



**Webchat Topic**  
**"Hearing Aid Compatible (HAC) BlackBerry Smartphones HAC, Messaging, & More!"**  
**Guest Speaker**  
**Dave Dougall**  
**Accessibility Program Manager at Research In Motion (RIM)**  
**Thursday, September 10, 2009 at 9 p.m. (EDT)**

**Moderator** Good evening. Our topic tonight "Hearing Aid Compatible (HAC) BlackBerry Smartphones HAC, Messaging, & More!"

Our program this evening will be moderated throughout the next hour. We will first answer any questions sent in advance, and then you may type in your questions below and click "ask". We will do our best to answer all of your questions.

Our guest speaker this evening is Dave Dougall, Accessibility Program Manager at Research In Motion (RIM)

Dave Dougall is the Accessibility Program Manager at Research In Motion (RIM), a leading designer, manufacturer, and marketer of innovative wireless data solutions, including the BlackBerry® family of products and services. In his role which he has held at RIM for the last five years, Dave is responsible for BlackBerry accessibility and all other aspects of RIM's Accessibility Program. Dave has been involved in the Alliance for Telecommunications Solutions Incubator on Hearing Aid Compatibility, as well as TEITAC Subcommittees providing recommendations for updates on Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act and guidelines under Section 255 of the US Telecommunications Act. Dave participates in industry trade association Accessibility Working Groups for ITI, TIA, and CTIA.

Dave holds a Bachelor of Science degree from Kettering University (GMI) in Flint, MI and an MBA from the Ivey Business School at the University of Western Ontario.

Welcome and thank you so much David for joining us tonight.

**David Dougall** Thanks Toni. It's my pleasure to be here with you this evening to share information and answer questions about how BlackBerry devices can be beneficial to individuals with hearing loss.

**Moderator** We will now get right to the questions sent in over the last couple of days.

**Connie O'Mara** I use my laptop to access the Sprint captel site so that I can get real time transcription of my phone calls. Could I do this with a Blackberry? I have a blue tooth device

for my hearing aid, so if this is possible, I might be able to hear (although I do not hear well on it) and see the transcription. [I will not be on the webchat, but will check the transcript later].

**David Dougall** Sprint WebCapTel® On the Go allows you to listen to your caller with one telephone device (wireless or standard telephone) while you read the captions of everything that is being said on a second wireless device. At this point in time, in order to utilize the service with a BlackBerry device, it is necessary to utilize it in conjunction with a second wireless or landline phone.

**Judy Salisbury** Which BlackBerry models can be used with WebCapTel On the Go?

**David Dougall** The BlackBerry models offered by Sprint Relay that are referenced as being supported are the BlackBerry Tour 9630 or the BlackBerry 8350i. Further information is available on the Sprint Relay website (at the link listed below) regarding support for BlackBerry models for the Sprint WebCapTel® On the Go service.  
[http://www.sprintrelay.com/webcaptel\\_go.htm](http://www.sprintrelay.com/webcaptel_go.htm)

**Suzanne Robinson** I like to use the WebCapTel Service ([www.sprintcaptel.com](http://www.sprintcaptel.com)) on the internet with my cell phone to give me a captioned phone call. It is possible to use this "on the go" but it takes 2 phones to do this. I have anxiously been waiting for a smartphone to work alone but the phone would have to be able to allow you to make a call and use the internet at the same time. The apple iPhone can do this but no other phone can right now. DO you know when this kind of technology would be available? Thank you.

**David Dougall** The feature support that you are requesting, to be able to make a phone call and do browsing at the same time, is currently available on the UMTS (Universal Mobile Telecommunications System) network. UMTS, also known as 3GSM, offers simultaneous voice and data functionality, and supports higher download speeds.

The BlackBerry Bold 9000 smartphone, available from AT&T in the US, has support for the UMTS network technology and allows you to make a phone call and do browsing at the same time.

More information about the differences in cellular network technology offered on various models of BlackBerry smartphones is available at the following link:

[http //na.blackberry.com/eng/ataglance/networks/#tab\\_tab\\_cellular](http://na.blackberry.com/eng/ataglance/networks/#tab_tab_cellular)

**Tiffany Shields** Which BlackBerry devices are rated for Hearing Aid Compatibility?

**David Dougall** Several BlackBerry smartphones have received certification from the United States Federal Communications Commission (FCC) stating that they meet the Hearing Aid Compatibility (HAC) requirements.

The following table lists BlackBerry smartphones rated for HAC and their respective M and T ratings.

