

## Chapter 1

# Can't Go Wrong with the Best-Selling Smartphone

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### *In This Chapter*

- ▶ Checking out your BlackBerry Curve behind the scenes
  - ▶ Seeing what your BlackBerry Curve can do
  - ▶ Handling the hardware
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**A**s of May 2009, the BlackBerry Curve family was deemed the best-selling smartphones in the United States. We're curious — what convinced you to buy this particular handheld mobile device? Was it the stats? The BlackBerry Curve 8500's cool optical trackpad? The compact size? The always-connected e-mail? The multimedia player to replace your iPod or iPhone? Or did you get a really good deal? The list goes on and on — and we might never hit on the exact reason you got yours. For whatever reason you bought your BlackBerry Curve, congratulations; you made an intelligent choice.

The same smarts that made you buy your BlackBerry Curve are clearly at it again. This time, your intelligence led you to pick up this book, perhaps because your intuition told you there's more to your BlackBerry Curve than meets the eye.

Your hunch is right. Your BlackBerry Curve *can* help you do more than you thought. For example, your BlackBerry Curve is a whiz at making phone calls, but it's also a computer that can check your e-mail and surf the Web. We're talking *World Wide Web* here, so the sky's the limit. Help is always at your fingertips instead of sitting on some desk at home or at the office:

- ✓ Need to check out the reviews of that restaurant on the corner?
- ✓ Need to know — right now — what's showing in your local movie theaters, or what the weather will be like tonight, or what's the best place to shop the sales?
- ✓ Need to know your current location and get directions to that cozy bed-and-breakfast, or retrieve news headlines, or check stock quotes?

- ✓ Want to do some online chatting or view some pictures online?
- ✓ Hanker to network with your old classmates?

You can do all these things (and more) with your BlackBerry Curve.



BlackBerry Curve is also a full-fledged *personal digital assistant (PDA)*. Out of the box, it provides you with the organizational tools you need to set up to-do lists, manage your appointments, take care of your address books, and more.

Being armed with a device that's a phone, an Internet connection, a PDA, a GPS device (Curve 8900), and a full-on media player makes you a powerful person. With your BlackBerry Curve (along with this resourceful book), you really can increase your productivity and become better organized. Watch out, world! BlackBerry Curve—wielding powerhouse coming through!

If you stick with us, you find out all you need to get the most out of your device or maybe even save a troubled relationship. (Well, the last one is a bit of an exaggeration, but we got your attention, right?)

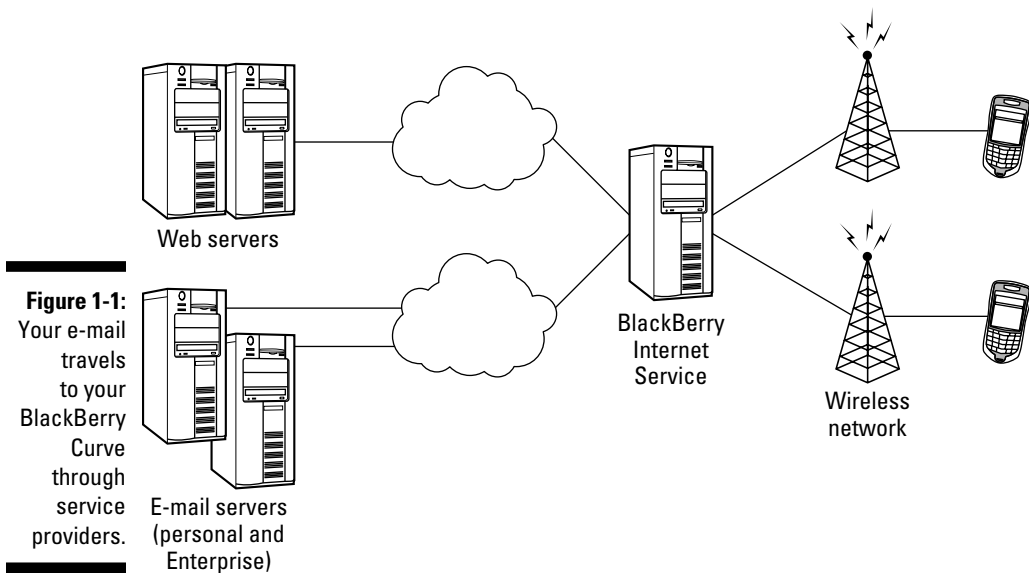
## *How It All Works: The Schematic Approach*

If you always ask, “How do they do that?” you don’t have to go far. This section is just for you.

