

RIM making new touchscreen smartphone, tablet device

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A woman sends text messages in 2008 on her Blackberry phone while commuting on the Metro from Washington, DC to the Virginia suburbs. Research in Motion (RIM) is developing a touchscreen smartphone with a slide-out keyboard and a tablet device to serve as a larger-screen companion to its popular BlackBerry, The Wall Street Journal reported on Tuesday.

Research in Motion (RIM) is developing a touchscreen smartphone with a slide-out keyboard and a tablet device to serve as a larger-screen companion to its popular BlackBerry, The Wall Street Journal reported on Tuesday.

The moves by the Waterloo, Canada-based company are designed to prevent the BlackBerry [smartphone](#) from losing more ground to Apple's

[iPhone](#) and [iPad](#) and mobile devices running Google's [Android](#) operating system, the newspaper said.

The touchscreen smartphone runs on a new version of the BlackBerry operating system and works much like an iPhone, the Journal said, citing "people familiar with the device."

The Qwerty keyboard slides out from the bottom of the touchscreen, the Journal said, and users can also type on a virtual keyboard.

It has four gigabytes of storage space and a five megapixel camera.

The tablet device, which is in the early stages of development and could come out as soon as the end of the year, will connect to cellular networks via a BlackBerry, according to the Journal.

RIM currently makes a touchscreen smartphone, the Blackberry Storm, but it has failed to match the popularity of the iPhone, whose latest version, the iPhone 4 hits stores on June 24.

RIM has also fallen behind Apple in terms of applications, the popular mini-programs developed to run on smartphones.

Apple offers more than 225,000 applications in its App Store while RIM only has some 7,000.

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