

BlackBerry and ISEC7:

Partnership Enables Customers to Achieve Digital Workspace Innovation



Some life changes occur so slowly and incrementally that we scarcely notice them happening. As parents, for example, we only dimly sense the gradual knitting together of neurons that enable our children to progress from crawling to walking. Other life changes occur so suddenly and swiftly that we have little time to fully absorb their implications. Such is the case with the COVID-19 pandemic, which is forcing many organizations to confront critical gaps in their digital workplace strategies and reappraise the value they place on their security investments.

BlackBerry partner, [The ISEC7 Group](#), has a unique perspective on these developments, thanks to its heritage as a first mover in helping organizations leverage mobile information technology to achieve their goals for digital transformation. Founded in 2003, the Hamburg, Germany-based firm has become a preeminent global provider of digital workplace and enterprise mobility solutions, serving more than 1,300 customers in 37 countries from offices in the United States, United Kingdom, Germany, Australia, and New Zealand.

ISEC7

Industry:

Mobile Business Services And Software Solutions

Location:

Hamburg, Germany

Product:

BlackBerry Spark[®] Suite

Website:

www.isec7.com/english/



ISEC7 draws roughly 60% of its business from government clients, law enforcement, and associated agencies, and another 15% from defense, banking, and other highly regulated industries. Organizations like these demand best-in-class products and services that meet the most stringent security requirements.

“In the past, security controls and policies have often been perceived as sources of business friction and barriers to employee productivity,” said CEO and Founder Marco Gocht. “However, you can’t safely expose sensitive information to remote employees and mobile devices unless you’re certain that data at rest and in transit is secure. It’s suddenly become abundantly clear that productivity and security are inextricably linked, two sides of the same coin. Operationally, that means you must be able to manage devices and security in a single pane of glass. This is precisely what BlackBerry has accomplished with the [BlackBerry Spark® Suites](#).”

“Integration is essential because it eliminates gaps in a security infrastructure that can arise when clients stitch together point solutions from multiple vendors,” adds Henning van der Linde, BlackBerry Senior Channel Account Manager. “When it comes to unifying endpoint management and security, there’s no room for finger pointing. The buck stops with ISEC7 and BlackBerry.”

A Measured Approach To Digital Workplace Innovation

Marco Gocht explains that ISEC7’s approach has always been to help clients optimize their digital workplace roadmaps in phases by guiding them through a [Seven-Stage Enterprise Maturity Model](#). “With Stage 4 or Stage 5 clients, for example, we would emphasize the importance of addressing security requirements in their plans to deploy productivity tools and endpoint management solutions,” Gocht said. “With less mature clients, we would suggest starting with a foundational capability, such as mobile threat management. This incremental approach is less relevant now that the COVID-19 pandemic is accelerating a transition that was already underway to a more holistic digital workplace, where the environment includes every kind of device that can run a productivity application. In the current climate, organizations feel a sense of urgency to deploy complete solutions as quickly as possible.”

A Complete Digital Workplace Infrastructure Solution

ISEC7 is helping clients meet this challenge with a fully integrated digital workplace infrastructure built upon the [BlackBerry Spark® Suite](#), with [BlackBerry® UEM](#) providing the endpoint management and policy controls, [BlackBerry® Workspaces](#) handling file sharing and synchronization while securing productivity applications, [SecuSUITE®](#) ensuring the privacy of voice calls, and [BlackBerry Spark® Unified Endpoint Security](#) tying it all together, protecting people, devices, networks and apps with a [Zero Trust architecture](#) that offers continuous threat protection while [maximizing user productivity](#).

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“ISEC7 has also leveraged BlackBerry technology as an independent software vendor partner to develop applications that significantly expand on these capabilities,” says Gocht.

First released in 2004, [ISEC7 SPHERE](#) is a platform-independent digital workplace infrastructure management and monitoring solution that utilizes network intelligence and more than 750 parameters to proactively flag potential issues before they impact users. From the ISEC7 SPHERE console, workplace administrators can perform real-time health checks and manage infrastructure environments with as many as 200,000 mobile devices. Today, more than 200 mobile infrastructures and 1.75 million devices are monitored and managed with ISEC7 SPHERE.

[ISEC7 Mobile Exchange Delegate](#) (MED) is an advanced personal information manager client that provides employees with delegated and shared access to Microsoft® Exchange email, calendar, contacts, and public folders. MED also enables users to access classified email as well as delegate functional mailboxes in high-secured multi-domain MS Exchange environments.

Eating Your Own Cooking

There’s a saying, sometimes attributed to Berkshire Hathaway chairman and CEO Warren Buffet, to the effect that investment advisors should demonstrate their financial acumen by investing their own money in the same vehicles they recommend to clients. ISEC7 has taken a similar approach in building its own digital workplace infrastructure.

