

Blackberry Differences

There are multiple types of Blackberry offerings, all with different advantages. BES is the easiest and best way of managing these devices as it integrates closely with the corporate network that they reside in, this used to be a lot more costly, but now with the addition of BES Express, this is no longer the case.

Handsets

Regardless of what Blackberry you have, you need to have a data plan associated with the device. There are two different offerings available for this, one which comes as standard with the Blackberry known as BIS (Blackberry Internet Services) and the other BES (Blackberry Enterprise Server).

BIS

The BIS data plan comes free with the Blackberry and usually requires setup over the internet; with new handsets, this is done exclusively on the phone and no further setup can be done. The main limitation with BIS is that it will only sync email (the Inbox, not folders within the Inbox) over the air, to sync Calendars, Tasks and Contacts requires the device to be plugged into a workstation.

There are limitations with this though, the ones that are set up on the web interface integrate with OWA (Outlook Web Access) and if the exchange server goes offline for a prolonged period of time, then the accounts need to be re-activated by logging into the website and entering the AD password for the account that it syncs with.

From a support perspective, this is easy to setup, maintain and manage providing we have the username and password for website login for the older phones. The disadvantage to this is if we don't have the details or don't have their AD password on file, then we are unable to access any of this and end up chasing the customer or getting them to reset their password by calling their provider. Setting up the new phones where the setup is done on the phone itself is also really straight forward and is documented on each of the provider's website.

BES

The BES data plan for allows the device to have the necessary Service Books associated with the device to sync back to the BES server.

This comes at an additional cost (usually £10 extra pm) from the provider but allows full syncing of Calendars, Tasks and contacts including 'Folder Redirection' which pushes email to folders within the Inbox as well. This also includes 'Push' email rather than only receiving email every 15 minutes from the server when it 'Pulls' the email in BIS.

BES/BIS Offerings

BES 4.1

BES 4.1 is now the 'old' version of BES. This runs on any Server 2003 environment, be it on SBS 2003 or on a standalone server, but this integrates into Exchange 2003 and 2007. There's no mention of

Exchange 2010 support with this as Blackberry have now released BES 5.0 to take over from this current version.

This is a standalone application and from a support perspective this is easy to manage as all devices are controlled through one location with no need for the users to do anything apart from run through an 'activation' process after an account has been set up.

The management of these devices is done centrally and all done over the air. The only way a device can be synchronised with this type of server is to have the BES data plan associated with the device.

BES 5.*

BES 5.* is the new offering from Blackberry that is installed on a local server and is now purely web based through IIS. There is no longer a stand along application for this. Again, the devices will need a BES data plan in order for them to be able to synchronise with this server.

There are a few differences with this new version compared to the previous version. The main one being that you aren't able to install this on an SBS 2003/2008 server or a server that has Exchange installed on it. This version now requires a standalone server to install BES on but functions in the same way as the older version. This also allows you to create IT Policies and lock certain elements of the phone down if required.

The GUI is completely different in this version, so from a support perspective, this may require some internal training to bring members of staff up to date on how to configure/set up new users and support the devices or a small guide put together and distributed.

The Blackberry website is very comprehensive on its support and options for self service and there are multiple support options available from Blackberry themselves including a complimentary support call upon downloading/purchasing BES ([Found Here](#)).

Here are some support references on what's needed to install this and what's not supported.

General Overview and Guide to Setting up BES: [Click Here](#)

System Requirements: [Click Here](#)

Unsupported Environments: [Click Here](#)

BES Express

BES Express is the free version of Blackberry Enterprise Server. It allows you to sync wirelessly and have all of the same features as the full blow version of BES. The difference between them is that BES Express allows it to be installed on an exchange server, this can be SBS 2008, SBS2003 or on a regular Exchange server which is a major advantage to most of our clients as they can incorporate this into their existing setup.

The only limitations are as follows: the first limitation, if it can be called that, is that if they don't want to pay for a BES data plan, they have to physically plug the phone into the server or any machine on the LAN that can access the Blackberry Admin web page on the server (this can also be over VPN) to get the device activated initially. Once the initial sync is done, then this allows them to

receive all further information wirelessly; this includes Contacts and Calendars. If they do have a BES data plan on their phone, then they are able to sync wirelessly as if they had a regular BES server.

The second is that there is a user limit on this. If it's installed on an Exchange server, then you are limited to 75 users. If you had a dedicated server, then there's a 2000 user limit.

The third is that there are no 'IT Policies' available for this method, so you are not able to control access to the devices and lock certain elements down as well as create enforced password policies for the devices which may be an issue for certain clients.

References:

Blackberry Version Comparison Chart: [Comparison Chart](#)

BES Express System Requirements: [Sys Req](#)

BES Express – How To Activate: [Activation Guide](#)

BES Express – Activation Methods: [Activate a Blackberry using Blackberry Enterprise Server Express](#)