<b>BlackBerry smartphone</b>	<b>M Rating</b>	<b>T Rating</b>
BlackBerry® Tour™ 9630 smartphone	M3	--
BlackBerry® Storm™ 9530 smartphone	M3	--
BlackBerry® Curve™ 8900 smartphone*	M3	--
BlackBerry® Curve™ 8350i smartphone*	M3	--
BlackBerry® 8830 World Edition smartphone	M4	T4
BlackBerry® Pearl™ Flip 8220 smartphone *	M3	T4
BlackBerry® Pearl™ Flip 8230 smartphone	M4	T4
BlackBerry® 8330 smartphone	M4	T4
BlackBerry® 8703e smartphone	M4	T4
BlackBerry® Curve™ 8310 smartphone	M3	T3
BlackBerry® Curve™ 8320 smartphone *	M3	T3
BlackBerry® Pearl™ 8130 smartphone	M3	T3

A current listing of which BlackBerry devices are HAC rated can be found at the following link:

[http://www.blackberry.com/btsc/search.do?cmd=displayKC&docType=kc&externalId=KB04540&sliceId=SAL\\_Public&dialogID=5987066&stateId=1%200%2010148128](http://www.blackberry.com/btsc/search.do?cmd=displayKC&docType=kc&externalId=KB04540&sliceId=SAL_Public&dialogID=5987066&stateId=1%200%2010148128)

**Karin Robertson** Hello I just recently bought the Blackberry Curve one week ago and am starting to get used to the idea of not having a flip phone in order to hear as much as I can (knowing the flip phone doesn't distort as the earlier cell phone models of a 'one piece' phone, I'm taking the chance). However, due to the high ratings this particular phone has, I'm pleased. I am trying the phone out and if it doesn't meet my needs, I will be able to take it back (and get my \$ back) and buy the Blackberry Pearl Flip. I've not bought any add'l devices for the phone, especially a neck loop. I would like to know the specific type of neckloop that would go with the Blackberry Smartphones and where the best places are to purchase them. Thanks, Karin Robertson

**David Dougall** There are a host of assistive listening device solutions for mobile phones, including those from Hearing Aid/Cochlear Implant manufacturers, which are designed to help enable persons with hearing loss to conduct phone calls and use audio from their device.

One example of a neckloop solution that BlackBerry smartphone customers have found effective and useful is the ClearSounds CLA7 Neckloop which is available at the following link

[http://www.clearsounds.com/product.asp\\_Q\\_catID\\_E\\_97\\_A\\_subCatID\\_E\\_115](http://www.clearsounds.com/product.asp_Q_catID_E_97_A_subCatID_E_115)

Other ALD solutions that BlackBerry smartphone customers have found effective and useful include:

BlackBerry Sound Isolating Headset -

[http://www.shopblackberry.com/\\_blackberryaccessories/cgi-bin/pd.cgi?frompage=category&page=product\\_detail&from\\_category=Lifestyles&category=AUDIO+%26+Memory&pid=F2222DRA4Z7CCFJFE3G](http://www.shopblackberry.com/_blackberryaccessories/cgi-bin/pd.cgi?frompage=category&page=product_detail&from_category=Lifestyles&category=AUDIO+%26+Memory&pid=F2222DRA4Z7CCFJFE3G)

Plantronics MHA 100 Cellular Amplifier -

[http://www.plantronics.com/north\\_america/en\\_US/products/mobile/mobile-headset-accessories/mha100](http://www.plantronics.com/north_america/en_US/products/mobile/mobile-headset-accessories/mha100)

Oticon's Streamer Bluetooth Accessory -

[http://www.oticonusa.com/Oticon/Professionals/professional\\_products/Epoq/Streamer.html](http://www.oticonusa.com/Oticon/Professionals/professional_products/Epoq/Streamer.html)

Siemen's Teck Connect Accessory - <http://www.siemens-hearing.com/hearing-aids/tek/>

Phonak FM Smartlink/Smartlink SX -

<http://www.phonak.com/consumer/products/fm/smartlink.htm>

Phonak iCom - [http://www.phonak.com/consumer/products/accessories/b2c\\_icom\\_use.htm](http://www.phonak.com/consumer/products/accessories/b2c_icom_use.htm)

**Ann Boyd** Currently, Blackberry provides the capability of using Web CapTel using 2 Blackberries. Unfortunately, I am unable to purchase 2 Blackberries and pay for plans on both devices just to be able to use WebCapTel. The iPhone 3G does provide the capability of using Web CapTel "All in One" device rather than 2 devices or models. I am very interested in purchasing a Blackberry and wonder if Blackberry has any plans to offer the ability to use Web CapTel "All In One" model and if so, approximately when should we expect to see this type model available? Thank You.

