BlackBerry Workspaces Keeps This Major **Water** Company's File Shares Flowing Securely

Industry Utilities
Employees 700
Location Netherlands
Products BlackBerry® Enterprise Mobility Suite - Content Edition, BlackBerry® UEM, BlackBerry® Work, BlackBerry® Dynamics, BlackBerry® Workspaces
https://www.evides.nl/

At a Glance

Located in the Netherlands, Evides provides drinking water to approximately two and a half million consumers and businesses, and tailored water services for numerous large industrial companies. Having already secured its mobile fleet through BlackBerry® UEM, its applications through BlackBerry® Dynamics, and its employee workflows through BlackBerry® Work, decision makers at the company realized they also needed a way to protect customer information and sensitive data. For this, they turned to BlackBerry® Workspaces.

The Organization

Evides is one of the Netherlands' largest water companies, supplying much of the country's southwest with drinking water. It counts approximately two and a half million consumers and businesses amongst its clientele.

Evides also provides tailored water services for large industrial companies in the Netherlands, Belgium, and Germany. This can vary from offering a temporary supply of industrial water, to implementing and operating entire water treatment plants. It counts several major fuel companies amongst its clients.

"In the market for industrial water-on-demand, we are one of the strongest players in Northwestern Europe," explains Alexander de Blok, Evides Head of Systems and Application Management. "One of our larger markets is Rotterdam, where we operate Western Europe's largest water processing refinery."

Better Coordination Through BlackBerry UEM: Because the service it provides is so critical, Evides cannot afford even minimal downtime in its infrastructure. The company's customers, de Blok says, have very high expectations – and Evides prides itself on exceeding them wherever possible. Everything from the water quality to its reliability to the overall customer experience needs to be smooth and seamless.

"We have a very high service level we need to achieve," says de Blok. "If there's a leak or interruption anywhere in our infrastructure, it needs to be addressed as quickly as possible. Our employees need to be able to find their way quickly to the source of any distribution problem, and to report when the problem is fixed."

To ensure that's always the case, Evides has implemented a Choose Your Own Device (CYOD) policy for approximately 500 of its 700 employees. Staff in the field are equipped with the ruggedized Samsung Galaxy Xcover 3 and Xcover 4, while other employees can choose between several BlackBerry Android phones and iPhones. These devices are all managed through an on-premises installation of BlackBerry UEM.

"We try to have a strict selection on what we offer, and we rely on monthly updates to ensure our security remains strong," says Rob ter Linden, IT Security Specialist and Solution Architect at Evides. "BlackBerry has given us a great deal of support in that regard, and also with their software."

Evides has been a BlackBerry customer since 2009, with BES5. Though they briefly considered MobileIron and Citrix when BES10 was released, they ultimately decided to stay with BlackBerry – and have done so ever since. This decision, says de Blok, was tied both to BlackBerry's superior security and the added flexibility it gained through its acquisition of Good Technology.

Evides is assisted in its management of BlackBerry UEM by a Netherlands based software partner, Dahvo.

Dahvo handles everything from advising on implementations to servicing Evides' infrastructure. They guided Evides from their old BlackBerry environment to BlackBerry UEM, while also maintaining and upgrading the on-premises installation. A long-time associate of BlackBerry, Dahvo is one of the highest-certified BlackBerry partners in the Netherlands.

Dahvo achieved BlackBerry Workspaces Specialization in 2016. When Evides mentioned the need for an EFSS solution, it was Dahvo who recommended choosing BlackBerry.

Secure Productivity with BlackBerry Dynamics: In addition to managing its mobile fleet through BlackBerry UEM, Evides also uses BlackBerry® Dynamics to ensure its corporate applications are kept completely secure. Employees use a number of apps from the BlackBerry Dynamics app store, including BlackBerry® Work, BlackBerry® Access, BlackBerry® Docs to Go, and BlackBerry® Notes, as well as ESRI, its geolocation tool.

Because ESRI is a third-party vendor – their app is not BlackBerry Dynamics-ready – Evides instead relied on AppDome® to containerize its data. A platform for mobile app integration, AppDome allows features from supporting apps like BlackBerry Dynamics to be wrapped into applications without requiring additional coding. As with BlackBerry UEM, Dahvo handled the implementation and development work, ensuring Evides could remain in full control of the geolocation data stored in the app. In the near future, Evides plans to further expand the scope of its BlackBerry Dynamics usage.

"We're currently working to wrap several partner- developed applications in the BlackBerry Dynamics container," explains ter Linden. "These include an information system that tracks our distribution pipelines, a planning app, and an IoT app. We are also exploring the development of at least four custom applications, such as an HR app."

"A lot of companies in our industry are going with their own FTP solution. This means installing servers and services for every single partner and contractor. With BlackBerry Workspaces, we don't need to do that – we have one system in place to quickly and securely share files between businesses, and one that's easy to maintain."

