RIM CEO: We’re Not Leaving the Consumer Business

Thorsten Heins, the CEO of Research In Motion [1], today clarified comments he made [2] weeks ago about RIM refocusing on the enterprise market, saying the company was not leaving the consumer business behind.

Heins said what he meant was the company needed to eliminate some services the company was doing in-house, and instead achieve those consumer-based goals with partnerships rather than going it alone. While enterprise is still RIM’s core strength, Heins said the company would continue to market and sell devices and services to the consumer segment.

Heins also unequivocally contradicted reports that RIM was abandoning physical keyboards on phones, a traditional RIM strength. Saying BlackBerrys had the best physical keyboards on the planet, Heins 100% confirmed there will be a BlackBerry 10 [3] device with a keyboard when the new platform debuts this fall.

He wouldn’t say whether or not there would be a new tablet when BlackBerry 10 devices arrive, but he did say that if RIM creates a new tablet, it would be marketed to enterprise customers first, with a consumer play later, if at all. Broadly, Heins sees tablets as an “on-ramp” to mobile computing.

Heins also spoke about his philosophies and RIM’s approach to the market.

“We spend a lot of time on who are we mostly talking to, who is the target customer,” he said. “The common denominator with all our customers is that they are striving to succeed.”

Heins said “success” didn’t necessarily mean in business. It could also be personal, but the main challenge that they all have is managing their relationships.

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Posted by Janine E. Mooney, Editor

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