



bitnext

USER'S MANUAL

Latest Release

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Before you dive in

Welcome!

We're thrilled that you've decided to join our privacy and freedom-loving service. We imagine that you already know this, but just to make sure, know that we **CANNOT** see your data. No one can unless you allow them to. This is by design. You will not be surprised, then, to know that we do absolutely nothing with your data; we do not peruse it, share it, index it, modify it or anything else. It is your data and we believe it should stay that way.

Some thoughts on security

You're here because you have realized that "Big Tech" is not your friend. We've lost count of the number of high-profile, high-dollar law suits they have lost over their inappropriate use of people's private information, yet they keep doing it. You realize this which is why you're here.

BitNext is a "Super Secure, