

Windows® Small Business Server 2011 Essentials vs. Windows Server 2008® R2 Foundation Comparison Guide

Your small business, two great choices

When it comes to providing the best server solution for small business organizations, Microsoft is now able to provide more than a “one-size-fits-all” approach and has offerings for a wide range of customer preferences. If you’re about to install your very first server solution, two options for you to consider are Windows® Small Business Server 2011 Essentials or Windows Server® 2008 R2 Foundation. Both server products are based on Windows Server 2008 R2, the most powerful and secure server technology to date so you can be sure that you are supporting your business with a robust and reliable technology platform.

Windows Server Foundation

With support for up to 15 users, Windows Server Foundation gives you the foundation you need to run core business applications, share files and printers, and get mobile and remote access. It provides affordable flexible role-based deployments for implementing customized applications or solutions, so you can tailor the deployment to your exact business need. Windows Server Foundation also supports the deployment of both on and off-premise applications with the ability to manually integrate with cloud technologies.

Windows Small Business Server 2011 Essentials

Windows Small Business Server 2011 Essentials gives you an easier way to deal with everyday computing tasks, including how to secure and protect your business data, share information and devices, and recover quickly from crash, theft, and loss. With support for up to 25 users, SBS 2011 Essentials combines the best of on-premise and online functionality in a single, seamlessly integrated solution. It is configured to take advantage of best practices, which means that small businesses can streamline the deployment process and spend very little time on management.

Which should you choose?

Depending on your specific needs, you’ll probably find that either Windows Server Foundation or Windows Small Business Server 2011 Essentials will meet your needs better. Take a look at the following scenarios to get a better idea of the differences between the two.

Windows Server Foundation	Windows Small Business Server 2011 Essentials
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I need a server solution for file and printer sharing, document management, collaboration, a line-of-business application, or remote access. I have up to 15 users 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I need an integrated and pre-configured server solution for file and print sharing, centralized storage and backup, remote access, and support for LOB applications locally and via the cloud.

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I need a very flexible solution, and have access to IT resources that will help me deploy, set up, and manage it. • My server solution can be limited to a single processor server. • Centralized Windows Server based backup is sufficient for my needs. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I have up to 25 users. • I need a solution that comes with best practices, standard features, and detailed guidance so that it is extremely easy to set up and manage. • I need robust data protection with scheduled automatic backups and backup redundancy. • I need easy access to important business information on the go with remote access. • I want to expand my business capabilities by connecting to the cloud. |
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Compare Features

Use this comparison chart below to see an at-a-glance view of the available feature sets of both servers.

	Windows Server Foundation	Windows Small Business Server 2011 Essentials
Number of users supported	15	25
Management	Windows Admin Management	Dashboard Management
Backup	Windows Server Backup	Automated Client and Server Backup
Cloud integration support	Manual	One-click setup
Remote Access	Remote Desktop Service Support	Integrated Remote Web Access
Identity Management	Active Directory Support	Pre-Configured Active Directory
Domain Join Ability	Yes	First Server Domain Owner
Setup/Deployment	Role Based Manual Deployment	Automated Wizard Driven
Application Support	Yes, any	Yes, any
General purpose services	Fully configurable role-based	Pre-configured SMB roles
Multi-Workload	Supports Many	Supports Many, integrated with online services
IT skill level	Requires high level of IT Skills	Near Zero
Multi-Processor Support	No	Yes
Channel Support	OEM Only	All Available Channels