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RIM/Lotus Collaboration and Mobility: More than Business Value

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First-Class Collaboration and Mobility = ROI

Advanced collaboration applications from IBM Lotus and BlackBerry smartphones from RIM offer state-of-the-art technology and business advantages to corporate users.

BY LAURA DIDIO



Mobility and unified communications are two of the biggest business drivers in the lives of 21st century workers.

A substantial portion of corporate end users rely on their mobile devices to deliver unfettered, round-the-clock access to crucial email and line-of-business applications. Corporate users depend on their smartphones to keep them connected to colleagues, customers and business partners regardless of location. Few, if any, business users today could conceive of life without their mobile phone.

With the pace of mobile technology innovation accelerating, the industry is moving beyond using smartphones just to deliver baseline access to email, voicemail and text messaging. Spurred by the demand for ubiquitous connectivity, businesses are eagerly embracing a unified communications (UC) model that melds mobility with a new class of collaborative applications,

enabling remote, traveling and telecommuting workers to have their desktops at their fingertips—literally.

Research In Motion's (RIM) BlackBerry® smartphone, the undisputed market leader in the smartphone device arena, and IBM® Lotus®, the top developer of enterprise collaborative applications, are pioneers in this fast-emerging mobile UC arena. The two industry giants have partnered to produce a series of collaborative applications and tools that run on BlackBerry smartphones and address the needs of an increasingly peripatetic and demanding corporate user populace.

“Bringing together the BlackBerry solution and IBM Lotus Domino, Sametime and other collaboration tools enables enterprises to unleash an unlimited amount of productivity from their employees,” says Vanessa Alvarez, an industry analyst in Frost & Sullivan's Unified Communications Information, Communications & Technologies Group.

The RIM/IBM Lotus collaboration, Alvarez says, means that corporations are no longer limited by geographic or connectivity constraints. The result, she adds, is they “can accomplish so much more.”

She continues, “This is the next step for the BlackBerry solution in the collaboration space, moving beyond email to more real-time applications. In this evolution, IBM is a natural partner, with an extensive product portfolio.”

BlackBerry® Enterprise Server, for example, securely integrates with IBM Lotus Domino mail servers. This is a powerful combination that provides seamless push-based access to all email, calendar and contact

management enjoyed in the desktop environment, ushering in a new era of mobile unified communications.

According to Alvarez, the ability to extend the “in-office functionality and corporate applications out to the mobile workforce is crucial.” Having the right collaboration tools in place will not only increase employee productivity, she says, but it can accelerate go-to-market business decisions, connecting employees with specific expertise who can quickly come together to solve a problem and find solutions. Delivering mobile applications to remote workers also has a positive impact on the business. It allows organizations to retain talent regardless of location, and ultimately adds to the bottom line.

A large organization suddenly becomes small; employees can reach specific contacts in a matter of minutes. “When you meld mobility and collaboration, it opens up a whole slew of opportunities for cost efficiencies and effectiveness. RIM and IBM are a powerful combination,” Alvarez says.

RIM Continues to Thrive

The BlackBerry smartphone is the undisputed market leader in the smartphone device arena with more than 29 million subscribers and growing. One reason for RIM’s early success was its prescience in providing customers with embedded, integrated access to email and messaging applications. RIM, founded in 1984 in Waterloo, Ontario, understands the dynamics that drive user adoption. The workplace is no longer narrowly defined as a traditional office locale with fixed 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. hours of operation to which the employee must conform

and report on a daily basis. Corporate workers travel, telecommute and interact with colleagues across time zones. Business is conducted on nights, weekends and holidays.

“Two out of five, or 40% of enterprise workforces, are mobile today, and that figure is growing. This is too big a segment of the workforce to ignore,” Frost’s Alvarez says.

Mark Amszej, a RIM director of product marketing, says the firm prides itself on its lack of diversity. “We focus solely on mobile solu-

“Two out of five, or 40% of enterprise workforces, are mobile today, and that figure is growing. This is too big a segment of the workforce to ignore.”

