

BlackBerry users dealing with e-mail outage

December 17 2009, By ROB GILLIES , Associated Press Writer

(AP) -- BlackBerry users in North America faced delays in receiving e-mail on their devices Thursday.

The company that makes the popular messaging phones, Research In Motion Ltd., said technicians were working on the problem. The company said users could still make phone calls, browse the Internet and send and receive text messages. RIM didn't immediately say how many users were affected.

RIM's system is relatively reliable, but its centralized structure means that any problems can affect millions of users.

In February 2008, an upgrade to the wireless system apparently caused a three-hour service disruption. In April 2008, a minor software upgrade crashed the system. A smaller disruption in September 2008 also was caused by a software glitch.

After initially focusing on corporate customers, RIM has expanded its reach into the consumer market in recent years. The devices face increasing competition from devices such as Apple's iPhone, Palm's Pre and the [Motorola](#) Droid.

RIM, which is based in Waterloo, Ontario, was scheduled to release quarterly earnings Thursday afternoon.

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