Review: BlackBerry Z10's slick design keeps company relevant

May 30 2013, by Jim Rossman

I can still remember getting my first BlackBerry. It was a pager that had a full keyboard, and we used them to communicate among co-workers in what was then called the Tech Services department.

We could send messages to each other, watch that message's status change as it was delivered and then read by the recipient, and then

receive an instant reply.

It was magic.

It was really just mobile texting/email back in the late 1990s.

Since that first [BlackBerry](#) 950, I owned and used half a dozen different BlackBerry devices, most of which incorporated a telephone. All of them had physical keyboards.

As much as I hate to say it, when the [Apple iPhone](#) was released, our company along with many others abandoned BlackBerry and its centralized server for a more open system (iOS) where we were free to choose from several types of [mail servers](#).

BlackBerry still has many, but fewer, loyal customers and corporations that are on the lookout for newer and better hardware.

The first BlackBerry phone to forgo the [physical keyboard](#) in favor of a full [touch screen](#) was the 2008 BlackBerry Storm.

It was not a popular device.

Fast-forward to 2013, and I can confidently say BlackBerry has released a phone that is a big step in the right direction. But is it too little, too late?

I've been reviewing the BlackBerry Z10 from AT&T.

My first impression when I took it out of the box was "Oh, BlackBerry made an [iPhone](#)." From across the room, if I held up both a Z10 and an iPhone 5, you'd have trouble telling them apart.

So what are the specifications?

The Z10 has 16 gigabytes of storage and a microSD card slot that can add up to an additional 32 GB. The screen measures 4.2 inches at 356 pixels per inch. Screen resolution is 1280 by 768 pixels.

The Z10's processor is a Qualcomm Snapdragon S4 dual-core running at 1.5 GHz, and it has 2 gigabytes of RAM. The 1,800 milliamp-hour battery is removable and provides up to 10 hours of talk time or up to 13 days of standby time.

The rear camera has an 8-megapixel sensor. Video recording is 1080p high-definition with video stabilization. The front camera can record 720p HD video with its 2-megapixel sensor.

The Z10 has sensors including an accelerometer, magnetometer, proximity sensor and gyroscope. It's running the BlackBerry 10 [operating system](). Connectivity includes 4G LTE, Wi-Fi, Bluetooth 4.0 and GPS.

Physically, the Z10 measures 5.12 inches by 2.58 inches by .35 inches and weighs 4.8 ounces.

Charging and syncing is done via microUSB.

The Z10 would be my phone choice if I was still a BlackBerry user. I found the newest BlackBerry operating system to be very stable and usable. The combination of the hardware and BlackBerry OS work very well together.

This is the first phone to use the BlackBerry 10 operating system. I'm not a user of the previous BlackBerry OS, so I didn't really have a learning curve. Current BlackBerry users are going to have to relearn things like

the new swiping navigation. It did take me a while to figure out how to check my email after I set up the account. But once you've used it for a few days, it will become second nature.

I find the few BlackBerry users I know use that ecosystem because of their employers. I'm glad those friends finally have a quality phone to use.

BLACKBERRY Z10:

-Pros: Nice mix of new hardware and software. Very sturdy and responsive.

-Cons: Limited number of applications in the app store.

-Bottom Line: BlackBerry users should be very happy with the Z10. Not sure how many converts it will attract.

-Price: $200 with contract from AT&T and Verizon; $100 down payment plus monthly payments from T-Mobile

-On the Web: us.blackberry.com

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