**VANESSA ALVAREZ, ANALYST,
FROST & SULLIVAN’S UNIFIED
COMMUNICATIONS INFORMATION,
COMMUNICATIONS & TECHNOLOGIES
GROUP**

tions via BlackBerry. We do one thing and we excel,” he says. This singular approach allows RIM to deliver innovation and a complete mobile end-to-end solution, starting with the applications that run on BlackBerry smartphones and continuing all the way up to cloud computing.

The BlackBerry solution differentiates itself with leading-edge security and data compression capabilities and the ability to efficiently route network traffic, conserving precious bandwidth. RIM

also boasts more than 450 carrier partners, and BlackBerry supports numerous enterprise applications and collaboration platforms, such as IBM Lotus, to provide customers with a wide array of choices.

RIM and IBM: Pioneering the Future of Mobile, Collaborative Unified Communications

RIM and IBM Lotus deliver all the tools needed to improve the productivity of businesses and their end users and enable intelligent collaboration across the enterprise—everywhere, anytime.

Corporate end users have 24/7 access to secure instant messaging whether in the office or in the field. The BlackBerry solution also incorporates such leading-edge functions as enterprise voice integration and presence awareness. Remote employees can initiate and continue business workflows, access reporting dashboards, securely access critical documents, and link to documents without downloading them.

In addition to collaborating with RIM in the development of BlackBerry clients that support native Lotus collaboration software functionality, IBM has also built its own internal applications to complement the BlackBerry solution. They include W3 BlueBerry Pages and Lotus Sametime Unyte. These applications, which have been available since early 2008, ensure optimal communications and collaboration among IBM’s 380,000 end users worldwide (see “[True Knowledge at Hand](#)”). Employees download the applications from IBM’s Web site; they are accessible from both the corporate desktop as well as Black-

Berry smartphones. The powerful BlackBerry development platform makes development of convenient applications possible. For example, IBM employees are now able to contact one another via phone, fax, or IMs in a minute or less; such apps also provide the employees' current status—whether available, unavailable, in a meeting or on a conference call.

RIM & IBM: Strong Partnership = Innovative Products and Support

The breadth and depth of the RIM/IBM Lotus mobile unified communications offerings is a testament to the strong, close working relationship between the two industry powerhouses. Design, engineering and technical service and support teams from both firms' particular product teams work closely from inception to release to ensure the highest degree of integration and interoperability.

IBM and RIM provide each other with early access to upcoming source code and each actively participates in the other's beta releases. The two companies also exchange "bugs" down to the core dump as well as their ideas on what caused a particular bug. And RIM provides BlackBerry smartphones to IBM developers for hands-on experience. The two firms also have dedicated design teams that collaborate on the next generation of Domino BlackBerry Enterprise Server, Connections, Quickr and Sametime.

"What started as a handshake relationship has expanded and been formalized into an excellent working relationship and close partnership," says Valerie Wang, RIM enterprise product manager for messaging and

collaboration. IBM assigns premium support technicians to RIM; so support tickets will open in both organizations and IBM will consolidate and manage them. This is extremely advantageous to corporate end users. Instead of finding themselves mired in time-consuming and annoying finger pointing, they are assigned a single trouble ticket. Resolution is fast and effective.

"Today's users want to be just one click away from any form of communications application [they] would like to use. And they want a wide variety of choices."

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A Cornucopia of Product Releases

In such a fast-paced, highly competitive market, neither RIM nor IBM is resting on its individual or collective laurels. The two market leaders have a full slate of new products and services scheduled for release this year.

Earlier this year IBM indicated that it will support the Domino Designer with xPages BlackBerry. This represents a new opportunity for developers to build custom applications for the BlackBerry solution, which should in turn spur usage. More recently, in an [April 28 blog post](#), Kevin Cavanaugh, IBM vice president of mes-

saging and collaboration products, confirmed that direction. In the post, Cavanaugh states that xPages was designed with the vast majority of Notes applications in mind and goes on to say, "Watch for xPages in the client and on mobile devices."

It's those collaboration aspects that will foster true mobile UC environments, according to Frost's Alvarez. "Today's users want to be just one click away from any form of communications application [they] would like to use. And they want a wide variety of choices," she says.

