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## BlackBerry vs. iPhone: A rivalry to benefit all

July 31, 2008



**Michael Foschetti is managing director of Mobisix**

By Michael Foschetti

Smartphones such as BlackBerrys and iPhones are quickly becoming standard operating procedure for many Fortune 1000 companies and their employees.

Initially, Research In Motion Inc.'s BlackBerry owned the wireless email and communication segment. BlackBerry technology allowed 24-hour global access to anyone within the corporate

ladder able to sync up with the handheld device. Apple and the iPhone have now officially challenged that domain.

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The beauty for the mobile marketing industry is that, with the nearly-compulsive use of these devices, a fantastic marketing opportunity is in the palm of our hand.

The seasoned businessperson – the BlackBerry's initial consumer demographic – fell within the age range of 30-55. Advertisers and BlackBerry began looking for a way to market the technology to the younger general consumer.

It was during BlackBerry's concerted effort to reach the younger demographic that the iPhone was introduced.

The creative powerhouse of Apple launched the iPhone in BlackBerry's wake. Buzz around the iPhone has never been greater, and Apple has successfully accessed the younger target demographic.

According to Rubicon Consulting, as of April 1, there were 3 million iPhones activated by AT&T in the United States. Nearly half of these users are under the age of 30.

However, with the release of the \$199 iPhone, which syncs with Microsoft Outlook on a PC, Apple clearly hopes to seize a piece of that professional arena as well.

There is no doubt that Apple will succeed in reaching a greater audience with its most recent iPhone.

The recent release of the new iPhone 3G, both \$199 and \$299 versions, has already prompted sales of more than 1 million units and Steve Jobs plans on selling 10 million units this year.

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A percentage of this new audience will be from corporate America. But Research In Motion will not sit back and let Apple erode its market share.

The launch of BlackBerry's new phone, the Bold, will essentially rival the iPhone in all critical functions, especially with its 3G HSDPA network and 624 MHz processor.

BlackBerry also has plans for the Thunder, a touch screen model that could be used to target the Apple-dominated, under-30 demographic.

According to Gartner Research, the North American smartphone market more than doubled in sales during the traditionally slow first quarter.

**Research In Motion** more than doubled global unit sales – up to 4.3 million – in the first quarter and expanded market share from 8 percent to 13 percent. Apple sold 1.7 million units of its iPhone in the first quarter to garner 5 percent of the global market.

As smartphones continue to penetrate the market, increased competition from companies, such as Apple and Research In Motion, will lead to lower prices and more efficient devices.

Also, more operators, marketers and advertisers will benefit from the messaging and mobile services available to the consumer.

When nearly the entire business world can conduct virtually any activity over their smartphones, the company that fails to incorporate mobile into its current and future strategy will be an irrelevant marketplace player.

BlackBerrys, iPhones and smartphones are increasing your ability to reach an engaged consumer via a rich media message. Don't waste this opportunity.

*Michael Foschetti is managing director of mobile marketing agency Mobisix, Charlotte, NC. Reach him at [mfoschetti@mobisix.com](mailto:mfoschetti@mobisix.com)*

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