

CASE STUDY

Ironclad TEK INC Delivers Fully Managed IT Services to Blackstone Drilling Fluids Ltd.

Enhancing Operational Excellence and Innovation in the Energy Sector



Introduction

Blackstone Drilling Fluids Ltd. (hereafter “Blackstone”), headquartered in Calgary, Alberta, has earned a reputation as a leader in providing innovative drilling solutions across the Western Canadian Sedimentary Basin (WCSB) and beyond. Established in 2006, Blackstone unites industry veterans with rising talents on the frontlines of technology and innovation. Their team, boasting over 165 years of combined expertise, has successfully managed drilling projects in environments ranging from the Arctic to the Alberta Oilsands and Canada’s East Coast Offshore. Their focus on safety, operational efficiency, and environmental stewardship distinguishes them in a competitive market.

Recognizing the pivotal role of reliable technology in supporting their mission and growth, Blackstone sought a trusted partner to deliver robust, secure, and fully managed IT services. Enter Ironclad TEK INC, a leading provider of managed technology solutions, whose expertise, responsiveness, and commitment to innovation aligned perfectly with Blackstone’s operational ethos and future objectives.

Client Background: Blackstone Drilling Fluids Ltd.

Founded in 2006, Blackstone was established to address complex drilling challenges in the WCSB and similar demanding environments. Their core philosophy is built upon the following pillars:

- **Proactive Safety Culture:** Fostering a safe workplace while solving drilling challenges.
- **Technical Mastery and Innovation:** Harnessing decades of experience and the latest technology to deliver optimal results.
- **Comprehensive Experience:** Drilling throughout the WCSB, Arctic, Alberta Oilsands, and East Coast Offshore with every major drilling fluid system on the market.
- **Cost Efficiency:** Delivering low cost of goods (COG) and operational costs, reducing overall project expenditures for clients.
- **Customer-Centric Approach:** Placing relationship building and responsive support at the heart of service delivery.
- **Environmental Responsibility:** Maintaining high production standards while respecting and protecting the environment.

Blackstone’s total fluids and solids management approach enables them to provide unparalleled service, technical recommendations, and support, tailored to the unique demands of each client.



Challenges

Despite Blackstone's technical prowess, the rapid pace of digital transformation across the energy sector posed significant challenges:

- **Legacy Systems:** Existing IT infrastructure was fragmented, making it difficult to coordinate information flow between field operations and headquarters.
- **Cybersecurity Concerns:** Increased connectivity and remote operations exposed the organization to a heightened risk of cyber threats.
- **Operational Downtime:** Any IT disruption could hinder drilling schedules, jeopardize safety, and incur significant financial losses.
- **Resource Constraints:** While Blackstone's team excelled in drilling expertise, internal IT resources were limited, restricting their ability to keep pace with evolving technology requirements.
- **Scalability:** As Blackstone expanded its footprint and diversified its operations, their IT environment needed to scale efficiently while maintaining reliability and security.

Ironclad TEK INC: The Solution Provider

Ironclad TEK INC specializes in delivering end-to-end IT services tailored to the needs of the energy sector. Their fully managed IT solutions encompass:

- 24/7 Remote Monitoring and Support
- Network Infrastructure Design and Management
- Cybersecurity Solutions and Compliance
- Cloud Services and Data Backup
- End-User Training and Support

Ironclad TEK INC's consultative approach began with a comprehensive needs assessment, involving key Blackstone stakeholders. This ensured all business-critical systems, applications, and workflows were mapped and understood.

Implementation Process

The partnership unfolded through several key steps:

1. Assessment and Strategic Planning

Ironclad TEK INC conducted a thorough audit of Blackstone's IT environment, identifying vulnerabilities, inefficiencies, and opportunities for modernization. Together, they developed a roadmap prioritizing security, performance, and operational continuity.