“Internally, ISEC7 is at Maturity Stage 7,” says Gocht. “Our Digital Workplace infrastructure is fully automated, and we utilize the same IT technologies we implement and manage for our customers. For example, we recently renewed the [BlackBerry® Secure UEM & Productivity Suites - Freedom Suite](#) licenses we purchased for our employees. Without those investments, it would be impossible for our three-person IT team to efficiently manage our entire operational infrastructure and provide our 100 employees with responsive support.”

ISEC7 was fully prepared when reports began circulating of a COVID-19 outbreak in China. “We don’t compromise when it comes to preserving the health and safety of our employees,” says Gocht. “We’ve been ready since mid-January for our employees to work exclusively from home. For us, and our customers, the transition has been seamless.”

Upgrading ISEC7’s Endpoint Defenses and Solution Portfolio

Eighteen months before, Gocht and his team had concluded that the firm’s endpoint defenses and solutions portfolio needed a refresh. “We had lost confidence in our legacy AV product,” says Gocht. “We knew that signature-based tools were no longer effective against modern threats. Therefore, we could no longer justify the administrative burden on our IT team to download, install, and audit signature files.”

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Gocht and his team spent two months testing artificial-intelligence-based endpoint security products before selecting [BlackBerry® Protect](#) and [BlackBerry® Optics](#) as ISEC7's new endpoint protection, detection, and response platform. "Not only was BlackBerry Protect more effective at stopping threats than the other solutions we tested, it was the easiest to manage," says Gocht. "We were also impressed by BlackBerry Optics' AI-driven capabilities for automated detection and response."

The decommissioning of the legacy AV and deployment of the BlackBerry solutions proceeded without incident. "Our entire mobile fleet is now in prevention mode," says Gocht. "We've also rolled out both solutions to our entire customer base."

A Multi-Faceted Partnership

Gocht's relationship with BlackBerry dates back to September 2001, two years before he founded ISEC7. "I participated in the network operator testing that preceded the introduction of BlackBerry mobile phones into the German marketplace," says Gocht. "I was impressed by their mobile technology, so one of my first moves after founding ISEC7 was to become a BlackBerry partner."

Since then, the partnership has matured and flourished. In February 2018, [BlackBerry announced](#) that ISEC7 would become the first global member of the new [BlackBerry® SHIELD Advisor Program](#), an initiative to help partners better manage risks and improve the security of IoT devices in the workplace. ISEC7 has also earned platinum status as a [Solution Provider](#) member of the [BlackBerry® Enterprise Partner Program](#), with specializations in [BlackBerry Workspaces](#), [BlackBerry® AtHoc®](#) crisis communications and [Managed Hosting Services](#). As a platinum partner, ISEC7 provides German-speaking BlackBerry customers with first- and second-level Premium Support. ISEC7 also participates in the BlackBerry partner programs for [Independent Software Vendors \(ISV\)](#), [Training Partners](#), and [Managed Security Service Providers](#).

"We seldom need to reach out to BlackBerry for assistance in resolving a customer inquiry," says Gocht. "On those rare occasions when we encounter a problem that requires escalation, our BlackBerry Partner Service Manager ensures we get immediate level-three support."

This streamlined access to BlackBerry technical resources is just one reason why ISEC7 has been so successful in servicing large and strategic customers such as [Pepperl+Fuchs](#), a global leader in the field of sensor technology and a BlackBerry customer for more than 20 years. "ISEC7 is managing the fleet of 1800 Android™ and iOS® devices that Pepperl+Fuchs' 6,200 employees rely upon for secure access to the firm's ERP, CRM, and productivity applications," says Gocht. "We view them as a model that other organizations will want to emulate as they pursue their goals for digital transformation."

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Looking Ahead

Years will pass before we can accurately assess the ultimate human costs of the COVID-19 pandemic or its long-term effects on the way organizations operate and conduct business. What is certain, however, is that the enduring partnership between BlackBerry and ISEC7 will continue to demonstrate a shared commitment to a world in which organizations and their employees are productive and secure.

About BlackBerry

BlackBerry (NYSE: BB; TSX: BB) provides intelligent security software and services to enterprises and governments around the world. The company secures more than 500M endpoints including 150M cars on the road today. Based in Waterloo, Ontario, the company leverages AI and machine learning to deliver innovative solutions in the areas of cybersecurity, safety and data privacy solutions, and is a leader in the areas of endpoint security management, encryption, and embedded systems. BlackBerry's vision is clear — to secure a connected future you can trust.

For more information, visit [BlackBerry.com](https://blackberry.com) and follow [@BlackBerry](https://twitter.com/BlackBerry).

