

# RIM 'excited' about UAE market after averting BlackBerry ban

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"I'm so excited about the progress that [BlackBerry](#) made in the UAE, and specifically in Dubai," said Jim Balsillie, the co-CEO of [Research in Motion](#) (RIM), in a keynote speech at the annual GITEX technology show in Dubai.

He boasted that BlackBerry controls 45 percent of the UAE's smartphones market, and announced a series of cooperation initiatives.

"This is the market that we are so excited about," he said, avoiding any reference to the problem with the UAE's telecom authority, which had set an October 11 deadline for RIM to allow them access to its encrypted data or face a ban.

Balsillie showed off RIM's new model, BlackBerry Torch, as well as its new BlackBerry PlayBook, in addition to its new operating system BlackBerry 6.

He also said RIM was starting partnerships in the UAE to advance e-government services and secure online payments, adding that it was offering local academic institutions teaching materials to provide students the experience of working with BlackBerry solutions.

He was not available to talk to reporters after his speech.

The UAE's Telecommunication Regulatory Authority (TRA) said in August that BlackBerry instant messenger, email and Web browsing would be suspended because they "allow individuals to commit violations", and cannot be monitored.

But TRA backtracked on its decision only a few days before the deadline, citing "the positive engagement and collaboration of Research In Motion in reaching this regulatorily compliant outcome."

It was not clear whether RIM made concessions allowing UAE authorities access to its servers.

On Monday, TRA director-general Mohammed al-Ghanem said the solution reached with RIM was "final," but declined to say whether RIM

made concessions.

"The solution is final... It is not a question of concessions," he told reporters following Balsillie's speech.

"What I can tell you is that the service of BlackBerry is in compliance with TRA framework," he said.

He also boasted of the "strategic cooperation" between RIM and TRA, as well as with the country's two operators Etisalat and Du, which were until recently offering their customers alternative [smartphone](#) packages, had the ban on BlackBerry gone into effect.

The UAE was the first country to threaten to suspend BlackBerry services over security concerns. Saudi Arabia went on to suspend messenger services briefly in August, before lifting the ban.

The UAE has some 500,000 BlackBerry users, while Saudi Arabia has around 700,000.

India, which has around one million subscribers, last week extended by 90 days a 31 October deadline given to RIM to provide intelligence agencies with access to its services.

RIM has always maintained that the [encrypted data](#) of BlackBerry were inaccessible.

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