

# Case Study

## Hughes Hubbard & Reed LLP Deploys BlackBerry Solution to Ensure Disaster Recovery and Emergency Communications

Hughes Hubbard & Reed LLP

**Company:** Hughes, Hubbard & Reed LLP is a top-tier, Manhattan-based law firm with more than 330 attorneys practicing in seven offices worldwide.

**Industry:** Legal/Professional Services

**Region:** Americas, EMEA

**Company Size:** Large Enterprise

**Email Environment:** Microsoft® Exchange

**Type of Solution:** Disaster Recovery, Continuity of Operations and Industry Specific Applications

**Partner Solution:** METAMessage® Emergency Communications by Onset Technology

**Business Challenge:** Maintain business continuity for attorneys, clients and IT personnel by ensuring uninterrupted communications in the event of a loss of network infrastructure due to natural or man-made disasters.

**Solution:** Hughes Hubbard & Reed established an enterprise-wide emergency communications network using METAMessage software to optimize BlackBerry® PIN-to-PIN messaging capabilities.

**Results:**

- Enhanced customer satisfaction by always keeping attorney/client teams in contact
- Increased IT effectiveness by enabling immediate responses regardless of infrastructure status
- Disaster Recovery and Continuity of Operations (COOP) mandates are quickly fulfilled



 BlackBerry®

## The Challenge: Ensure uninterrupted communications in emergencies.

Recent natural and man-made disasters have demonstrated the vital importance of maintaining communications in the event of an emergency. Increasingly, major law and professional service firms are handing their IT groups a clear, unambiguous mandate – ensuring uninterrupted messaging in the event of infrastructure failure.

“My responsibility is to make sure that attorney/client teams maintain non-stop communications. Our clients don’t need to know how things get done, just that we get results. And, to stay competitive, we have to meet their expectations,” says Steve Sommer, CIO of Hughes Hubbard & Reed, an international law firm with headquarters in Manhattan.

However, traditional messaging infrastructure has many vulnerable points. Within an enterprise site, there are numerous network, email, and messaging servers and routers that, if damaged, will stop mission-critical messaging cold. The failure of landlines can render mirror sites useless.

And, regardless of how sophisticated the backup or failover system may be, IT personnel need immediate communications in order to get things up-and-running quickly and to minimize downtime. Yet, cell voice circuits are typically overwhelmed in an emergency when everyone’s first instinct is to pick up the phone.

“When the unexpected occurs, the IT group has to immediately respond to any number of challenges, from damaged servers and routers to frantic end users,” said Sommer. “As the IT maestro, I have to orchestrate a concerted effort to manage the response. I have to be able to quickly get vital messages to the whole group, know who’s received what message when, track who is responding to which problem, and do it all while the primary means of communication may be broken.”

## Why BlackBerry?

Like many law firms, Hughes Hubbard & Reed deployed BlackBerry® smartphones from their earliest availability. Successful law firms are built on clear communications that increase attorney effectiveness and improve client responsiveness. Thus, mobile email is a cornerstone of every modern law practice.

“Our attorneys have to know that they’re up-to-the-minute both with client needs and with their colleagues’ responses. Between email and the phone, our personnel are quite dependent on BlackBerry devices. It’s one device I know they are adept with and that they always have with them.”

Because the firm’s staff has found BlackBerry® smartphones so easy to use, extending its power to business applications beyond email was an obvious choice. In the case of finding a solution for emergency communications, there was another, critically important feature intrinsic to the BlackBerry® platform – PIN-to-PIN messaging.

Every BlackBerry smartphone has a unique personal identification number (PIN). This identifier enables device-to-device text messaging that bypasses email infrastructure. Because PIN messages are low-bandwidth and require only an intact wireless network to work, PIN messaging is ideal for emergency communications. Voice circuits may be jammed, email infrastructure may be damaged, landlines may be cut, but BlackBerry PIN messages typically get through.

Hughes Hubbard & Reed found implementing an emergency communications solution on the BlackBerry platform the most efficient and effective approach due to the following reasons:

- the ubiquitous presence of a device users carried almost everywhere
- the intrinsic reliability of PIN-to-PIN messaging
- ease-of-use with a minimal need for training a familiar audience

As Sommer explains, “Trust was a key factor in extending our use of the BlackBerry platform to enable emergency communications. We’ve participated as the BlackBerry solution grew from a simple email system to a powerful, multi-faceted data and voice platform. Put simply, we trust RIM, their products, and their future.”

