



## A CASE STUDY

### Exgis® and BlackBerry® Make Expense Tracking Simple for Earth's Favorite Car™

ZENN Motor Company is a leading edge car company with a difference. Their mission is to design, develop, and market a variety of unique high-quality electric vehicles. In short, the business of ZENN is one of ingenuity and innovation.

With a company as technology conscious as ZENN, they already are well aware of the benefits of mobility and staying in constant and immediate touch with their retailers, clients, and investors. That is why the entire executive and sales teams chose the BlackBerry as their wireless communication device for voice, push-based email, and synchronized calendaring.

As growth at the ZENN Motor Company continues they continue to look for new technology that will grow along with them. As they continue to sell and distribute their electric vehicles around the globe, they wanted to implement processes to streamline some of their back office systems and provide productivity gains for their staff. One of their systems to improve was expense claim tracking. The goals were outlined as follows:

- Further leverage the BlackBerry investment by providing their mobile teams a way to quickly record expenses as they are incurred, thus saving administrative time.
- Remove the cumbersome process for finance of distributing Excel expense spreadsheets for business rule changes.
- Allow employees to be reimbursed quickly.

The ZENN Motor Company selected Exgis as their Expense Tracking tool – an expense tool specifically designed for use on the Internet and BlackBerry. Exgis allowed ZENN to immediately make use of an expense tracking and reporting system without having to purchase new hardware or install any software.

#### Company

ZENN Motor Company

#### Applications Deployed

Exgis Expense

#### Challenge

The management team at ZENN Motor Company is consistently on the road meeting with suppliers, retailers, and investors. They required a simple and trouble free way to improve their process of capturing and reporting their travel and business expenses.

#### Company Profile

ZENN Motor Company is a leading developer, manufacturer and supplier of zero-emission, no-noise, luxury neighborhood electric vehicles.

#### Solution

Exgis Expense was deployed to the executive, sales, and administrative teams – providing a full-featured web based expense tracking and reporting system – with real time access from their BlackBerry devices.

#### Results

- Improved tracking and reporting of expense claims throughout the company.
- Better management oversight and approval of expenses.
- Faster employee reimbursement of incurred business expenses.

## The Advantages of Exgis Expense

The ZENN Motor Company is on the cutting edge of technology as they drive to set a new standard for what electric vehicles can be. They continue to explore new avenues of technology to make their vehicles the most efficient and cost effective electric vehicles on the market today and into the future.

The ZENN Motor Company is growing quickly as they manufacture and distribute their electric vehicles to retailers around the world, and as a result, are actively pursuing technology solutions to improve and streamline their back office operations and provide productivity gains for their staff that travel and incur out of pocket expenses on a regular basis.

One area that was picked for improvement was their expense management process. Historically, ZENN employees used an Excel template to complete their expenses. They manually completed the spreadsheet and emailed it to their manager for approval. Once approved, the spreadsheet would be printed and submitted to the finance department for payment processing.

The management at ZENN decided to implement a new expense management system to remove the cumbersome process of using Excel spreadsheets. Further, since the majority of the staff that travel utilize BlackBerry wireless devices, they decided that the solution should also work on the BlackBerry platform.

ZENN Motor Company selected Exgis as their expense vendor. In particular Exgis is an expense management tool that is accessed from the Internet, with a rich-client version for the BlackBerry, so expenses can be entered anytime, from anywhere. In particular, some of the Exgis features that met the requirements of ZENN Motor Company are:

- Complete access by staff via the Internet; connecting from any Internet connected computer in the world
- Leverage the BlackBerry by providing their mobile teams a way to quickly record expenses as they are incurred
- Allow employees to reimbursed more quickly
- Multi-currency allows expense tracking from any country ZENN deals with
- No software, no hardware to install – speed of deployment allows staff to quickly gain benefits of centralized expense management

In particular, the staff at the ZENN Motor Company can utilize Exgis Expense for the mobile business to track expenses and assign to expense types, locations, and projects. With the multi-currency feature, the staff at ZENN can track their incurred expenses in any currency, knowing that it would be converted back to their home currency using the latest exchange rate.

