

Baloise Insurance

CUSTOMER SUCCESS STORY

“OUR EMPLOYEES APPRECIATE THAT IANYWHERE MOBILE OFFICE IS VERY EASY TO USE AND EXTREMELY RELIABLE. VIRTUALLY ALL IPHONE USERS INSTALL THE SOFTWARE ON THEIR DEVICE WITHOUT ANY ASSISTANCE FROM THE IT DEPARTMENT. AS A RESULT, WE’VE BEEN ABLE TO DRAMATICALLY REDUCE OUR IT SUPPORT COSTS WHILE GREATLY ENHANCING USER SATISFACTION...WITH SYBASE, WE HAVE THE RIGHT TECHNOLOGY PARTNER ON BOARD TO MOBILIZE OUR ENTERPRISE APPLICATIONS AND DATA EVEN FURTHER!”

—MARC BAIER, DIRECTOR OF COLLABORATION & WORKPLACE SERVICES, BALOISE INSURANCE

INDUSTRY

- Insurance

BUSINESS ADVANTAGE

- Able to reduce mobility support costs while increasing mobile user satisfaction.

SYBASE TECHNOLOGY

- iAnywhere® Mobile Office

KEY BENEFITS

- Reduces IT engineering and support costs required to maintain the mobile device deployment by more than 35%
- Reduces the number of help desk calls by more than 50 percent
- Empowers employees through self service portal and eliminates costly device roll-outs
- Positions company for continued mobility growth without having to re-engineer its infrastructure

Baloise Insurance, recognizing the importance of mobile technology to its operations and leadership position, needed to find a way to administer and support its growing and evolving mobile enterprise. Its key objectives were to improve user satisfaction while reducing IT costs. The company was able to achieve these objectives by implementing iAnywhere Mobile Office from Sybase and making it accessible to employees through a self service portal.

MANAGING MOBILITY EFFECTIVELY AND EFFICIENTLY DESPITE CONSUMERIZATION OF THE ENTERPRISE

Baloise Insurance is an affiliate company of Baloise Holding Switzerland. Together with Baloise Bank SoBa, Baloise Insurance is a leading provider of integrated products and services including insurance, pensions and wealth management for private customers as well as small and medium enterprises.

As is the case for so many companies, enabling and supporting mobility is a key IT strategy for Baloise Insurance, particularly as it employs over 9,400 people, many of them working remotely in the field and reliant on mobile access to information.

The company initially began to implement this strategy several years ago, turning to Sybase for the mobile solutions required to provide its employees with mobile email capability. At that time, Baloise Insurance focused on providing this capability on various types of PDAs including Palm devices.

MOBILITY GROWTH PRESENTS CHALLENGES

Over the ensuing years as the mobility market rapidly expanded and a great many new, powerful and multi-functional devices became available, Baloise found itself facing the challenge of how to support a broader range of mobile devices—such as the iPhone—in response to user demands. The company realized that it needed a flexible, secure and scalable solution that would allow it to integrate and support those mobile devices and to administer them from a centralized console. Without such a solution, Baloise realized its IT staff and existing infrastructure could hit a breaking point.

To avoid such a situation, the company turned to Sybase partner, Comdirect AG. Initially, Baloise and Comdirect AG created a short list of standardized devices to be supported by the company. Based on this list, mobile devices were individually pre-configured before being issued to users.

While this standardization approach was successful in reducing support costs by more than 35 percent, it was not as successful in achieving user satisfaction. Users, aware of the rapid evolution of mobile devices offering greater power, performance and business functionality, were frustrated by their limited device choices. IT was faced with a dilemma: it understood user frustrations, but also knew that the more devices and operating systems it had to support, the higher the support and maintenance costs would be. How, IT wondered, could it strike a balance between multiple device support, security, and administration on the one hand, and mobile infrastructure efficiency on the other?