## Partner Profile:



### Company:

Onset Technology is a leading provider of "beyond email" applications for enterprise BlackBerry® solutions. Onset's METAmessagE solutions help clients leverage their BlackBerry deployments with emergency communications and provide productivity-enhancing features, such as spell checking and printing, as well as handheld access to time-and-billing, CRM and other enterprise applications.

### Featured Product:

METAmessagE Emergency Communications

### Application Type:

Disaster Recovery, Continuity of Operations Plans (COOP)

### Business Value:

"Clients expect high-profile law firms like ours to be in constant contact regardless of external circumstances – uninterrupted communications is a fundamental customer satisfaction issue. The BlackBerry solution and METAmessagE Emergency Communications solution increases our responsiveness, improves our mobile efficiency, and therefore increases our profitability."

~ STEVE SOMMER, CIO, Hughes Hubbard & Reed

## Continuity of Communications is a "Must-Have" Enterprise Attribute

Hughes Hubbard & Reed chose BlackBerry smartphones and the METAmessagE solution for three principal reasons:

- The BlackBerry platform's PIN-to-PIN features offered a built-in backup messaging capability
- METAmessagE's optimization of PIN-to-PIN features provided a complete set of emergency communications tools
- The law firm trusted its long, successful history with both products

The BlackBerry solution with METAmessagE Emergency Communications pays off for Hughes Hubbard & Reed in a number of ways.

One of the key elements of any emergency communications solution is being sure that everyone has the latest, accurate contact information for all of their key contact people. With all the changes that go with maintaining a handheld deployment – device upgrades, personnel turnover and the like – updating PIN addresses enterprise-wide can be a time-consuming, expensive IT task. METAmessagE eliminates the IT burden by enabling automatic, unattended updates and enables quick PIN blasts to the distribution lists.

Hughes Hubbard & Reed attorneys now have the most up-to-date PIN distribution lists, which include everyone on their particular attorney/client teams, directly on their BlackBerry smartphones. In an emergency, everyone from support staff and paralegals to the client representatives quickly get each other's messages. The client is never out of touch, and the Hughes Hubbard & Reed team is always working together.

When the IT group is faced with the unexpected, team leaders need to know who has responded to what messages – and when. With METAmessagE read/receipt notifications, leaders can track exactly who has read what message with a quick glance at their device. Again, the Hughes Hubbard & Reed IT group is "in-sync" and is working optimally as a team.

"When it comes to business continuity, we don't spend a lot of time doing elaborate cost/benefit analyses - being up-and-running when things get tough is, quite literally, a priceless attribute," explains Sommers. "Our clients expect it, and our firm takes great pride in never missing a beat regardless of the circumstances. That said, the METAmessagE solution on our BlackBerry smartphones turned out to be, by any measure, the most cost-efficient deployment of a business-continuity solution that we could make."



"BlackBerry built-in PIN-to-PIN messaging has saved the day many times. It has simply never failed to keep my IT staff in constant contact. Implementing METAMessage software, we've turned our BlackBerry deployment into an effective, enterprise-wide Emergency Communications network almost overnight."

Steve Sommer  
CIO of Hughes Hubbard & Reed

For more information on solutions for BlackBerry, visit [www.blackberry.com/go/success](http://www.blackberry.com/go/success)

## Results

**Enhanced Customer Satisfaction:** Clients are always in touch with their attorneys and staff. In the event of a natural or man-made disaster, uninterrupted communications let clients know that their interests are being effectively monitored regardless of adverse conditions.

**Increased IT Effectiveness:** When IT groups need to initiate failover systems, restore servers, or otherwise fix infrastructure, optimized PIN messaging between managers and staff gets services back-to-normal more quickly and easily.

**Cost-Effective Fulfillment of Disaster Recovery Mandates:** IT staff quickly fulfilled enterprise objectives for ensuring disaster prevention and recovery by leveraging the already widely deployed BlackBerry solution.

**User Friendly, Scalable Solution:** Users were already familiar with the BlackBerry platform, and leveraging it as an emergency communications network meant eliminating training costs. And, in the future they expect the platform to host a time-tracking solution, thereby letting attorneys enter time-and-billing information directly into their enterprise system from their BlackBerry smartphones while on-the-go.

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