough, without having to be bogged down in more paperwork. A system that prompts them to record what they've just done maximizes their time and frees them up to focus on other things

User-friendliness: Lawyers can choose various features of the solution to make their jobs easier, such as using auto text or a time clock, and can customize the solution to match their work habits

"We lawyers are supposed to record our time. The question is whether that's easy or hard to do. The BlackBerry solution makes sure I enter my time on-the-spot, without ever having to put pen to paper."

~ ARTHUR SPECTOR, *Attorney at Law*

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