Additionally, RIM's BlackBerry Enterprise Server 5.0, was released on May 4, 2009. It provides administrators and end users with enterprise-level manageability and will include such features as:

- A device-comprehensive Web-based Administration console that is also now open to developers and customers to build value-added applications to augment the BlackBerry Administration Service
- Built-in high availability and fault tolerance to enable an even higher level of BlackBerry Enterprise availability
- Enhanced ability to manage enterprise applications and ensure that these applications are properly pushed and installed on the end-user BlackBerry smartphones
- Ability to view, copy and utilize contacts in public folders
- Ability to synchronize public contact folders with the BlackBerry

BlackBerry Enterprise Server 5.0 also incorporates a slew of new mobility features including Remote File

Access, support for Windows Media Audio files (WMA), enhanced calendar functionality, and the ability to manage/add/remove email folders.* A 60-day trial is available at www.blackberry.com/go/server5.

Over the next several quarters, RIM will also address corporate end-user demand to expand social

networking offerings to the mobile BlackBerry platform.

“Customers want more social networking applications for their enterprise use, and we’ve delivered that with the BlackBerry® Client for Lotus Connections v. 2.0.1, shipped in the spring of 2009,” RIM’s Wang said. “We’ve gone from email to IM

to social software. The next-generation collaboration tools will allow users to work in a more focused, organized fashion and provide tighter integration with BlackBerry core applications like email and calendar and various collaboration clients.”

RIM is also integrating presence with several other collaboration ap-

TRUE KNOWLEDGE AT HAND

Productivity, collaboration and simple workflow are some of the ways RIM enhances business and personal communication.

“The BlackBerry is my desktop!”

That declaration by Michelle McIntyre, an IBM corporate communications professional, full-time wife and mother, and part-time PTA president and soccer mom, says it all.

McIntyre has worked at IBM’s Saratoga, Calif., offices for 13 years; she’s been mobile for the past seven. She relies on her BlackBerry® smartphone’s workflow, collaboration and social networking tools like Beehive and IBM’s own Lotus Connections facilities to keep her connected, regardless of her location.

“The BlackBerry solution is workflow the way that work should flow,” McIntyre says. “Using this technology makes me productive regardless of whether I’m sitting in the bleachers at my son’s soccer game or in an airport waiting to catch a plane, because I can attach [to my corporate network] locally.”

McIntyre says she’s secure in the knowledge that information she needs is no farther than her fingertips. “I can remember back to the days when I had to hunt for a Starbucks to get a connection for my laptop,” she recalls. Today, she relishes the fact that she can connect from anywhere and access myriad applications to do business for IBM and also attend to her personal life. “The unified communications aspect of the BlackBerry solution extends far beyond email. It encompasses my calendar, my contacts, to-do lists and voicemail,” she says. In practical terms, that means McIntyre frequently multitasks.

McIntyre’s experience also underscores the close technology partnership and integration between RIM and IBM. Big Blue has built its own internal applications—Mobile Viewer for BlackBerry, the W3 BlueBerry Pages and Lotus Sametime Unyte. These applications, which have been available since early 2008, ensure optimal communications and collaboration among IBM’s 380,000 end users worldwide. Employees

download the applications from IBM’s intranet Web site; they are accessible from both the corporate desktop as well as BlackBerry smartphones.

These internal IBM, BlackBerry-enabled applications have made Angus McIntyre (no relation to Michelle McIntyre), much more efficient and productive in his professional and personal life, irrespective of location. Angus McIntyre is a group product manager for IBM Software Group, Lotus and Collaboration Rove Mobile Viewer for BlackBerry and the W3 BlueBerry Pages.

“If I’m fully connected to high-speed Internet and have access to my BlackBerry smartphone, I’m always connected to the IBM network. It takes me about 75 seconds to access the applications,” Angus McIntyre says. “I estimate that the internal collaboration applications and the BlackBerry solution save me two hours per day, 10 hours per week, 40 hours per month and 400 hours in 10 working months—which is phenomenal,” he adds.

