

# VW gives employees break from their Blackberry

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Are you fed up with your Blackberry because it effectively puts you on call for your employer 24/7? Are you a slave to its blinking red light and the vibrating alarm that tells you you have a new email?

Well, if you're an employee at German [car maker Volkswagen](#), you will now be officially released from the tyranny of the little electronic ball and chain in future, at least during after-work hours and at weekends.

"A deal has been reached" with labour representatives and the mighty IG Metall union under which the carmaker's server will no longer transmit emails to thousands of employees' company Blackberrys between 6:15 pm and 7:00 am, a spokesman told AFP.

The "truce" was "already in force," the spokesman said.

"As a company, we need and make use of up-to-date means of communication. But we realise that a balance needs to be struck. We feel this deal strikes such a balance," he said.

Last month, household chemicals specialist Henkel, maker of Persil washing powder, similarly declared an email "amnesty" for its employees between Christmas and New Year.

"The message is: only send an email in case of an emergency. That goes for all [employees](#)," Henkel chief Kasper Rorsted told the daily Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung.

Rorsted said he had made it a habit never to read his messages at the weekend.

"I take a last look at my [Blackberry](#) on Saturday morning. And then I put it aside for the rest of the weekend. I spend time with my children," the chief executive said.

"I don't have to read my emails simply because someone somewhere is bored and sending me them," he continued. "It shows a lack of respect to pester people like that."

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