**David Dougall** Sprint WebCapTel® On the Go is a service offered by Sprint Relay. At this point in time, in order to utilize the service with a BlackBerry device, it is necessary to utilize it in conjunction with a second wireless device or landline phone.

**Patricia Spears** Recently purchased a Verizon Storm Blackberry. Are there any Bluetooth headsets that will fit on the ear with in-the-ear canal aids? I have been unable to find any Bluetooth headsets that do not protrude into the ear. If so, which has the best quality sound?

**David Dougall** Most Bluetooth headsets are designed in a similar fashion, and generally speaking, as you have witnessed, they do tend to protrude into the ear at least to some degree. The BlackBerry® Wireless Headset HS-500 was designed to be compatible with BlackBerry

smartphones, include the BlackBerry Storm. Further information on the BlackBerry Wireless Headset HS-500 is available at the following link

[http //www.shopblackberry.com/us/hs500?IID=%20us\\_bb\\_hs500\\_page-usv\\_sbb\\_hs500](http://www.shopblackberry.com/us/hs500?IID=%20us_bb_hs500_page-usv_sbb_hs500)

In addition, there is a BlackBerry Sound Isolating Headset that is a wired, in-ear headset option. While not a Bluetooth headset, it is another option for customers universally who are looking to channel sound into the ear canal. While it isn't a replacement for ear molds that are available from your hearing professional, there are simply another option for customers.

[http //www.shopblackberry.com/\\_blackberryaccessories/cgi-bin/pd.cgi?frompage=category&page=product\\_detail&from\\_category=Product%20Types&category=Audio+%26+Memory&pid=F2222DRA4Z7CCFJFE3G](http://www.shopblackberry.com/_blackberryaccessories/cgi-bin/pd.cgi?frompage=category&page=product_detail&from_category=Product%20Types&category=Audio+%26+Memory&pid=F2222DRA4Z7CCFJFE3G)

**Moderator** A transcript of this chat will be available tomorrow afternoon at [www.hearingloss.org](http://www.hearingloss.org)

**Gary Koerner** Regarding Blackberry Chat topic - I understand that the Blackberry can be tethered (connected) to a laptop via a Blackberry cable with a USB port, thus eliminating (or reducing) the extra expense of a separate cell modem with a separate two year contract of \$40 to \$100 per month. While this may not seem like a related topic to hearing compatibility, I'd venture to say that most hearing-impaired people rely extensively on the internet for communication, beyond the Blackberry's keyboard, and would be interested in knowing more. Please offer a brief description of tethering and explain any issues in Blackberry tethering, as well as which cell vendors are reputed to fully support BB tethering functionality?

**David Dougall** With cellular network coverage, your BlackBerry® smartphone becomes a wireless modem capable of uploading or downloading large amounts of data. Simply connect your smartphone to your laptop using Bluetooth® technology or a USB cable for instant Internet access.

- No need to purchase or carry a wireless PC card
- Simply connect to browse the web
- Exchange files at broadband speeds

For a complete listing of BlackBerry smartphones capable of tethered modem support, as well as additional technical information about how to use your BlackBerry smartphone as a tethered modem, please refer to the following link:

[http //na.blackberry.com/eng/devices/features/tethered\\_modem.jsp](http://na.blackberry.com/eng/devices/features/tethered_modem.jsp)

Wireless carriers may have various service plans under which they offer tethered modem support for BlackBerry. Please refer to the individual wireless carriers for their respective offerings in this area.

**Marvin Goldman** When will CapTel service be available for cell phones?

**David Dougall** Sprint WebCapTel® On the Go is available today for use on cellular devices. It allows you to listen to your caller with one telephone device (wireless or standard telephone) while you read the captions of everything that is being said on a second wireless device. At this point in time, in order to utilize the service with a BlackBerry device, it is necessary to utilize it in conjunction with a second wireless or landline phone.

Further information is available on the Sprint Relay website (at the link listed below) regarding support for BlackBerry models for the **Sprint WebCapTel® On the Go service**.

[http://www.sprintrelay.com/webcapitel\\_go.htm](http://www.sprintrelay.com/webcapitel_go.htm)

**Jason Radell** Ratings are fine but what do the hearing aid compatibility ratings mean? Wireless devices rated M3 or M4 meet FCC requirements and are likely to generate less interference with hearing devices than wireless devices that are not rated. M4 is the higher of the two ratings.

Wireless devices rated M3 or M4 meet FCC requirements and are likely to generate less interference with hearing devices than wireless devices that are not rated. M4 is the higher of the two ratings.

Wireless devices rated T3 or T4 meet FCC requirements and are likely to be more compatible with a hearing device's telecoil (T-coil, T Switch, or Telephone Switch) than wireless devices that are not rated. T4 is the higher of the two ratings.

