

Remote Work Is the Future

ConvergeOne Embraces It



Leveraging over two decades of expertise, ConvergeOne provides its clients with a wide range of solutions, including collaboration, networking, infrastructure-as-a-service, telephony, unified communication, and cybersecurity. It works with some of the largest organizations in the world, including 75% of Fortune 100 and approximately 50% of Fortune 500 companies. The one thing it prides itself on above all else is the connection it's forged with its customers.

"We help our clients build the solutions they want to use," explains Collin Buechler, Security, Data, and Privacy Compliance Officer (CISO) at ConvergeOne. "It's one of our core tenets – we're always going to do right by our clients, because we spend so much time learning about their pain points and line of business. We understand that there's no one-size-fits-all solution, and that every client is unique."

ConvergeOne

Industry:

Professional and
Managed Services

Employees:

Over 3,000

Location:

North America

Product:

BlackBerry® Digital Workplace,
BlackBerry® Secure UEM
& Productivity Suites –
Limitless Suite

Website:

<https://www.convergeone.com/>



Digitization and Distributed Work

ConvergeOne is no stranger to remote work. Given the nature of its industry, the majority of its staff work outside the office – on the road, at client sites, or from home. Initially, the organization supported its remote staff via VPN.

As ConvergeOne's workforce became more distributed, it began to test the limits of what its VPN could support. Over the past five years, the company experienced meteoric growth, expanding from 500 employees to over 3,000. As a result, staff increasingly began working from locations without the connectivity required to support a VPN.

"A VPN works great if you have a strong network connection," says Buechler. "However, our staff frequently need to report in from areas where all they have is 3G, which can't support a VPN's bandwidth demands. It was really hindering their ability to work."

ConvergeOne's rapid expansion posed another challenge, as well. The majority of its growth occurred via acquisitions, as the organization sought new solutions to better serve its clientele. Although these acquisitions greatly enhanced its capabilities, they brought with them something else: sprawl and IT complexity.

"At one point, we had fifteen different monitoring solutions, five instances of Google Drive", and multiple Dropbox" accounts," Buechler recalls. "We needed to consolidate, but we also recognized that you can't force people away from the tools and devices they're used to – not without providing a better alternative. They wanted to keep doing things the way they did them before the acquisition."

It was through BlackBerry that ConvergeOne found a solution.

From Vendor To Client

"We initially explored BlackBerry's portfolio as a potential offering for our clients," says Buechler. "After seeing what the company had to offer, I realized this was what we'd been looking for. It solved all our problems."

After an initial pilot that lasted approximately two months, ConvergeOne rolled out BlackBerry Digital Workplace. Combining the power of BlackBerry® Desktop, BlackBerry® Protect, Secure Edit, and Awingu, BlackBerry Digital Workplace enables remote workers no matter where they are. Built with next-generation networking and security technologies, the platform equips a distributed workforce with both online and offline access to all the apps, data, and tools they need without requiring active device management or complex VPNs.

All devices and endpoints are further guarded against digital threats via BlackBerry Protect, a cutting-edge AI-based anti-malware solution. BlackBerry Protect is an accurate, efficient, and effective solution designed to guard against persistent threats and malware on an organization's endpoints. It helps prevent breaches while also providing additional security controls to safeguard against a wide range of attacks, including script-based, fileless, memory-based, and device-based.

To help further secure its devices and data, ConvergeOne also deployed the BlackBerry Secure UEM & Productivity Suites – Limitless Suite, which features powerful and intuitive endpoint management, secure productivity apps, file-level digital rights management, industry-leading application security, identity/access management, SDK and ISV/custom apps, and full compatibility with Microsoft® Intune. This is all managed through a single pane of glass.

Optimized for mobility and designed to be device-agnostic, Awingu runs Windows®, Linux®, web apps, intranet apps, virtual desktops, and files entirely from within BlackBerry Desktop. Many of ConvergeOne's overseas engineers use this solution, which allows them to access the software necessary for their work, while its screen recording capabilities allow some degree of oversight. Through BlackBerry Digital Workplace, ConvergeOne has seen several considerable gains.

