

New BlackBerry phone aims to revive faded brand

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BlackBerry's new handset, the latest effort to revive the faded brand, includes a physical keyboard

There's a new BlackBerry smartphone, the latest effort to revive the once-dominant brand.

The BlackBerry Key2 was unveiled Thursday in New York by TCL Communication, the Chinese manufacturer which took over the rights to the smartphone [brand](#) from the Canadian tech firm in 2016.

The new device, which includes a physical keyboard under a 4.5 inch screen and runs the Android operating system updates the first BlackBerry Key released last year.

It will be sold this month starting at \$649 or 649 euros, according to the company.

"Although there are many different smartphones for consumers to choose from today, most tend to offer very similar experiences without much distinction from one to the next," said Alain Lejeune, head of TCL's BlackBerry Mobile division.

"With the introduction of BlackBerry Key2, we've created a distinct smartphone that captures all the traits that have made BlackBerry smartphones iconic, while introducing new innovations and experiences that not only make this one of the best devices for security and privacy, but also the most advanced BlackBerry smartphone ever."

BlackBerry's share of the global [smartphone](#) market has fallen to virtually zero from a peak of more than half a decade ago.

The dominance of Apple's iOS and Android-powered handsets prompted the Canada-based firm to abandon the market to concentrate on [software](#) and services.

Under the agreement between the two [firms](#), Canada's BlackBerry will remain in control of software and security on smartphones, while TCL will produce handsets powered by Google Android software, abandoning the former BlackBerry OS software.

TCL also produces smartphones under the Alcatel brand.

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