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AppleBerry might be the next big thing

SIMON AVERY
GLOBE AND MAIL UPDATE

Is the day near when you will get music on your BlackBerry and e-mail on your iPod?

The idea of an "AppleBerry" partnership between **Research In Motion Ltd.** and **Apple Computer Inc.** was floated yesterday by Peter Misek, an analyst with Canaccord Capital Inc., who last year accurately predicted a partnership between RIM and Intel Corp.

Such a deal would have huge merit because each company lacks what the other provides. RIM wants a firm foothold in the consumer market and Apple doesn't have a presence in the booming wireless data sector, he said.

The two might jointly develop a new device: Apple could create a cellphone combining its iPod music device with RIM's wireless technology, or RIM might embed Apple's iTunes music into a future BlackBerry, he speculated.

Senior executives at Intel have recommended that Apple work with RIM, Mr. Misek said in a research note.

"Yeah, it could make sense. Technically it could work," said Jean-Louis Gassée, a venture capitalist in Silicon Valley who once oversaw Apple's global products division and research and development. But he questioned whether the strong personalities leading the two companies could work together.

"I want to see the two CEOs of RIM and [Apple CEO Steve] Jobs working together," he said. "The thought of this ménage à trois is absolutely hilarious."

Both companies found success by controlling the hardware that runs their software, which could prove a point of contention during any negotiations.

Indeed, a partnership between Apple and Motorola Inc. announced last year has yielded little because of efforts by each to control the hardware, analysts say. The two worked together on Motorola's Rokr cellphone, which stores up to 100 songs from Apple's iTunes on-line music store. But so far sales have fallen short of expectations.

Both companies declined to comment on the speculation.

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