Additional information describing the HAC ratings at the following link:

[http://www.blackberry.com/knowledgecenterpublic/livelink.exe/fetch/2000/7979/1181821/278287/Description\\_of\\_Hearing\\_Aid\\_Compatibility\\_Ratings\\_for\\_Wireless\\_Devices.pdf?nodeid=1077714&vernum=0](http://www.blackberry.com/knowledgecenterpublic/livelink.exe/fetch/2000/7979/1181821/278287/Description_of_Hearing_Aid_Compatibility_Ratings_for_Wireless_Devices.pdf?nodeid=1077714&vernum=0)

### **Katherine Seelman**

1. In response to an incoming call, I want my Blackberry both to vibrate and to ring.
2. I want to download a ring that accommodates my severe hearing loss.

**David Dougall** In order to have your BlackBerry both vibrate and ring during an incoming call, you can modify your “Profile” or “Sound” settings by clicking on this icon on BlackBerry home screen (icon name will vary depending on which model of BlackBerry and which version of software you are running). You have a choice of selecting a default Sound Profile, modifying an existing profile, or creating your own custom profile.

You can select a default Sound Profile by simply scrolling to one of the standard Profiles and clicking on it. You will note the icon on the home screen changes to reflect that name of the active profile.

You can also use a combination of ringtones, vibration and flashing LED to customize how you receive the notification. If you click on the Profile or Sounds icon on the home screen and then

scroll to the bottom of the dialog box, you can choose from options such as “Set Ring Tones/Alerts”, “Set Contact Alerts” or “Custom Profiles” Please refer to your BlackBerry User Guide for further information on creation or editing custom sound profiles.

You can also find the sound file that you best meets your hearing needs, bring it to your BlackBerry device through a variety of means (download from the web, sync via BlackBerry Media Sync, place on MicroSD card and bring to your device) and use that sound as your ringtone.

In addition, as of the BlackBerry Tour 9630 smartphone and to be included on future models as well, RIM has implemented an extension of the Vibration feature to allow customers with hearing loss to set their vibrations to 1, 2, 3, 5 or 10 vibrations and set the duration of each vibration to Short, Medium or Long.

**Dana Mulvany** Does Blackberry test the accessibility of each phone for people with hearing loss, especially with respect to the accessibility of the alerts, including the ring tones? (The M and T ratings are not enough in themselves.) For example, audible tones need to be as low-frequency as possible, and ring tones also need to have low frequency components (especially since many people with hearing loss can't hear high frequency sounds well). Many people with hearing loss end up missing phone calls or messages because they can't hear or feel the alert.

**David Dougall** Each BlackBerry model comes with a wide range of ringtone options that can be selected depending on which one works best for the user. Custom ringtones are also supported, providing the option to download a particular ringtone that meets the frequency requirements which will vary for each individual.

**Dana Mulvany** Could you also address the quality of the audio on Blackberry phones and whether Blackberry makes any special provision to ensure high fidelity of the audio (instead of dropping some important speech frequencies)?

**David Dougall** Significant effort is placed on ensuring high audio quality is available on each BlackBerry model. Given hearing loss differs per individual, the latest BlackBerry devices enable customers choose different equalizer preset options for Media Player and Phone settings.

**Dana Mulvany** Could you also speak about the strength of the vibrating alerts used on the different Blackberry phones?

**David Dougall** Each BlackBerry model is developed to ensure a consistent user experience for vibrating alerts, such that there is little difference between the various models. The individual user experience may vary slightly from user to user, especially depending the holster style and specifically how it is worn by each individual.

Also, additional options for custom vibration settings have just recently been introduced into the BlackBerry Tour 9630 Smartphone. A user now has the option of Short, Medium, or Long vibrations, and vibration count settings of 1,2,3,5 or 10. These options can then be set of In Holster, Out of Holster, or for both. This feature will be available on all future models of BlackBerry, which will provide users with significantly more choice in their vibration settings for different types of messages, reminders, or phone calls.

**Michael Spiegel** Where can I go to try-out current neckloops and assistive listening devices? I am a senior with a sensorineural hearing disability.

**David Dougall** The sales distribution channels for Assistive Listening Devices (ALDs) will vary by manufacturer. I would recommend checking out the web sites for the respective ALD manufacturers which will typically list “How to Buy” their products. Some offer a Retail Store Locator or an Audiologist Locator to help you find places to purchase the product that are near your location, and you could confirm with them if they offer the opportunity to test out the devices.

You could also consult with your hearing professional to see if they provide the opportunity to test various neckloops or assistive listening devices. Further information may be available from your local Hearing Loss Association of America chapter.

