Following Amazon Deal, BlackBerry Cuts 65 Consumer Apps Jobs

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BlackBerry laid off 65 employees who worked on consumer applications development [1] for the company. The cuts come shortly after BlackBerry announced a deal giving its customers access to the Amazon Appstore [2] beginning in the fall.

BlackBerry World, the company's consumer app storefront, will stay open but BlackBerry will close the music and video portion of the store on July 21.

The company made the job cuts in order to focus more on "enterprise application development," according to a statement.

The consumers apps job cuts and the Amazon deal fall in line with BlackBerry's renewed commitment toward enterprise services and software. CEO John Chen has shifted the company's focus away from hardware.

The new game plan appears to be helping the once-mighty OEM as BlackBerry last week reported first quarter numbers that exceeded expectations [3]. Sounding slightly less discouraged about the BlackBerry's handset horizons, Chen said the company was getting closer to at least breaking even on hardware.

The new round of job cuts is fairly small compared to the numerous labor reductions BlackBerry has gone through in the past few years. Following lay-offs in the summer of 2011, BlackBerry's workforce totaled around 16,000. As of March 2013, that number was closer to 12,700. That total was from before reports surfaced in September that the company would be reducing staff by up to 40 percent [4].

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