

## E-mail on the move

Last month, Blackberry, who produce a hand-held e-mail device, signed up its three millionth subscriber. Competition for the mobile e-mail market hots up.

1 Do you ever check your work e-mails when you are at home, or when you travel? If so, how? You may need to use some of the words in the box below. Compare your answer with a partner.

hotspot	Wi-Fi	hotmail	password	Blackberry
laptop	hand-held computer	internet café	smart phone	

2 Study the results of a questionnaire and guess the correct figures. Check your answers in paragraph 3 of the article.

<p><b>E-mail research (AOL): 4,000 people (20 cities in the US) – May 2005</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• people on average check their e-mail about <b>three / five / ten</b> times a day</li> <li>• <b>57 / 67 / 77</b> percent of respondents have more than one e-mail account</li> <li>• <b>27 / 47 / 87</b> percent said they check their personal e-mail at work</li> </ul>
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**Blackberry way?** Last month, Blackberry signed its 3 millionth subscriber. 1 million of these users were added in the last six months. Why is the Blackberry device, which accesses e-mails on the move, so successful? Good marketing? Ease of use? Being the first company to provide wireless e-mail on the move has certainly helped sales.

For some executives, Blackberry is one of the best business tools ever. Others say it is too expensive. Smart phone users prefer rival products like Treo from Palm. They like the colour display screen, the new keyboard, and the fact that they can work in *Word*, *Excel* and *PowerPoint* on the road. But one of the big questions for the future is: does mobile e-mail really lead to increased productivity and flexible working?

Just how important e-mail is nowadays was seen last month, when more than 4,000 people across 20 US cities participated in a survey, carried out by AOL. On average, people check their e-mail about five times a day. 77 percent of respondents have more than one e-mail account. 47 percent said they check their personal e-mail at work.

Competition for the Blackberry is certainly hotting up. Nokia has just announced the launch of its 770 Internet Tablet, giving wireless access to the Web in a café or on your sofa at home. Now Microsoft intend to enter the mobile e-mail market. Still, Blackberry are optimistic and predict huge growth. With an estimated 50 million mobile workers in the US alone, there's a lot of business to aim for!

3 Read the article and decide which device you prefer.

4 Add these ten words to the table below.

*product / competition / rival / launch / announce / estimate / market / device / predict / aim*

NOUN	NOUN & VERB	VERB
<i>subscriber</i>	<i>access</i>	<i>(to) enter</i>

5 Discuss the following questions in small groups and report your ideas to the class.

- What are your predictions for the future of mobile e-mail devices?
- What benefits has e-mail brought to business in general, and your company in particular?
- What are the negative aspects of using e-mail?