

RIM showcases new BlackBerry 7.1 OS at CES 2012

LAS VEGAS, US: At the BlackBerry booth at this year's Consumer Electronics Show (CES 2012) Research In Motion showcased the new BlackBerry 7.1 OS as well as updates to the BBM (BlackBerry Messenger), BlackBerry Traffic and BlackBerry Travel apps. The new OS and app updates are designed to make seizing and sharing the moment even easier.



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BlackBerry 7.1 has already begun rolling out from carriers around the world and over the coming weeks[1]. The new releases of BBM, BlackBerry Traffic and BlackBerry Travel are available on BlackBerry App World.

"BlackBerry 7 delivered a next-generation platform for our customers around the world and the range of software updates announced today build upon the strengths of that platform to further enhance the mobile experience and make life easier, from managing daily tasks to planning big adventures," said Mike Lazaridis, president and co-CEO at Research In Motion.

Life is better shared

The BlackBerry 7.1 OS incorporates a new feature called BlackBerry Tag that can change the way BlackBerry users share information and content. By simply tapping their NFC-enabled BlackBerry smartphone against another NFC enabled BlackBerry smartphone, users can make sharing easier than ever. They can instantly invite a friend to BBM, exchange contact information, documents, URLs, photos and other multimedia content, and they can also pair their BlackBerry smartphone with an NFC enabled Bluetooth device.

Support for BlackBerry Tag is just one of a number of enhancements in the updated BBM app (version 6.1). Additional features are designed to allow users to personalise their experience even more with support for animated avatars (animated GIFs)[2], a dozen new and fun emoticons to spice up conversations, and the ability to customise chat bubbles with different colours. In addition, the new BBM app allows users to add customised personal messages of up to 160 characters in their online Profile, more than double the length supported in previous versions. Users can also now set the picture for their BBM avatar directly from the camera app - simply snap a picture and select "Set as BBM Display Picture" from the menu.

Make things happen

With BlackBerry 7.1, it is claimed users can be productive from virtually anywhere. They can now turn their BlackBerry smartphone into a mobile hotspot that can be shared by up to 5 Wi-Fi -enabled devices, including laptops and tablets[3]. The 7.1 update also supports carrier implemented Wi-Fi calling services (UMA/GAN where available), allowing users to make Wi-Fi calls from their BlackBerry smartphone that don't eat into their airtime minutes.

Getting to any location is now so much easier with the new BlackBerry Traffic (version 3.0), a free app from RIM that is being released today. BlackBerry Traffic determines a user's estimated time of arrival (ETA) based on current traffic conditions, and now includes hands-free turn-by-turn voice guidance.

Planning, booking, managing, and sharing travel activities are also claimed to be easier than ever thanks to the updated BlackBerry Travel app that is being released today. The new version adds support for contextual deals, such as offers for

hotels and car rentals, or for arranging limo services to and from the airport. BlackBerry Travel can automatically keep track of a user's bookings and schedule and quickly notify them if their flight is delayed or cancelled, and can then help them find a new flight right away. The automatic trip scanning feature pulls the travel details into the app, allowing the user to see all their travel updates in one place.

Seize the moment

Sometimes it's nice when someone (or something) does the thinking for you. The Universal Search capability has again been enhanced to help users find what they are looking for. It now includes an auto-suggest feature that intelligently filters Bing search results to offer users a variety of relevant Web sites based on their search terms.

Love a good deal? Now finding and taking advantage of them is so much easier thanks to BlackBerry Maps - an essential app that comes preinstalled on BlackBerry smartphones and has been enhanced in the BlackBerry 7.1 OS update. When users launch the new BlackBerry Maps application they can discover special offers, coupons, and discounts from nearby vendors. Users can immediately act on the deals presented to them by clicking to call the vendor or clicking to get the best route to the location where the deal is offered⁴.

Customers with a BlackBerry Curve 9360 or 9380 smartphone will find a nice surprise with the BlackBerry 7.1 OS update in the form of an FM radio. The FM radio circuitry is already built in to the Curve 9360 and 9380 models and BlackBerry 7.1 provides users with a new app that allows them to tune in and enjoy local FM radio stations. Listening to the FM radio does not require a data plan or use data services.

For more information about the BlackBerry 7.1 OS update, visit www.blackberry.com/bb7. For more information and to download the new versions of BBM, BlackBerry Traffic and BlackBerry Travel visit BlackBerry App World at www.blackberry.com/appworld.

1. The BlackBerry 7.1 OS update is subject to carrier certification. Please check for availability with your service provider.
2. The animated avatar feature is supported on BlackBerry smartphones running OS 5.0 and higher.
3. Mobile hotspot feature requires BlackBerry 7.1 and may require an additional data plan. Please check with your service provider.
4. Please check with your service provider for availability of this feature.