Streamlined Acquisitions, Greater Satisfaction

In 2019, ConvergeOne acquired IT solutions provider Venture Technologies. Of the firm's 500 employees, an estimated 90% relied on Mac® computers for their day-to-day work. With ConvergeOne operating under a traditional acquisition model, Buechler and his team would have taken those devices away and replaced them with Dell™ laptops.

"We would have been looking at half a million dollars in hardware that people would use only grudgingly, if at all," explains Buechler. "BlackBerry allowed us to avoid this pitfall entirely, saving us money and keeping morale high. We actually had very little turnover from that acquisition."

Because users were able to remain on the devices they were familiar with, this also led to a significant reduction in IT integration help tickets – 80%, by Buechler's estimates.

"Our Director of IT infrastructure asked me if people were actually using BlackBerry solutions," Buechler recalls. "In his experience, people complained when they had to use a new system. With BlackBerry, we gave people the solution, and it was business as usual for them – we don't need to force people into a single solution."

A Step Ahead of Bad Actors

"One of the common sentiments in information security is that traditional antivirus software is dead," explains Buechler. "I don't think that's the case, but it's dangerous to rely solely on definitions. They're predicated on knowing what bad actors are doing – but we don't always know that."

Cyber criminals move fast. They are constantly pioneering new techniques, testing new attack vectors, and engineering new tactics. BlackBerry Protect helps ConvergeOne keep pace, protecting the organization and its distributed workforce from all manner of digital threats, while BlackBerry Digital Workplace helps ensure that corporate data is kept safe.

"For me, it's about peace of mind," says Buechler. "It can sometimes take days or weeks to come up with a virus definition, and we're not in a climate where anyone has that sort of time."

"It doesn't matter what system you have on your device or what device you have. As long as you have BlackBerry, you have access to your work. That's helped us realize about \$4.5 million on cost avoidance and savings over three years"

— Collin Buechler, CISO,
ConvergeOne

"I'm not worried about users circumventing security because they're at home or on public Wi-Fi," he continues. "With BlackBerry, we can move to a Zero Trust environment. We don't have to trust our devices and workstations, because we trust BlackBerry."

Preventing Data from Walking Out

In any acquisition, there's always the risk that new employees will have loyalties outside the parent company. Particularly in a distributed workforce, this means coping with the constant threat that proprietary data might end up in the hands of a competitor. For ConvergeOne, this is no longer an issue.

Secure content collaboration platform BlackBerry® Workspaces, part of the BlackBerry Secure UEM & Productivity Suites – Limitless Suite, helps ConvergeOne maintain control over and visibility into its data, no matter where it ends up.

"We had an incident where one of our account managers had reason to suspect that somebody at one of our long-term clients was sharing information with the competition," Buechler recalls. "We set her up with BlackBerry Workspaces and had her share a proposal on Friday. By Monday, someone from the competition had requested access to it – an account manager from a competing organization and the spouse of someone who worked at the client company."

Cost Reduction Through Digitization

BlackBerry has allowed ConvergeOne to significantly reduce infrastructure costs, scaling back its IT environment and eliminating all 3,000 of its workstations. It's also reduced the cost associated with lost, stolen, and damaged devices. As long as an employee has been online within the past 24 hours, they have current copies of all their work – they simply need to install the necessary software on a new device.

Originally, this process could take days, both to issue a replacement machine and to restore backups.

"We recently had an incident where an individual on her way to one of the most important sales calls of the year forgot her laptop at a security checkpoint," Buechler recalls. "Because she was using BlackBerry Workspaces, she was able to purchase an iPad® and get all of her data back within fifteen minutes."

"In just the past week, we blocked more than 80,000 COVID-19 phishing emails, and we've seen a 14% increase in malicious traffic against our perimeter since the pandemic started."

– Collin Buechler, CISO,
ConvergeOne

A Distributed, Secure Workforce

BlackBerry's software solutions were, recalls Buechler, lightweight, low-friction, and incredibly easy to deploy. Yet for Buechler, ConvergeOne's relationship with BlackBerry is about more than cost-avoidance and distributed work. It's about the lasting partnership forged between the two organizations.

"John Dubois and the BlackBerry team together comprise one of the most outstanding partners I've ever had in a vendor," Buechler concludes.

"They're instrumental to our success, and everyone I've had the pleasure of working with feels more like a team member than a third party."

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 and follow [@BlackBerry](https://twitter.com/BlackBerry).

