

= BlackBerry Bold 9700 =

The BlackBerry Bold 9700 (codenamed Onyx) is a smartphone developed by telecommunication company BlackBerry , formerly known as Research in Motion (RIM) . The second device in the Bold series , it succeeds the model 9000 and precedes the Bold 9650 . The device , which runs on the BlackBerry OS , features several improvements over the 9000 , including introduction of an optical trackpad , and a reduced size overall . Other visual changes were carried out in order to appeal both men and women .

Upon release , the BlackBerry Bold 9700 received mostly positive reviews from critics . The smartphone was commended for its design and most changes were favored , such as the trackpad . However , critics were ambivalent towards the dated software and the slow browser , and some concluded that the device did not set itself apart from previous models .

The BlackBerry Bold 9700 was succeeded by the upgraded version , the BlackBerry Bold 9780 , introduced in October 2010 . The BlackBerry Bold 9700 was discontinued in December 2011 .

= = History = =

= = = Rumors and prototypes = = =

Starting April 2009 , various rumors circulated regarding the smartphone and other reportedly planned models for the BlackBerry line @-@ up . The first rumor reported that a trio of devices were being developed as high @-@ end smartphones , codenamed Onyx , Driftwood and Magnum . All of them were rumored to contain a " hybrid concept " with a touch screen and a QWERTY keyboard , with similar prototype designs but destined to different networks . Onyx was rumored to be released only for AT & T markets .

An image of one of Onyx 's early prototypes surfaced online , with a similar hardware to the 9000 's , including the same trackball . That prototype was early reviewed by website CrackBerry , which confirmed diverse details about the device , such as the 480 × 360 display , the 3 @.@ 2 megapixels camera and connectivity features ? Wi @-@ Fi and GPS . The same day , other information regarding technicalities were revealed on a surfaced AT & T filesheet about the smartphone . Already known as the BlackBerry 9020 and having started production , a photo of the device surfaced , though it replaced the trackball with a trackpad . A previous prototype with a trackball was put up for sale on eBay , where it passed the mark of \$ 600 ; four days later , a pre @-@ launch list of then @-@ upcoming smartphones for AT & T surfaced online on August 9 , 2009 , which listed the device . A T @-@ Mobile press image was leaked on September 8 .

= = = Announcement and release = = =

On October 7 , 2009 , technology website Engadget reported that mobile carriers T @-@ Mobile and AT & T would publicly announce the Bold 9700 on October 21 , 2009 . Two days later , the website posted that rumors were circulating on the Internet , which predicted that the smartphone would be released to the United States T @-@ Mobile on November 11 , 2009 . The aforementioned carrier was then revealed to be sending invitations to " executive briefing " events ? taking place in Los Angeles on November 3 , 2009 ; in New York City . T @-@ Mobile Germany announced on October 15 , 2009 that the Bold 9700 would be released in that country in November .

The device was officially presented in Bochum , Germany ? where it was developed ? on October 21 , 2009 . The launch event was hosted by BlackBerry (then known as RIM) vice chairman Mike Lazaridis . Boy Genius Report reported on November 4 of that year that the smartphone would be available early five days later for " select business costumers " . On November 16 , it was officially released to the general public in the United States under T @-@ Mobile ; AT & T released it on November 22 . A new white version of the Bold 9700 was hinted at by Research In Motion (RIM) ' s

Thai website , which posted an image of that version . On April 7 , 2010 , it was exclusively released on T @-@ Mobile Netherlands . It was first released in North America by operator Rogers Communications in Canada , followed by its first release in the United States by T @-@ Mobile , in May 2010 , at a retail price of \$ 100 with a contract . The AT & T release occurred on the 26th of that month . A special " Team Canada " edition of the Bold 9700 was also given to Future Shop employees once they reached a certain number of sales .

= = Features = =

= = = Hardware = = =

The smartphone considerably reduces its predecessor 's sizes , measuring 4 @.@ 3 by 2 @.@ 4 by 6 inches (10 @.@ 92 , 6 @.@ 09 and 15 @.@ 24 centimeters , respectively) . The Bold 9700 has a 624 MHz processor and a 256MB Flash memory . The device uses a 2 @.@ 44 inch HVGA (approximately 6 @.@ 1 cm) non @-@ touch LCD display at a resolution of 480 × 360 pixels . The resolution of the display was compared to that of HTC Magic , as it has also HVGA quality . The model changes its predecessor 's trackball to an optical trackpad , with simple functionalities such as swiping the thumb to move it and press it to make a selection . This change prevented problems including the accumulation of dust behind the trackball . Similarly to previous BlackBerry models , BlackBerry 9700 has a 35 @-@ key QWERTY @-@ type physical keyboard , which is smaller than that of Bold 9000 . On the top of the device , there are two buttons that respectively lock or mute it ; on the right side of it , rubberized keys are found , which can either control the audio volume or the music player ; further down , there is a camera shutter key . Cosmetic changes including the addition of a leatherette battery cover were carried out in order to appeal both sexes .