**Richard Neely** I am looking at the BB Tour. If you have not covered the HAC (hearing aid compatibility) issue yet, please give the M and T rating. The Tour seems to be much improved from the smartphone I am using now. And do you have a ranking of PDAs with HAC? Thanks for being on the HLAA Chat.

**David Dougall** The BlackBerry Tour has an overall HAC rating of M3 and is not T rated. Results may vary depending on the hearing device and the degree of hearing loss. The best way to evaluate the compatibility of your hearing device and a rated wireless device is to test the devices together and consult with your hearing health professional. Please contact local wireless carrier stores in your region that carry the BlackBerry Tour (such as Verizon Wireless or Sprint) to see if they have a live unit in their store which you can try out.

**Saul Britchkow** Does your product work with Hamilton's CapTel service? If so, what telecomm vendors (i.e., Verizon, AT&T, Sprint, etc.) would I have to use? Also, if so, are there any requirements, needs, that I should be aware of?

**David Dougall** At the present time, BlackBerry models cannot be used with Hamilton's CapTel service. Sprint Relay has recently introduced a WebCapTel service that is compatible with BlackBerry smartphones.

**Harley Roberts** Will I have the same user experience for two devices that have the same HAC rating?

**David Dougall** Results may vary depending on the hearing device and the degree of hearing loss. If your hearing device is vulnerable to interference, you may not be able to use a rated wireless device successfully. The best way to evaluate the compatibility of your hearing device and a rated wireless device is to test the devices together and consult with your hearing health professional.

**Duane Zemaitis** 1) I've tried a number of hearing-aid compatible cell phones, some are "loud and clear", and others have problems with clarity. Why? Is there a way to "test" the phones?

**David Dougall** Wireless devices rated M3 or M4 meet FCC requirements and are likely to generate less interference with hearing devices than wireless devices that are not rated. M4 is the higher of the two ratings.

Wireless devices rated T3 or T4 meet FCC requirements and are likely to be more compatible with a hearing device's telecoil (T-coil, T Switch, or Telephone Switch) than wireless devices that are not rated. T4 is the higher of the two ratings.

Results may vary depending on the hearing device and the degree of hearing loss. If your hearing device is vulnerable to interference, you may not be able to use a rated wireless device successfully.

The best way to evaluate the compatibility of your hearing device and a rated wireless device is to test the devices together and consult with your hearing health professional. You will be able to test out live phones at wireless carrier owned and operated stores.

Additional information describing the HAC ratings at the following link:

[http://www.blackberry.com/knowledgecenterpublic/livelink.exe/fetch/2000/7979/1181821/278287/Description\\_of\\_Hearing\\_Aid\\_Compatibility\\_Ratings\\_for\\_Wireless\\_Devices.pdf?nodeid=1077714&vernum=0](http://www.blackberry.com/knowledgecenterpublic/livelink.exe/fetch/2000/7979/1181821/278287/Description_of_Hearing_Aid_Compatibility_Ratings_for_Wireless_Devices.pdf?nodeid=1077714&vernum=0)

**Snooky Boy** Is there an opinion board where I can read people's opinions of one HA compatible phone versus another HA compatible phone?

**David Dougall** Given the individual nature of hearing loss, results may vary depending on the hearing device and the degree of hearing loss. I would recommend that the best way to evaluate the compatibility of your hearing device and a rated wireless device is to test the devices together and consult with your hearing health professional.

**Lisa Johnson** Some cell phones come with a jack for headsets. There are many headsets and again, a wide gamut of sound quality exists. Why? A headset helps because I can position it better over the T-coil area of the BTE H.A. What do you recommend?

**David Dougall** Headsets are offered by a wide range of manufacturers, and they may have been developed and tested with a particular set of wireless devices, but not with all devices (given the several hundred available on the market at any point in time), so sound quality may

vary between devices. I would recommend consulting with your hearing health professions to see if there are any particular models that they would recommend.