“Having access to Exgis Expense through the Internet, *and* on my BlackBerry, makes it a complete mobility solution” says Dennis Hancock, VP Sales & Marketing. “My BlackBerry goes with me wherever I go, and with Exgis Expense, I can enter my expenses immediately no matter where I happen to be on business”.

Entering expenses via the Internet or BlackBerry allows users to have complete access to their expenses no matter where they are located. With the BlackBerry, having the ability to record an expense claim as soon as it is incurred allows for much quicker review of expenses and easier submission of expense reports for approval and payment. Since everything entered into Exgis on the BlackBerry is replicated with a secure website, ZENN Motor Company is able to have a complete history of their business expenses from a central location.

## Improved Operations

Exgis Expense is based on a Software as a Service (SaaS) model allowing the administration of the system to be performed from a central location. Thus the finance department at ZENN Motor Company can implement and adjust business rules for all employees through their department with the knowledge that such changes take affect immediately across their entire organization.

This is especially important at ZENN Motor Company due to the fact that their sales staff is located in different countries around the world. Expense types, locations, and different rates including taxes, mileage, and per diems are established by country and all maintained from the centralized finance department at ZENN Motor Company headquarters in Canada.

Thus a change to the mileage rate for employees situated in the United States can set by the finance department Canada to take affect on a particular date. Once the new mileage rate is entered into the system by the administrator, it is applied to all employees located in the United Sates for all new mileage expenses entered on or after the effective date – no matter if the expenses are entered through the Internet or via the employees BlackBerry.

This is a significant and important change for the finance group at ZENN Motor Company. Historically mileage rate changes were made programmically to Excel templates and distributed to all employees via email on the date that the new mileage rate when into affect. Thus it put the burden on the employees to check their email, download the new Excel template, and replace the old template. Any expense reports in the process of being completed were effectively lost and had to be started over. Finally, the finance group had to check every expense report that came into their department to determine if the most recent Excel template had been used. If not, the expense claim was sent back to the employee to redo it from scratch. All this effort has been replaced with the administrator simply changing the mileage rate directly into the system – reducing a substantial ongoing effort to a 30 second change.

## Measuring the Return on Investment

It is safe to say that ZENN Motor Company started to realize the combined power of BlackBerry and Exgis almost immediately. Not only are they enjoying the ease of mobile expense tracking, but also they are seeing it make a noticeable difference on the reduced amount of administrative time spent creating and reviewing expense claim statements.

Dennis Hancock talks directly to the ROI at ZENN – “For me knowing that I am not missing any expenses is very important and brings peace of mind. The simplicity and clean organization of the expenses is priceless. I expect this to save me 20 to 30 minutes per expense report which I do twice a month on average.” Extend this time savings to all employees at ZENN, and the ROI in time savings alone becomes significant.

For ZENN Motor Company, the decision to deploy Exgis on the BlackBerry to their executive and sales teams provided the following results:

- On-the-spot expense recording reduces the administrative effort.
- Easy claim submission and thus faster employee reimbursement.
- Accurate expense analysis in real-time.
- Maintenance and enforcement of business rules.
- Elimination of Excel template distribution.

Deploying Exgis as a mobile productivity tool further leveraged their investment in the BlackBerry platform and provided immediate and measurable benefits to the ZENN Motor Company.

*"Exgis takes the monthly chore of typing in expense reports from a crumpled pile of receipts to a simple click of the mouse to get expenses done. On the fly, real time expense tracking via your BlackBerry means you never miss an expense and it greatly simplifies the bi-weekly and month end crunches to get expenses into accounting."*

*"We've come a long way from completing and emailing spreadsheets around the office."*

- Dennis Hancock, VP Sales & Marketing  
ZENN Motor Company  
[www.zenncars.com](http://www.zenncars.com)

For more information on Exgis Expense, and how it can meet the needs of your company or industry, please visit [www.exgis.com](http://www.exgis.com).

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