The 3 @.@ 2 @-@ megapixels camera is accompanied by a LED flash , and allows autofocus and video recording . More features include a microSD slot and a headphone port . Relatively to its connectivity , the BlackBerry Bold 9700 has support for 3G HSDPA networks and integrates Wi @-@ Fi and GPS . The T @-@ Mobile version of the Bold 9700 supports UMA technology ? unlicensed mobile access , which allows making voice calls with a Wi @-@ Fi network and not just with a cellular network .

= = = Software = = =

Upon release , the smartphone came with version 5 of BlackBerry 's operating system , the BlackBerry OS . For the Bold 9700 , the system came with upgrades , specifically for Messaging , Calendar and Browser applications ; support for BlackBerry Enterprise Server (BES) and BlackBerry Internet Service , the latter allowing having up to 10 personal or business @-@ oriented POP3 or IMAP4 e @-@ mail accounts registered . The software also comes with " personal information management tools " and pre @-@ loaded applications , such as a calculator , a clock , a task list and Documents To Go ; along with more downloads found in BlackBerry World (then BlackBerry App World) , though extra applications can only be downloaded to the smartphone 's main memory and not to the microSD memory card . The phone 's browser contains a faster JavaScript and enabled CSS processing , which allows faster page loading ; it also supports widgets , streaming and Google Gears . The device also features speed dialing . The media player , which has basic functionalities such as searching , creating playlists and shuffle and repeat modes , supports MP3 , WMA , WMA ProPlus , AAC , AAC + and eAAC + songs ; it also plays MPEG4 , WMV , and H.264 video files which can be played in a full @-@ screen mode . Users ' personal libraries can be synced from desktop / laptop media players through BlackBerry Media Sync .

An updated version of the operating system , BlackBerry 6 , was announced by Research In Motion on August 3 , 2010 . It was initially announced for the Bold 9700 , Bold 9650 and Pearl 3G models , while it debuted on the BlackBerry Torch smartphone . It improves several functionalities of BlackBerry 5 , such as : icons on the home screen are arranged in five different views , which the

user can view separately by swiping the trackpad ; a search tool (" Universal Search ") ; an improved web browser , based on layout engine software WebKit , which contains diverse tabs that can be open simultaneously ; pre @-@ loaded social networking apps and enabling " rich content " on text messages , which are displayed in a chat @-@ like format . It was released by T @-@ Mobile on March 4 , 2011 ; AT & T released it for Bold 9700 and Curve 3G models on April 29 , 2011 ;

= = Critical reception = =

Gareth Beavis of TechRadar awarded the smartphone four stars out of five . He pointed out that users who would upgrade to the phone from its predecessor could experience difficulties with typing , due to the reduced size of the keyboard , which he called " a little cramped for [his taste] " . Beavis stated that he liked its " solid build quality [, which] cradles a battery with unrivalled lasting ability " , the screen quality and the new optical trackpad . However , he opined that the device " still feels like the BlackBerrys of old " and felt it needed to be upgraded , along with its software features . Laura June from Engadget said that the " device feels nice in the hand " due to the " smaller , more sleek form factor of the whole package " . Unlike Beavis from TechRadar , she felt " typing on [the keyboard] is a joy " , while she agreed that " the larger @-@ handed among us [could feel] pretty cramped " . She wrote :

And , at the end of the day , that 's one thing we can 't get past ? serious BlackBerry enthusiasts will tell you that the interface is doing just fine , and there are plenty of reasons to get hooked on these devices . For us , however , the BlackBerry UI is showing its age , and ultimately , beautiful hardware aside , this device is essentially exactly the same as every other BlackBerry .

Digital Trends ' Nick Mokey referred to the Bold 9700 as a " recommended product " . Awarding it four stars out of five , he stated that the overall " solid feel of the phone helps " stand out an " overall aura of quality " . He found that the keyboard was " bordering on too small " , although he named it the " finest " keyboard that can be " fold [ed] into a space this size " . He also called the screen " amazing " and its call voice quality " excellent " . Concluding the review , Mokey compared the smartphone to a Curve 8900 with a better battery , keyboard , a trackpad and what was missing on that phone ? 3G Internet coverage . He wrote : " Although the Bold 9700 lacks the frills of an iPhone or Palm Pre , for utilitarian business users , it ? s one of the most polished smartphones on the market today . "

Jamie Lendino and Sascha Segan from PC Magazine , who respectively reviewed the AT & T and T @-@ Mobile versions , gave the smartphone a rating of four out of five points . The former described the Bold 9700 as " powerful , comfortable , and even somewhat chic " and its keyboard as " comfortable , quiet , and accurate " . Emphasizing the quality of the voice calls , Lendino wrote they were " crisp , clear , and with plenty of gain in both direction " . She regarded the Internet browser as " poor " , noting that some pages take more than one minute to fully load ; she also claimed the video playback was problematic . Sascha Segan named it " evolutionary , not revolutionary " , having a similar opinion to Lendino though remarking that the video player ran with no problems and emphasizing the photo camera power .