The following ALD solutions that BlackBerry smartphone customers have found effective and useful:

BlackBerry Sound Isolating Headset -

[http://www.shopblackberry.com/blackberryaccessories/cgi-bin/pd.cgi?frompage=category&page=product\\_detail&from\\_category=Lifestyles&category=Audio+%26+Memory&pid=F2222DRA4Z7CCFJFE3G](http://www.shopblackberry.com/blackberryaccessories/cgi-bin/pd.cgi?frompage=category&page=product_detail&from_category=Lifestyles&category=Audio+%26+Memory&pid=F2222DRA4Z7CCFJFE3G)

Plantronics MHA 100 Cellular Amplifier -

[http://www.plantronics.com/north\\_america/en\\_US/products/mobile/mobile-headset-accessories/mha100](http://www.plantronics.com/north_america/en_US/products/mobile/mobile-headset-accessories/mha100)

ClearSounds CLA7 Neckloop -

[http://www.clearsounds.com/product.asp\\_Q\\_catID\\_E\\_97\\_A\\_subCatID\\_E\\_115](http://www.clearsounds.com/product.asp_Q_catID_E_97_A_subCatID_E_115)

Oticon's Streamer Bluetooth Accessory -

[http://www.oticonusa.com/Oticon/Professionals/professional\\_products/Epoq/Streamer.html](http://www.oticonusa.com/Oticon/Professionals/professional_products/Epoq/Streamer.html)

Siemen's Teck Connect Accessory - <http://www.siemens-hearing.com/hearing-aids/tek/>

Phonak FM Smartlink/Smartlink SX -

<http://www.phonak.com/consumer/products/fm/smartlink.htm>

Phonak iCom - [http://www.phonak.com/consumer/products/accessories/b2c\\_icom\\_use.htm](http://www.phonak.com/consumer/products/accessories/b2c_icom_use.htm)

**Note, if the adapter plug size provided with the particular ALD is 2.5mm and the audio jack on your BlackBerry smartphone is 3.5mm, the "Stereo Headset Adapter, 3.5mm to 2.5mm" available at the following link may be required:**

[http://www.shopblackberry.com/blackberryaccessories/cgi-bin/pd.cgi?frompage=category&page=product\\_detail&from\\_category=Lifestyles&category=Audio+%26+Memory&pid=F7RX2222SENMVJ92P27](http://www.shopblackberry.com/blackberryaccessories/cgi-bin/pd.cgi?frompage=category&page=product_detail&from_category=Lifestyles&category=Audio+%26+Memory&pid=F7RX2222SENMVJ92P27)

This headset adapter gives you the ability to connect a 2.5mm headset to a 3.5mm headset jack on the BlackBerry smartphone.

**Barry S** I'm considering purchasing the Bluetooth technology boot for BTE H.A. (\*ELI DirX). I would need to also purchase a Bluetooth-related cell phone. Can you discuss your experience with ELI Dir-X and your experience with Bluetooth cell phones? Will that make it really LOUD?

**David Dougall** Generally speaking, feedback we have received regarding the use of Bluetooth enabled hearing aids when used in conjunction with a Bluetooth-enabled cell phone, has been positive in nature, and it will tend to eliminate interference that may otherwise be present

between a hearing aid and the cell phone. Significant use of Bluetooth with any wireless device may have an impact on battery life, so that may be one consideration that you would want to explore further, depending on the extent of usage you are planning.

**Judy G Martin** I am the proud owner of my second Blackberry. This is a two-part question.

No matter that it's rated M4/T4, there is still much interference when I use it even with the t-coil enabled. I'm sure this could be eliminated with a flip-top design which the Alltel Pearl is. However, I would like to see a flip-top with a QWERTY keyboard offered by all the carriers. Is that in the works?

**David Dougall** Thank you for your feedback. I am not able to comment on any potential future product offerings.

**Judy G Martin** Second, why does the BB have a USB port when most assistive listening devices for phones have a 2.5mm plug? Some of the new BBs have a 3.5mm plug which is used for listening to music. Why not replace the USB jack with 2.5mm and keep the 3.5mm plug as well? OR why have a 3.5mm jack at all since the primary purpose of a cell phone is for communication not listening to music?

**David Dougall** The USB port on the BlackBerry is required as a means of charging the device, as well as providing a mechanism to synchronize the device with a computer for software downloads or upgrades. The 3.5mm stereo audio jack is becoming more prevalent within the industry as the smartphone market continues to evolve and people are using their devices for a wider range of applications, including listening to music.

**David Johnas** What types of messaging are supported on BlackBerry devices?

**David Dougall** Several types of messaging are supported on BlackBerry smartphones, including email, SMS, MMS, and IM.

You can add up to 10 personal (such as AOL® Mail, Windows Live™ Hotmail, Google Mail™ or Yahoo!® Mail) and work email address to your BlackBerry smartphone. And if you need a new one, choose a unique BlackBerry email address just for your smartphone.

You can communicate with friends and contacts who use phones or mobile devices that support SMS (text messaging) or MMS. Whether you're changing plans or confirming times, you can send a quick text message to keep everyone in the know.

**Brandi Edwards** Which IM programs are available for BlackBerry?

**David Dougall** BlackBerry smartphones support the following instant messaging applications<sup>2</sup> when integrated with BlackBerry® Internet Service.