2. Infrastructure Modernization

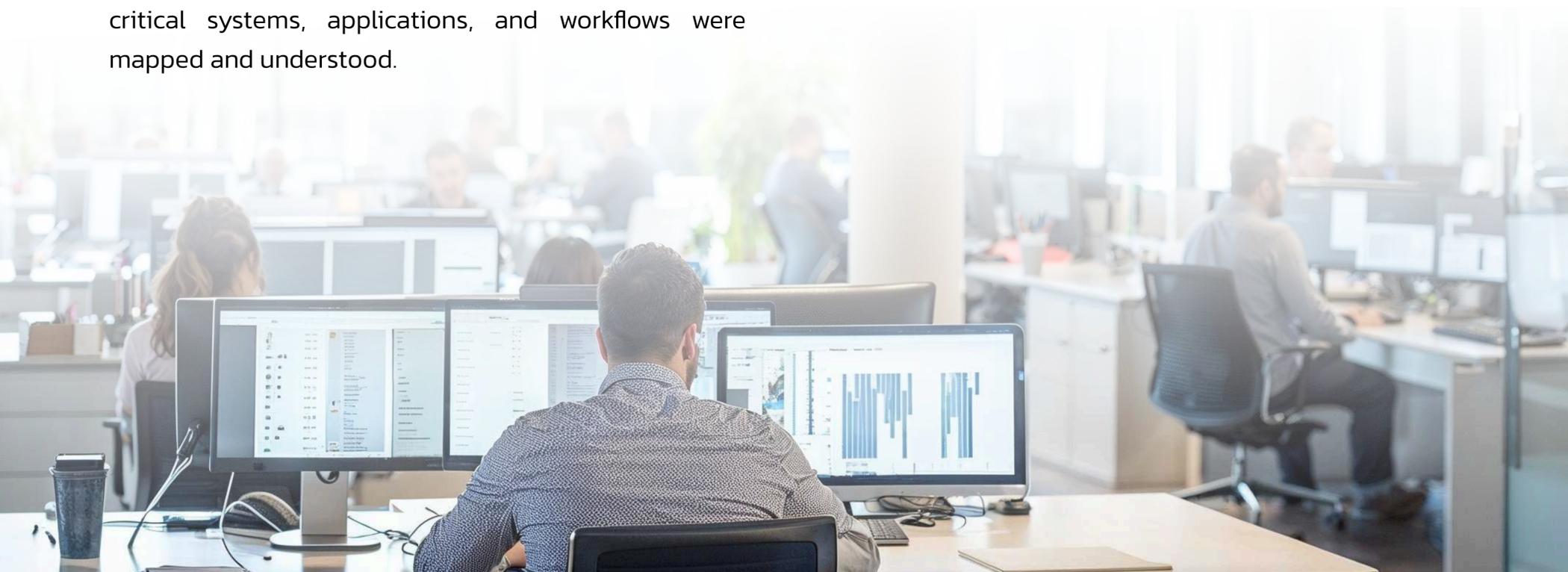
Ironclad migrated Blackstone's core systems to a scalable, cloud-based architecture. This move not only improved data accessibility for remote and field teams but also enabled seamless collaboration across multiple locations. Legacy hardware was replaced with standardized, high-performance devices, reducing maintenance costs and boosting reliability.

3. Enhanced Cybersecurity

Given Blackstone's exposure to cyber risk, Ironclad implemented robust security protocols, including multi-factor authentication, advanced endpoint protection, and regular vulnerability assessments. User training sessions increased awareness of phishing and other social engineering attacks, fostering a cybersecurity-first culture across the organization.

4. Proactive Monitoring and Support

Ironclad's Network Operations Centre began 24/7 monitoring of all systems, enabling rapid identification and resolution of potential issues before they escalated. Blackstone's staff now benefit from a single point of contact for IT-related needs, streamlining support and reducing response times.



Outcomes and Benefits

The collaboration between Blackstone and Ironclad TEK INC delivered significant, measurable improvements:

- **Operational Uptime:** System outages and downtime incidents were dramatically reduced, supporting uninterrupted drilling operations and safeguarding project timelines.
- **Enhanced Security:** Blackstone's data and intellectual property are now protected by a multi-layered cybersecurity framework, mitigating risk and ensuring compliance with industry regulation.
- **Increased Efficiency:** Streamlined IT processes and cloud-based collaboration tools improved team productivity and accelerated decision-making.
- **Scalability:** The upgraded IT infrastructure now supports Blackstone's ongoing growth, accommodating new users, locations, and applications without disruption.
- **Cost Predictability:** The fully managed services model enabled predictable IT budgeting, eliminating surprise expenses and freeing resources for core business initiatives.
- **Partnered Innovation:** Ironclad TEK INC continues to advise Blackstone on emerging technologies, ensuring their IT environment evolves in lockstep with industry advancements.

Testimonial

"We have had the pleasure of working with Ironclad TEK for over 15 years including throughout my entire tenure at Blackstone Drilling Fluids. During this time, they have consistently provided exceptional support and service. We truly consider Ironclad TEK an integral part of our team—fully aligned with our operational requirements and the evolving needs of a growing company. Since the pandemic, our organization has expanded from 10 employees to over 55, and Ironclad TEK has played a key role in supporting that growth through outstanding customer service and technical expertise.

We look forward to continuing our strong partnership with Ironclad TEK for many years to come"

Jeff Dimitroff

VP – Technical Services

Blackstone Drilling Fluids Limited

Conclusion

The case of Blackstone Drilling Fluids Ltd. and Ironclad TEK INC demonstrates the transformative impact of fully managed IT services within the energy sector. With Ironclad's support, Blackstone has secured its digital foundation to drive operational excellence, safeguard its assets, and maintain its leadership as an innovator in drilling solutions. The partnership stands as a model for how technology and expertise, when aligned with business strategy, can unlock new levels of performance and resilience— even in the most demanding environments.