### *The role of the network service provider*

Along with wondering how your BlackBerry Curve actually works, you might be wondering why you received your BlackBerry Curve from a network service provider such as T-Mobile or AT&T rather than from RIM (Research In Motion). After all, RIM makes the BlackBerry Curve. Why did you need to go through a middle person?

That’s an excellent question, and here’s the quick-and-dirty answer: RIM needs a delivery system — a communication medium, as it were — for its technology to work. Not in a position to come up with such a delivery system all by its lonesome, RIM partnered (and built alliances across the globe) with what developed into its network service providers — the big cellphone companies. These middlemen support the wireless network for your BlackBerry Curve so that you can connect to the BlackBerry Internet service and get all those wonderful e-mails (and spend so much valuable time surfing the Internet). See Figure 1-1 for an overview of this process.



Network service providers don't build alliances for nothing, right? In return, RIM gave them the right to customize the BlackBerry Curve firmware and add their carrier version of Application Center.

## *Connecting to your computer*

Nowadays, a personal computer is a household necessity. You probably spend a lot of time using one, and it holds information you need. No surprise that BlackBerry works hand in hand with your PC and Mac. The USB cable that comes with your BlackBerry Curve does more than just charge your device.

Part V helps you use your PC connection with the help of BlackBerry Desktop Manager and all the utilities that come with it. For instance, in Chapter 16, you find how to sync your device with the personal information manager (PIM) data that you keep in your PC. You can also read Chapter 17 for directions about switching from another device (even a non-BlackBerry device) to a new BlackBerry Curve. For example, you find out how to import your contacts list into your new BlackBerry Curve. Chapter 18 tells you how to protect your data. Last, Chapter 19 talks about installing new applications on your BlackBerry Curve with the help of your PC.

If you have a Mac, you'll be happy to hear that RIM has rolled out BlackBerry Desktop Manager on the Mac. Read more in Chapter 17.

## *Rule the world with BlackBerry Curve in your hands*

If you got your BlackBerry Curve from AT&T, chances are that your BlackBerry Curve will continue to work when you travel to, say, London or Beijing. All you need to worry about is remembering to turn on your BlackBerry Curve (and maybe the extra roaming charges).

Because your BlackBerry Curve is quad band, it works in more than 90 countries. What is *quad band*? Basically, different cellphone networks in different countries operate on different frequencies. For example, the United States and Canada operate on 850 and 1900 MHz, and Europe and Asia Pacific operate on 900 and 1800 MHz.



Your quad-band BlackBerry Curve is designed to work on 850 MHz, 900 MHz, 1800 MHz, and 1900 MHz, so you're covered almost wherever you go. Just to be sure, however, check with your network service provider to see whether your BlackBerry Curve will work at your destination before you hop on a plane.



Nothing stands still in this world, and this saying is proved by the fact that Global System for Mobile Communication (GSM) has spawned *High Speed Downlink Packet Access (HSDPA)*, which is a technology that has been growing because it works on the same GSM phone infrastructure. HSDPA is available in the United States through most major network service providers and competes in the marketplace against EvDo (Evolution Data Optimized) from Code Division Multiple Access (CDMA).

What's all this alphabet soup mean to you? CDMA and GSM aren't compatible. Your phone works on only one technology. When you travel outside North America, you face the burning question: CDMA or GSM? (Read: Will my BlackBerry Curve work on this country's network?)

Your BlackBerry Curve runs on GSM, so you should be okay to travel outside the United States. Most non-North American countries are on GSM networks. If you're a CDMA kind of person, you might have some "issues," as they say. When in doubt, talk to your network service provider.