And it’s not just IBM users who rave about the integration between the BlackBerry solution and Lotus Notes, Lotus Sametime and Lotus Connections. Bonnie Tucker, a senior account executive at ABI Research in Oyster Bay, N.Y., works remotely from her home in Massachusetts and travels frequently to visit clients. She calls the BlackBerry smartphone “indispensable.”

In Tucker’s estimation, the BlackBerry solution does email and collaboration better than any other. “If I don’t pick up my office phone within four rings, it automatically forwards to my BlackBerry smartphone. And it’s good on power—I’ve never had the battery die,” she says.

“The BlackBerry personifies a truly unified communications device. It’s perfect for today’s 21st Century business on the go,” Tucker concludes.

*Some features require BlackBerry device software v5.0.

plications. This will allow business users to determine the availability of their contacts to see if they're able to receive an IM, for example.

In the current downturn, employees are tasked with working more efficiently just to keep up, and that's why the features in these collaboration tools are taking on greater importance, Wang notes. "You can't afford to have efficiency bottlenecked when you're mobile," she says.

To that end, RIM provides its customers with a variety of options. Corporate users can choose from 2G or 3G mobile broadband networks or even a wired connection to the laptop to conserve bandwidth and avoid roaming charges. RIM also allows its customers to replace their BlackBerry batteries, and the company is committed to long battery life and the durability of the BlackBerry device itself.

"We know our customers need at least a full day of battery life and we give them that," Wang says. "And

"Customers want more social networking applications for their enterprise use, and we've delivered that with the BlackBerry Client for Lotus Connections v. 2.0.1, shipped in the spring of 2009."

**■ VALERIE WANG, ENTERPRISE
■ PRODUCT MANAGER FOR MES-
SAGING AND COLLABORATION, RIM**

all of our BlackBerry models are designed for durability; we do a lot of stress testing and drop testing to ensure that they're not DOA if you accidentally drop them," she adds.

Unified and Competitive

Unified mobile communications and collaboration are necessary in

order for businesses to compete and succeed in today's fast-paced, dynamic environment. Unified communications capabilities tear down the walls and barriers among email, messaging, voice, instant messaging, text messaging, conferencing and even video applications. A true unified communications environment allows corporate end users to multitask. It also lets them seamlessly communicate and collaborate with peers, business partners, customers and suppliers who use various types of devices, irrespective of geographic location.

Smartphone devices and the business tools that support them are evolving to provide corporate users with straightforward, easy access to all types of information. According to Frost's Alvarez, melding two recognizable product and market leaders—the BlackBerry smartphone and the IBM Lotus suite of enterprise collaboration applications—into a single offering is a formidable combination. ▶

Laura DiDio is a high-tech industry analyst, consultant and writer as well as principal at Information Technology Intelligence Corp.

Business in Motion

In a world of instant information access and global collaboration, innovation is the key to competitive advantage. And it's even more essential in the world of mobility, where smartphones are becoming one of the fastest growing technologies. Computerworld spoke with Mark Amszej, director of product marketing for Research In Motion (RIM), based in Waterloo, Ontario, about trends in the messaging and collaboration market.

BY LAURA DiDIO

Computerworld: What trends are you seeing in mobile messaging and collaboration?

Mark Amszej: We are seeing mobile workers more connected than they've ever been before to their office worker counterparts, as messaging and collaboration capabilities on smartphones become more powerful. Co-workers now have more visibility into the availability of their team members and more methods of reaching them, whether by email, phone, instant messaging or more advanced collaboration solutions like IBM Lotus Connections.

CW: From an enterprise collaboration perspective, can you describe RIM's short-term tactical plans for collaboration capabilities on the BlackBerry® platform?

Amszej: Collaboration is extremely valuable to businesses from both a tactical and a strategic standpoint. Businesses today are becoming more agile, more effective overall because they are empowering their employees with the technology they need to be accessible, productive and responsive, regardless of their

location. Today, the BlackBerry platform supports all the major messaging and collaboration suites, including Lotus Sametime and Microsoft Office Communications Server 2007. RIM continues to seek out solutions for the BlackBerry platform that can build on the extensive mobile collaboration capabilities available today.

