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## Time To Dump Blackberry?

Dave McClure • Oct. 13, 2011

For most of this week, Research In Motion has had server problems with its signature Blackberry service, frustrating users and leading to the inevitable media speculation that those users will abandon Blackberry.

Poor RIM just doesn't get any respect.

In a year in which it has released a new tablet whose basic structure was advanced enough to lead Amazon.Com to steal it for the new Kindle Fire...a year in which the company announced a new OS7 operating system for its phones and an eventual migration to their newer QNX-based system...a year in which it has redefined ease of use in touchpads...

It has gotten battered by nearly everyone, including me.

Hanging out on the forums at Crackberry.Com, users seem pretty evenly divided between rabid Blackberry fans and skeptics. Both have their points.

The current service interruption is just another in a long line of frustrations for users that have included a tablet with incomplete features, new phones that will run an operating system that will be obsolete next year even before the phones get into the marketplace, and a general lack of honesty on the part of the company about plans to fix their problems.

On the other hand, old-time Blackberry users (including me) have noted that massive service disruptions usually occur just before RIM introduces major new products and services, as they are expected to do next week at their Developer's

Conference. RIM upgrades their core system to accommodate the new stuff...but isn't able to talk about the service disruption because they don't want to preannounce the coming changes.

I've held off reviewing the Blackberry Playbook tablet because it was such a disaster as a business device that I couldn't find much positive to say about it. That may change some time after next week with a planned major update to the tablet operating system. Or not. I'll let you know after next week.

The cellular/tablet marketplace is a bloodbath right now, as too many companies and too many products chase too little discretionary income. In this environment, companies like RIM are rushing products to market before they are ready in order to avoid being left behind.

If you ask whether it is time to dump Blackberry, I would have to ask...for what? The core Blackberry system is still outstanding, and my trusty but obsolete Storm II smartphone still does almost exactly everything I want.

And frankly, I've watched both the iOS and Android phones and systems struggle with problems of their own.

I plan to wait until the end of the year, and re-assess then. It is anyone's guess whether the tea leaves will read differently then, but that's the nature of the tech markets.

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