Rob ter Linden,
IT Security Specialist and Solution Architect, *Evides*

According to ter Linden, the reason Evides relies on BlackBerry Dynamics for its application security is tied to the regulatory climate of the EU. The company needs to keep its data on-premises and secure. It also needs to ensure that data is not compromised by device vulnerabilities.

"In spite of the regulatory demands we face, we're very comfortable with mobile app usage," says de Blok. "We use the BlackBerry container, so we know our apps are secure."

The Challenge

Although it had both application and endpoint security covered, Evides soon realized it also needed a solution in place for secure file sharing, as well. The company frequently works with external contractors such as construction companies. These partnerships often involve the exchange of files containing protected information – and protecting those files was traditionally challenging.

"There's a lot of data that passes back and forth between Evides and our business partners," says ter Linden. "Customer data, location information, details on the water grid, plans for maintenance work and expansions, invoices, and so on. A lot of these partners have their own file transfer systems in place, but we found that method of sharing to be quite inefficient, especially since we're usually sharing up to a gigabyte of data at a time."

Evides needed a way to keep all this data safe, while also making things more efficient for its employees.

An Enterprise File Synchronization and Sharing platform was the most obvious answer to its problem. Unfortunately, the company realized that very few platforms were capable of meeting its list of requirements.

Evides needed to ensure that no matter where files ended up, it always remained in control of them – otherwise, it could not stay compliant with the EU's privacy and data protection regulations. This system needed to integrate readily with both the company's file share server and its document management system, OpenText. Finally, location tracking was also a must have, according to ter Linden.

"To avoid privacy issues and protect customer data, we needed to know that the right companies were opening the files," explains ter Linden. "And we found that the best way to do that was through geolocation."

The Solution

Evides made a short list of two vendors that they felt might meet their requirements: BlackBerry Workspaces and Kite Works. Ultimately, it was BlackBerry's responsiveness, support, and alignment with Evides' goals that caused them to choose BlackBerry Workspaces. Their existing relationship with BlackBerry strongly contributed, as well.

Within a few months, it had an EU-based BlackBerry Workspaces implementation connected to its file server and ready to go. The company has now dropped its File Transfer Protocol (FTP) entirely when working with external contractors – all file sharing is done through the BlackBerry Workspaces platform.

"BlackBerry was really the only one that could match all our requirements," explains ter Linden. "Our initial BlackBerry Workspaces installation was only intended for fifty users, but we've since extended it to several hundred. Currently, we're working to connect BlackBerry Workspaces to OpenText – we should have that done in the near future."

With BlackBerry Workspaces, internal colleagues can still use the company's original file sharing system. And when the time comes to work with someone outside the company, that external user can log in to BlackBerry Workspaces to access the files they need. Once integration with OpenText is complete, the sharing process will become even more streamlined, says ter Linden.

The Results

Since implementing BlackBerry Workspaces, Evides has been able to do away with FTP outside the company altogether. This has made the process of working with external contractors significantly more efficient, and promoted widespread user satisfaction throughout the organization. Most importantly, these benefits were achieved while also keeping compliant with regulatory guidelines – including the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), which went into effect in May of 2018.

Positive Reception: Currently, the primary users of BlackBerry Workspaces are those who have contact with housing contractors. The platform has also seen use in the invoicing process for industry customers. Both user groups have found the platform seamless and easy to use.

"Feedback has been positive," says ter Linden. "We've delivered exactly what our users requested – a file sharing solution that works."

Lower Overhead: According to ter Linden, the majority of construction contractors typically use their own custom FTP solution. Traditionally, this meant having to install and maintain a new FTP server for each individual project. With BlackBerry Workspaces, none of this extra legwork is necessary.

"We have one solution to share files with every contractor and within every project," says ter Linden. "Because it's running already and is a cloud instance, we don't have to do much to maintain it. That means lower implementation costs, fewer potential points of failure, and better security and connectivity."

Regulatory Compliance: Through BlackBerry Workspaces, Evides ensures that all file sharing done outside the organization complies with the EU's regulatory climate. Files are fully encrypted no matter where they're sent, and all data is stored on a server based in the European Union. And through location tracking and time-restricted access, the company can ensure that sensitive data is only accessible to authorized users.

"BlackBerry Workspaces lets us know if the right company is opening a file," says ter Linden. "And if we see any suspicious activity – for example, if someone working at a site in Rotterdam suddenly opens a file in the United States – we can react immediately and rescind access. The level of control the platform gives us makes compliance much easier than with standard FTP."

For Evides, BlackBerry Workspaces is about being in control of the information they send - names, addresses, usage reports, payment reports, and more, all of which falls under the GDPR. With BlackBerry Workspaces, Evides can show audit teams that it has full ownership of all information processes. It makes compliance with regulations like the GDPR simpler than ever. More importantly, it gives both internal users and contractors a means of collaboration that's simple, efficient, and secure.

About BlackBerry Limited

BlackBerry Limited is an enterprise software and services company focused on securing and managing IoT endpoints. The company does this with BlackBerry® Secure™, an end-to-end Enterprise of Things platform, comprised of its enterprise communication and collaboration software and safety-certified embedded solutions.

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