- [Windows Live™ Messenger for BlackBerry® smartphones](#)



- [Yahoo!® Messenger for BlackBerry® smartphones](#)



- [Google Talk™ for BlackBerry® smartphones](#)



- [AOL® Instant Messenger™ service for BlackBerry® smartphones](#)



- [ICQ® for BlackBerry® smartphones](#)

**Allen Rothenberg** I use Widex behind the ear hearing aids. Telephone conversations are difficult because the microphones are on top and behind the ear. Holding the phone to my ear means I can't hear. Holding the phone near the microphones means I cannot speak so that the caller can hear. Any solutions?

**David Dougall** There are several different form factors and sizes for cellular devices, including BlackBerry smartphones. You may find that certain models just as flip phones tend to work better for you personally since there is a greater distance between the microphone at the bottom of the phone and the speaker at the top of the phone. Neckloops may provide an additional option if you cannot find a phone that works directly when you hold it up to your ear.

**From Los Angeles** I love my BB and the large size of the texting message body is great. However, is there any way to get BB to a m4/t4 rating? The present t3 compatibility is truly poor and not current with modern hearing aids.

**David Dougall** There are several BlackBerry models that are HAC rated as M4,T4:

- BlackBerry® 8830 World Edition smartphone
- BlackBerry® Pearl™ Flip 8230 smartphone \*
- BlackBerry® 8330 smartphone
- BlackBerry® 8703e smartphone

Also, the BlackBerry® Pearl™ Flip 8230 smartphone is rated as an M3, T4 device.

**From Los Angeles** Also, is there any way to license the Google Voice beta phone on BB? Google voice can transcribe VM messages and if BB (or any company for that matter) can offer that service too, then I bet BB will get loads and loads of new customers from the deaf and hard of hearing world.

**David Dougall** Google Voice is a mobile application from Google that is designed to work on Android based phones and BlackBerry smartphones. The application is available by invite only and offered as a Google service.

For more information about Google Voice, visit <http://www.google.com/googlevoice/about.html>.

For more information about Google Voice for BlackBerry smartphones, visit <http://www.google.com/mobile/products/voice.html#p=blackberry>, or visit [www.google.com/voice/m](http://www.google.com/voice/m) from your BlackBerry Browser.

**Alison Freeman** I have a profound loss of 85-95 db and have been a hearing aid wearer my whole life. I have an LG phone but would like a blackberry but cannot hear well as it has a lot of interference. Why is it that I can hear better on cell phones such as the LG but not on the Blackberry?

**David Dougall** Several BlackBerry smartphones have received certification from the United States Federal Communications Commission (FCC) stating that they meet the Hearing Aid Compatibility (HAC) requirements.

Wireless devices rated M3 or M4 meet FCC requirements and are likely to generate less interference with hearing devices than wireless devices that are not rated. M4 is the higher of the two ratings.

Wireless devices rated T3 or T4 meet FCC requirements and are likely to be more compatible with a hearing device's telecoil (T-coil, T Switch, or Telephone Switch) than wireless devices that are not rated. T4 is the higher of the two ratings.

There are several BlackBerry models that are HAC rated as M4,T4:

- BlackBerry® 8830 World Edition smartphone
- BlackBerry® Pearl™ Flip 8230 smartphone \*
- BlackBerry® 8330 smartphone

- BlackBerry® 8703e smartphone

I would recommend trying these particular BlackBerry models to see how they compare to your current phone.

**Randy Simmons** Where can I get additional applications for my BlackBerry?

**David Dougall** Find tons of apps designed for your BlackBerry® smartphone in one convenient place in BlackBerry App World™. With the BlackBerry App World application, you can download and purchase apps right from your smartphone.

BlackBerry App World™ is available for download through the Internet browser on your BlackBerry device at the following link: [www.blackberry.com/appworld](http://www.blackberry.com/appworld)

Additional information on BlackBerry App World can be found at the following link: <http://na.blackberry.com/eng/services/appworld/>

**Randy Simmons** What types of applications are available on BlackBerry App World?

**David Dougall** There are several Categories of applications available on BlackBerry App World to allow you to quickly find the applications of interest to you:

- Entertainment
- Games
- Maps and Navigation
- Music and Video
- News and Weather
- Personal Finance and Banking
- Personal Health and Wellness
- Productivity and Utilities
- Professional & Business
- Reference and eBooks
- Shopping
- Social Networking and Sharing
- Sports and Recreation
- Travel

**Moderator** What are some examples of applications available on BlackBerry App World?

**David Dougall** **viigo™**- One click access to news, weather, entertainment, sports scores, stock info, RSS news feed for BLOGS, etc.