## Know your BlackBerry history

Your BlackBerry Curve is truly a wondrous thing, boasting many features beyond your ordinary mobile phone. And its “sudden” popularity didn’t happen overnight. Like any other good product, BlackBerry has come a long way from its (relatively humble) beginnings.

In the days when the PalmPilot ruled the PDA world, RIM was busy in its lab, ignoring the then-popular graffiti input method and designing a device with a QWERTY keyboard (the kind of keyboard people were already used to from working on their computers). RIM didn’t stop there, however. It added an always-connected e-mail capability, making this device a must-have among government officials as well as finance and health professionals.

To meet the needs of government officials and industry professionals, RIM made reliability, security, and durability the priorities when manufacturing its devices. Today, the BlackBerry Curve comes from the same line of RIM family products, inheriting all the good genes while boosting usability and adding more functions to its core BlackBerry applications. As a result, BlackBerry is popular among both *prosumers* (professional customers) and consumers. Starting with BlackBerry Pearl, RIM has been targeting the mainstream consumer market. Clearly, with BlackBerry Curve, RIM is winning the hearts of consumers while maintaining its hold on the enterprise market.

## Oh, the Things You Can Do!

Always-connected e-mail used to be one of the primary factors that made BlackBerry very attractive and was likely first in the long list of reasons you got yours. And if you need to go global, you can use your BlackBerry in more than 100 countries. Just hop off your flight, turn on your BlackBerry Curve, and voilà: You can receive and send e-mails whether you’re in Hong Kong, London, or Paris. Your significant other can get in touch with you wherever you are — just to say hi or to remind you that you promised Aunt Edna a bottle of Chanel No. 5.



Make sure that your network service provider has the technology to go global. See the preceding section for more info. Generally, you can receive and send e-mails just like you do when you’re at home. Whether you have T-Mobile in the United States or Rogers in Canada, your BlackBerry Curve will work if you have a full data and voice plan. Check with your carrier before you start your trip.

Although e-mail and communication are your BlackBerry Curve’s strengths, they aren’t the only things it can do. The following sections go beyond e-mail to point out some of the device’s other major benefits.

## *All-in-one multimedia center*

Previously, many people hesitated to buy a BlackBerry because of the lack of multimedia functions. They wanted a camera and audio and full video playback. BlackBerry has changed all that and has more features than you may expect. Not only does your BlackBerry Curve have a high-resolution megapixel camera (see Chapter 13) — but it also has a memory slot for a microSD chip (see Chapter 2).

Your BlackBerry Curve can function as the following:

- ✓ A music player
- ✓ A video player and recorder
- ✓ A digital camera
- ✓ A portable flash drive
- ✓ Your personal photo collection

## *Internet and social networking at your fingertips*

Yup, with the new BlackBerry Curve on a 3G network, you can surf the Internet nearly as smoothly as you do on a desktop computer. You'll get an alert when your stock is tanking. True, that isn't fun, but you want this information as quickly as possible. With your BlackBerry Curve, you can continue chatting with your friends through all types of instant messaging applications, just as if you never left your desktop PC, and your friends will thank you for persuading them not to buy that losing stock.

Intrigued? Read how BlackBerry Curve can take full advantage of the Web in Chapter 11.

## *On-the-go GPS*

Your BlackBerry Curve (only the 8900 and some 8500 models) comes with an onboard GPS that allows you to pinpoint your location with the BlackBerry Map application and other third-party applications such as Google Maps and TeleNav.

## *Me and my great personal assistant*

You might be saying, “But I’m really a busy person, and I don’t have time to browse the Web. What I *do* need is an assistant to help me better organize my day-to-day tasks.” If you can afford one, by all means go ahead and hire a personal assistant. The next best thing is a personal *digital* assistant (PDA). Just as people come in many types, so do many PDAs.

Whip out that BlackBerry Curve of yours and take a closer look. That’s right; your BlackBerry Curve is also a full-fledged PDA, helping you increase productivity:

- ✓ Remember all your acquaintances (Chapter 4)
- ✓ Manage your appointments (Chapter 5)
- ✓ Securely keep a list of passwords (Chapter 6)

## *A computer in the palm of your hand*

Remarkable communication device? Check.