COMPANY TURNS TO SYBASE FOR COMPREHENSIVE MOBILITY SOLUTION

Baloise Insurance knew it needed a comprehensive mobility strategy and solution that would take into account the rapid and continuous emergence of newer, more powerful and functional mobile devices, as well as the company's security and data management requirements. Additionally, the company wanted a solution that was user-friendly, minimally demanding in terms of administration, and cost-effective.

After substantial research into potential solutions, Baloise Insurance again turned to Sybase. Specifically, it selected iAnywhere Mobile Office—Sybase's solution for secure mobile email and business process mobilization, to provide PIM and email data to employee's mobile devices.

"Before making the decision, we carried out an in-depth market evaluation. However no other solution fully met our requirements," says Marc Baier, Baloise Insurance's director of collaboration and workplace services. "iAnywhere Mobile Office, for instance, was the only solution that supported the proper integration of the iPhone into a Lotus Notes business environment and that met our other business requirements, such as security."

ENABLING SELF SERVICE

As part of its overall mobile strategy, the company also developed an innovative way to implement the new solution. Baloise Insurance developed a self service portal located within the company's intranet to enable employees to synchronize the mobile devices of their choice with corporate systems and data. To develop and implement this portal, Baloise Insurance again turned to Sybase partner, Comdirect AG.

The decision for a self service portal was driven by the idea that each user should be able to select his or her mobile device from a list of standard models. This allowed employees greater device choice and the ability to configure their devices appropriately without the hands-on involvement of IT staff.

With iAnywhere Mobile Office and Baloise Insurance's self service portal in place, activating a new mobile device is simple. Employees register their devices through the portal. They then receive an automated text (SMS) reply containing a link for the download of the client software for the particular mobile device. After a successful registration, data is automatically synchronized between the user's mobile device and the company's enterprise messaging and database systems. Users can specify the type of data to be synchronized based on their specific requirements and tasks.

MOBILE CONSUMERIZATION WAVE HITS BALOISE

Although Baloise Insurance offered its staff a wide range of different mobile device options, the company quickly observed an unexpected trend. One week after the launch of its new mobility system, more than 300 users had registered their personally owned iPhones. In the blink of an eye, the iPhone had become the de-facto standard device within the company, based solely on user preference.

Today, about 600 employees at Baloise Insurance have registered for iAnywhere Mobile Office use. 87 percent of those registrants use iPhones. Responding to this overwhelming employee preference, the company intends to make the iPhone its standard device for the future. In other words, Baloise Insurance is embracing a standardization that is led by its employees.

REDUCING IT WORKLOAD AND COSTS WHILE IMPROVING USER SATISFACTION

The implementation of iAnywhere Mobile Office through the self service portal has yielded significant benefits:

- The roll-out of the new mobile infrastructure was considerably less costly than its previous standardized device policy, in which every unit had to be individually unpacked, configured, repacked and distributed to the user. Now, users do this themselves through the intranet self service portal.
- IT costs for both engineering and support have been substantially reduced. Approximately 90 percent of iPhone users require no IT support at all. In addition, the number of calls to the help desk has dropped by more than 50 percent.
- User satisfaction has increased significantly.

“Our employees appreciate that iAnywhere Mobile Office is very easy to use and extremely reliable,” says Baier.

“Virtually all iPhone users install the software on their devices without any assistance from the IT department. As a result, we’ve been able to dramatically reduce our IT support costs while greatly enhancing user satisfaction.

“The implementation of iAnywhere Mobile office and our self service portal has enabled us to achieve a complete enterprise mobility solution that offers not only end-to-end security, but also supports the handling of business and workflow processes on the mobile devices,” Baier adds.

POSITIONED FOR FUTURE GROWTH AND EVOLUTION

Considering the positive feedback from its workforce and the substantial IT savings it is achieving, attributable to its Sybase solution, Baloise Insurance is convinced that there is still a huge potential of the iPhone deployment in their business environment.

“For the end of 2009, we have set a target of 1000 registrations,” says Baier. “We might even consider expanding the range of applications for use on iPhones. With Sybase, we have the right technology partner on board to mobilize our enterprise applications and data even further!”