

BlackBerry Phones No More as TCL Ends Partnership?

Written by Frederick Douglas
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Chinese smartphone maker TCL announces it will no longer make BlackBerry-branded devices, as August 2020 brings the end of a 4-year licensing and tech support partnership, one TCL will not renew going forward.



“We do regret to share however that as of August 31, 2020, TCL Communication will no longer be selling BlackBerry-branded mobile devices,” a note posted on the BlackBerry Mobile Twitter account reads. “TCL has no further rights to design, manufacturers or sell any new BlackBerry mobile devices.”

The company does not have any more details to share on the matter, other than it will continue support models already on the market until 31 August 2022. As such, there is no word as to whether the BlackBerry brand will find a new licensee. Will it live on with another company or will it simply disappear, bringing an end to an era? BlackBerry does have other phone manufacturing partners, but these involve far more limited relationships. For instance, BB Merah Putih launched a single BlackBerry phone in Indonesia in 2017, while Optiemus Infracome made some phone for India, Sri Lanka, Nepal and Bangladesh.

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Once one of the biggest names in smartphones, thanks to capable software and QWERTY keyboards, BlackBerry failed to keep up with the touchscreen-enabled competition. Eventually maker RIM stopped making smartphones as it shifted focus to mobile security and enterprise services, before handing over the license to TCL in 2016. However the TCL-made BlackBerry devices failed to reach any level of popularity, and as such remain under the tiny "other" category in smartphone market share reports.

In addition, TCL plans to start selling devices under its own brand after lack of success with both the BlackBerry and Alcatel brands. So far the company has four devices in the works, the TCL 10 Pro, TCL 10L, TCL 10 5G and a yet unnamed foldable device, all set for a 2020 release.

Go [TCL End of BlackBerry License Agreement \(Twitter\)](#)