Full-fledged PDA? Check.

Full-featured media player? Check.

These capabilities are just the tip of the iceberg. Don’t underestimate the device because of its size: Your BlackBerry Curve is also a powerful computer.

Need convincing? Here goes. Out of the box, with no fiddling, it comes with a great set of organizational and productivity tools. Software developers besides RIM are taking advantage of this growing market, which means that hundreds of applications are out there for you. For example, you can download graphics-intensive games or a mortgage calculator.

Download? Absolutely! BlackBerry Curve supports the downloading of applications through BlackBerry Browser. And, of course, downloading the application can be accomplished both wired and wirelessly (or over the air [OTA]). In April 2009, RIM rolled out BlackBerry App World (the company’s response to the popular Apple’s App Store), which allows BlackBerry owners to easily browse for BlackBerry applications on their device and download them directly. Other third-party BlackBerry application stores are tremendously popular in the BlackBerry community, such as the CrackBerry.com App Store powered by MobiHand. (For more information on downloading third-party applications, see Chapter 19.)



What's the difference between BlackBerry App World and BlackBerry Application Center?

- ✓ Application Center most likely came with your BlackBerry Curve.
- ✓ Application Center contains only applications that your network service provider wants you to see.
- ✓ App World needs to be manually downloaded by you from RIM's Web site.
- ✓ App World has an unfiltered list of BlackBerry applications for you.

## *Look, Dad! No hands!*

Your BlackBerry Curve can be equipped with a stereo headset that doubles as a mic for hands-free talking. This accessory is your doctor's prescription for preventing the stiff neck that comes from wedging your BlackBerry Curve against your ear with your shoulder. It helps free your hands so that you can eat Chinese takeout. Some places require you by law to use an earphone while driving and talking on a cellphone.



Avoid using your cellphone while driving, hands-free or not.

But RIM didn't stop with just your standard wired earphones. BlackBerry Curve also supports cool wireless earphones based on Bluetooth technology. How could a bizarrely colored tooth help you here? *Bluetooth* is the name for a (very) short-distance wireless technology that connects devices. See Chapter 7 for how to connect your BlackBerry Curve to a Bluetooth headset.

## *Putting a sentry on duty*

The virtual world isn't exempt from general human nastiness; in fact, every day a battle is fought between those trying to attack a system and those trying to protect it. A computer connected to the Internet faces an extra risk of being cracked by a hacker or infected by a virus. (Viruses try to replicate themselves and generally bug you.)

Fortunately, security is a BlackBerry strong point. Viruses often come as e-mail attachments. However, BlackBerry supports very few file types out of the box (mostly images and documents). You won't face threats from e-mails with these attachments. And in an enterprise environment, the data that you send to or get from the PDA is *encrypted* (coded) to prevent snooping.





## Saving power

Anyone with previous BlackBerry experience knows that BlackBerry is typically a highly efficient power consumer. With the older BlackBerry, you can go for five days on a single charge. The addition of a color, high-resolution screen, GPS (only Curve 8900 and some 8500

models) and Bluetooth support have weakened the power efficiency. Power requirements have increased so much that you need to recharge roughly every two days. But hey, now you have a GPS on deck!



RIM also has a Signature process for application developers that forces developers to identify themselves and their programs if they're developing any applications for the BlackBerry that need to integrate with either BlackBerry core applications or the OS.

Remember the *I love you* and *Anna Kournikova* viruses? These are virtual evils transmitted through e-mail, scripts, or sets of instructions in the e-mail body or attachment that can be executed either by the host e-mail program — or, in the case of an attachment, by the program associated with the attached file. Fortunately, BlackBerry's Messages doesn't support scripting languages. BlackBerry's viewer for such files doesn't support scripting either, so you won't be facing threats from e-mails having these attachments.



The security measures that RIM implemented on the BlackBerry platform have gained the trust of the U. S. government as well as many of the Forbes Top 500 enterprises in the financial and health industries.

