Will the Blackberry 10 save RIM?

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Though Research in Motion (RIM) is banking on the Blackberry 10 release in early 2013 to save the company, Karl Volkman, the Chief Technology Officer of SRV Network, isn't convinced.

"I think it might be too little too late," Volkman says of the Canadian communications company. "If this would have come out a few years ago, the existing Blackberry Customer base was large enough they could have won it over and maintained a lead, but that base has shrunk and I can't see people leaving Android or iPhone to hope on Blackberry."

It's a dim view of the situation, but when you factor in the burgeoning popularity of the Andriod [1]and the brand power of Apple, it doesn't seem too farfetched.

For a long time, Blackberry was synonymous with business phones. Most companies valued the devices for their security and business capabilities. They were designed with a full keyboard and screen that made it easy to read and write emails. But other companies like Apple soon began offering phones that were essentially little computers, with big screens and the ability to do everything from searching the web to video conferencing, which were more intriguing to customers than clunky Blackberries.

RIM is playing catch up with their new releases, which will debut with larger touch screens, plus a feature that allows for two different email profiles. Allowing users to have two email profiles is a plus for companies who want the control that Blackberry traditionally offers, without completely ignoring the personal needs of their employees. Basically, instead of having all email aggregated to one list, the user can have separate lists for work and personal.

It’s a solid marketing technique, but it probably won’t make up for the lack of apps available for the Blackberry.

“In terms of attracting people away from other companies I think initially, at least, they’re going to falter like the Android did and like Windows is doing, because they don’t have the enormity of apps written for them,” says Volkman. “It’s really the apps that are going to let people see the benefits of switching products.”

At this point, according to Volkman, Blackberry has three options. They either need to kick it in gear and develop apps or pay designers to create apps for their platform, *or* they need to settle on a price point that accounts for a limited amount of apps in order to entice people away from their current phones.

So will this save RIM? It depends on the price and the corporate reaction.

“If they lose the last bastion of corporate people, their growth is zero, “ saysVolkman. “No one wants to invest in a company that has zero growth.”

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