CW: What about RIM's long-term strategic plans?

Amszej: From a strategic perspective, collaboration, presence, unified communications and fixed mobile convergence will continue to be a focus for expanding the capabilities available on the BlackBerry platform. Also, you can clearly see by the investments RIM has made in R&D that we continually innovate to enhance the functionality of the BlackBerry smartphones and the overall user experience. RIM focuses on what our customers want today and balances that with forward-thinking R&D to anticipate the customer needs of tomorrow.

CW: What makes BlackBerry the leader in business mobility?

Amszej: BlackBerry is the gold standard for business mobility and for several reasons: reliability, simplicity in UI, true push technology, market-leading security, manageability and scalability. We offer a complete wireless solution—everything from the portfolio of smartphones that appeal to different users and business uses to applications that run on smartphones or that integrate with back-end corporate applications, server software for any size business, and end-to-end security.

The BlackBerry ecosystem is made up of over 450 carriers globally, thousands of third-party smartphone application providers, third-party platform solution providers, and partners that offer BlackBerry solutions as managed services around the world. We also mobilize all the leading email and communications platforms, including Microsoft® Exchange, Lotus® Domino and Novell® GroupWise. The leading-edge data compression capabilities of the BlackBerry platform also benefit customers and carrier partners by minimizing data plan usage and network traffic. Put together, the BlackBerry platform provides customers with incredible choices, a proven wireless platform, and an extensive ecosystem for building on their wireless foundation.

CW: How does RIM's recent acquisition of Chalk Media Group fit into your strategic vision?

Amszej: Mobile chalkboard™ enables the rapid creation and secure, tracked deployment of media-rich “pushcasts” to BlackBerry smartphones. We're excited about the prospect of taking the Mobile chalkboard application and adapting it to communicate with globally disparate organizations and disseminating information to global employees via the BlackBerry platform. The secret sauce of the Mobile chalkboard application is the interaction with the end users to ensure user

compliance, to track user learning, or even to survey the end users.

This product will redefine mobile learning and media distribution.

CW: What is RIM's vision for mobility and the importance of RIM's partnership with IBM?

Amszej: Jim Balsillie, our co-CEO, was on stage during the keynote presentation at Lotusphere this year [2009], and that says a lot. IBM and RIM hold a very close partnership. IBM Lotus Notes, Domino and Sametime have worked on the BlackBerry platform for years. Last year, we introduced the BlackBerry® Client for Lotus Connections, and we are now in the process of rolling out Lotus Symphony document viewing and new capabilities for Lotus Connections. Support for Lotus Quickr and Lotus Domino Designer are planned for this year as well. We will continue to explore new ways to create “a smarter planet” with IBM solutions on the BlackBerry platform.

CW: What are some of RIM's latest initiatives?

Amszej: We have really expanded our portfolio of smartphones, software and services for businesses of all sizes. Over the past year or so, we have launched new types of smartphones, including the BlackBerry® Bold™, BlackBerry® Pearl™ Flip, BlackBerry® Storm™, BlackBerry® Tour™ as well as the BlackBerry® Curve™ 8900 to offer a selection of

devices to appeal to a range of users and business use cases.

In May, we launched the next-generation BlackBerry® Enterprise Server, version 5.0, which offers a rich set of advanced IT administration features and smartphone controls for large-scale, mission-critical BlackBerry deployments. This latest server software is truly enterprise class, with mobile device management, smartphone application management, over-the-air software deployment and high availability built in. Several of our larger enterprise customers will also appreciate the scalability of this solution as they reach smartphone deployments of a hundred thousand or more.

BlackBerry® Mobile Voice System is also attracting significant attention from businesses looking to mobilize their corporate phone systems (PBX) and converge smartphones with desk phone capabilities for a truly unified, managed voice experience. And helping to ensure reliable BlackBerry services within the business environment, RIM also recently launched an enhanced BlackBerry® Technical Support Services program for small and midsize businesses and enterprises, with flexible and more comprehensive support options to help customers find the right level of support for their specific business needs. It's been an exceptional year for BlackBerry solutions. ▶

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