

The True Costs (and Future) of webOS

Written by Marco Attard
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The real news in the HP Q4 2011 results is not whether the company made an overall profit (even if it did). It is how much HP spent on the Palm and webOS businesses-- a sum totalling well over \$2 billion.



First off, one has to recall HP spent \$1.2BN to buy Palm in the first place back in 2010, before releasing a couple of webOS-powered smartphones and the stillborn TouchPad tablet. Two other numbers emerge from the Q4 2011 results-- \$885 million in "impairment of goodwill and purchased intangible assets" tied to webOS and Palm, and \$775M relating on the decision to "wind-down the webOS device business."

The result? \$1.66 billion, spent on killing off Palm and webOS.

What next for webOS? HP is still looking for a buyer, and Venturebeat says Intel and Qualcomm are still in talks over purchasing the Palm portfolio (at least according to the unnamed sources). However HP demands a caveat-- the license to use webOS in printers. And such a licensing deal is what keeps dragging Palm purchase negotiations on and on.

Maybe HP knows a fabulous secret on the synergy between webOS and printers? Or it has a finished webOS-powered printer awaiting release? We can't imagine "webOS-enabled" ever becoming a unique selling point for printers, but hopefully all will be clear(er) over the next few weeks-- or whenever HP decides the final fate for the Palm experiment.

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Go [HP Q4 2011 Results](#)

Go [As Palm Bidding Continues, HP Wants a Sweet Deal to Keep webOS in Printers \(VentureBeat\)](#)