

App-centric iPhone model is overrated: RIM CEO

November 17 2010, by Glenn Chapman



The new BlackBerry PlayBook is displayed during the Blackberry DevCon 2010 in September 2010 in San Francisco, California. PlayBook will be priced at less than 500 dollars when it is introduced in North America in the first quarter of 2011, according to RIM. The PlayBook global launch is set for the second quarter of the year.

The head of BlackBerry maker Research In Motion (RIM) fired a shot at rival Apple, slamming the notion that smartphones need "apps."

"You don't need an app for the Web," RIM chief executive Jim Balsillie said during an on-stage interview at a Web 2.0 Summit in San Francisco.

"We believe you can bring the mobile to the Web, but you don't need to go through some kind of control point."

Applications must get Apple's approval before being allowed into the App Store at [iTunes](#) that serves as an exclusive shop for programs for iPhones, iPads, and [iPod touch](#) media players.

"It is really not about a set of proprietary rules or about appifying the Web," Balsillie said. "The Web needs a platform that allows you to use your existing [Web content](#), not apps."

Balsillie gave as an example the multitude of online videos done in [Flash software](#) shunned by Apple and publicly ridiculed by Apple chief executive [Steve Jobs](#).

He predicted that the era of smartphone applications would "pass real quick."

Balsillie said that he liked how Canada-based RIM was positioned with handsets and a "PlayBook" tablet that will take on Apple's iPad.

PlayBook will be priced at less than 500 dollars when it is introduced in North America in the first quarter of 2011, according to RIM. The PlayBook global launch is set for the second quarter of the year.

RIM unveiled the Playbook in San Francisco in September as it seeks to compete with Apple's popular iPad and Samsung's recently launched Galaxy Tab.



An Apple iPhone showing the Cobra iRadar App, which allows motorists to view and hear alerts for upcoming hidden red light cameras and speed traps, at the Las Vegas Convention Center in Las Vegas, Nevada November 5, 2010. The head of BlackBerry maker Research In Motion (RIM) fired a shot at rival Apple on Tuesday, slamming the notion that smartphones need "apps."

The PlayBook has a seven-inch (17.8-centimeter) display, smaller than the 9.7 inches of Apple's iPad, and plays Adobe Flash video software, which is banned from the Apple device.

The cheapest [iPad](#) costs 499 dollars while the top model is priced at 829 dollars.

When asked what he would say to Jobs if Apple's iconic pitchman were to appear at the Summit, Balsillie replied his first comment would be "You showed up."

On a separate competitive front, Balsillie downplayed news that near-field-communication (NFC) chips were being built into a second-generation Nexus smartphone that Google is readying for release.

"We'd be fools not to have NFC in a product in the near term, and we are not fools," Balsillie said.

A new Google mobile phone imbedded with a chip that makes it a virtual wallet so people can "tap and pay" is poised to make its debut, the Internet giant's chief Eric Schmidt said at the Summit a day earlier.

The successor to the Internet firm's Nexus One smartphone runs on a fresh version of Android software and is imbedded with a NFC chip for financial transactions, according to Schmidt.



Samsung's new tablet device, the "Galaxy Tab" has a seven-inch (17.8-centimetre) touchscreen, slightly smaller than the iPad's 9.7 inches, and uses Google's Android 2.2 operating system.

"You will be able to take these mobile devices that will be able to do commerce," Schmidt said. "Essentially, bump for everything and eventually replace credit cards. In the industry it is referred to as tap-and-pay."

The chips store personal data that can be transmitted to readers, say at a shop checkout stand, by tapping a handset on a pad.

Google's Android mobile operating system surged past Apple's iPhone and Canada's Blackberry in the third quarter to become the second

biggest smartphone platform after Nokia's Symbian, according to research firm Gartner.

Gartner said Finland's Nokia sold 29.5 million smartphones during the third quarter of the year for a 36.6 percent share of the worldwide market, down from 44.6 percent a year ago.

Sales of Android-powered smartphones soared to 20.5 million units, giving the Android platform a 25.5 percent market share, up from just 3.5 percent a year ago, Gartner said.

Apple's iPhone was next on sales of 13.5 million units for a 16.7 percent market share, down from 17.1 percent a year ago.

RIM was in fourth position with sales of 11.9 million units. Its market share dropped to 14.8 percent from 20.7 percent a year ago.

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