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RIM's Release of BlackBerry® Mobile Fusion — Next Generation Mobile Device Management Solution for Government and Business Customers

Research in Motion (RIM) recently announced its release of BlackBerry® Mobile Fusion, which uses RIM's Universal Device Service to extend mobile device management platform support from a previous BlackBerry-only service to include the Android (smartphones and tablet computers) and iOS (Apple devices) operating systems.

In a statement at a press panel during the May 2, 2012 BlackBerry® World 2012 conference, Alan Panezic, Vice President of Enterprise Product Management and Marketing at RIM, clarified that this development highlights RIM's new focus on, and greater appreciation for, the “emancipation of the end user...looking for the same type of elegance and experience in their personal lives in everything they do.” Panezic continued, “[f]or businesses and government, managing a mix of mobile devices on any scale is chaotic...BlackBerry Mobile Fusion allows organizations to manage a mixed environment of devices in the most secure, simple, and cost-efficient manner possible. It also means that businesses and government do not have to move to the lowest common denominator on security for all the devices they need to manage.”

Simply put, RIM has recognized that organizations are moving away from a “one device-fits-all” solution, and is trying to position RIM as a service provider within the bring your own device (or “BYOD”) business culture in which each employee picks—and often directly supports—her device of choice. And in other literature highlighting just how RIM will pursue this strategy, RIM has confirmed that BlackBerry® Mobile Fusion integrates BlackBerry® Enterprise Server 5.0.3 for advanced IT management and a single outbound security connection, as well as support for BlackBerry® Balance technology. Administrators can support over-the-air installation to upgrade and audit apps on employee devices, and retain the ability to push and install required work apps and catalog optional apps for download through the work channel of BlackBerry® App World.



An April 3, 2012 RIM Press Release outlined the breadth of RIM's BlackBerry® Mobile Fusion's offerings and comprehensive mobile device management capabilities, including:

- Support for multiple devices per user
- Application and Software Management
- Connectivity management (Wi-Fi, VPN, certificates)
- A centralized, easy-to-use, and unified Web-based console
- Security and policy definition and management
- Asset management
- Configuration management
- Security and protection for lost or stolen devices (including remote lock and wipe)
- User- and group-based administration
- High scalability

While the BYOD trend toward the use of employee-owned and multiple device platforms has created many challenges for business IT professionals, it is also creating service opportunities like the one BlackBerry® Mobile Fusion is positioned to address. Organizations whose employees use a single device for professional and personal use must consider the security of those devices and develop strategies which eliminate or minimize the possibility of corporate data compromise. RIM believes that its proposed BlackBerry® Mobile Fusion “one-stop-shop” for multiple platform support is the clear solution for faster, easier, and more organized management of these devices; it will be interesting to see how the market responds, and which competitors enter to alternatively service this clear corporate need.

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