**buzzd** - Get places, events and THE BUZZ in your city

**ticketmaster** - Your mobile connection to event, concert, game and theatre tickets

**Slacker** - Listen to all your favorite personalized Slacker stations on your BlackBerry for free!

**facebook®** - Stay in touch and up-to-date with Facebook® for BlackBerry® smartphones

**Flickr™** - Snap a picture and post it to your Flickr™ account right from your BlackBerry smartphone

**Livestrong™** - Calorie Tracker can help you find that information and keep a digital diary of your daily calories.

**Texas Hold'em** - Learn Texas Hold'em with tips and 8 lesson topics so you can gamble like a casino pro as you play mobile poker against various opponents.

**WikiMobile Encyclopedia** - Carry Wikipedia wherever you go, and you'll never get stumped again! With WikiMobile, you gain access to all 2 million articles, including pictures and quick facts.

**GreenFinder** - turns your BlackBerry into a GPS-enabled golf rangefinder

**Pat** Can I get an m/4 t/4 blackberry with an at & t plan? Thanks for your help

**David Dougall** Unfortunately, there are no M4,T4 rated BlackBerry models available from AT&T.

**mateus** Will BB screen ever be the size of iPhone etc

**David Dougall** I am not able to comment on future product direction, but the screen size on the current BlackBerry Storm model is quite similar to that of the phone.

**trigirl** Which Blackberry is recommended for those who wish to use the web captel feature with a larger font for easier reading?

**David Dougall** If you could email me this question directly, I will have to follow-up on it. I believe the font sizes are adjustable on both the Tour and the 8350i for WebCapTel, but I will confirm.

**Dana** Will the Blackberry ever be able to support Mobile CapTel? (Simultaneous use of WebCapTel and voice at the same time?)

**David Dougall** Mobile WebCapTel is not a product offered directly by BlackBerry, hence I cannot speculate on the future product offerings in this area.

Rest assured, the desire for such a feature is duly noted given the significant interest expressed at the HLAA Conference, the TDI Conference, and during this chat session.

**pat** Is the flip phone usually better for BTE HA users?

**David Dougall** Yes, a flip phone form factor does tend to provide a better user experience for many BTE HA users given the additional distance and separation between the microphone and the speaker on the phone. However, this is still based on an individual user experience and testing the live models is the best opportunity to find a model that works for you.

**Judy-Florida** A few minutes ago I tested my 2.5mm/3.5mm and it is not useful at all. The other person sounds a half world away. How are the adaptors tested?

**David Dougall** It's important to note that not all adapters are created equally that are available from other manufacturers (or shipped with various ALDs). For BlackBerry devices, we have positive experiences when users have used the official adapter from BlackBerry. Note, if the adapter plug size provided with the particular ALD is 2.5mm and the audio jack on your BlackBerry smartphone is 3.5mm, the "Stereo Headset Adapter, 3.5mm to 2.5mm" available at the following link may be required [http://www.shopblackberry.com/blackberryaccessories/cgi-bin/pd.cgi?frompage=category&page=product\\_detail&from\\_category=Lifestyles&category=Audio+%26+Memory&pid=F7RX2222SENMVJ92P27](http://www.shopblackberry.com/blackberryaccessories/cgi-bin/pd.cgi?frompage=category&page=product_detail&from_category=Lifestyles&category=Audio+%26+Memory&pid=F7RX2222SENMVJ92P27). This headset adapter gives you the ability to connect a 2.5mm headset to a 3.5mm headset jack on the BlackBerry smartphone.

**Dana** I'm afraid I came in late and didn't see the answers to the questions I had posted in advance. I'd like to commend BlackBerry for its success in providing strong vibration, however.

**David Dougall** The answers to your questions will be available in the transcript. Thank you for the positive feedback regarding vibrations!

**Moderator** Wow! Dave you certainly have provided us with a great deal of information. I see our time is up and I appreciate you spending this hour with us.

**Dave Dougall** My email address is [ddougall@rim.com](mailto:ddougall@rim.com), and further information is available at <http://www.blackberry.com/accessibility> or email [accessibility@rim.com](mailto:accessibility@rim.com). It's been my pleasure to participate in this evening's session and share information about how BlackBerry smartphones can be beneficial to individuals with hearing loss. Thank you very much for the opportunity!

**Moderator** A transcript of this chat will be available tomorrow afternoon at [www.hearingloss.org](http://www.hearingloss.org)

## Upcoming Webchats

- October 22, 2009 9 00 p.m. EDT - **Guest** [Dr. Michael A. Harvey](#), Diplomat in Clinical Psychology  
**Topic** Psychological strategies for surviving the holidays with hearing loss

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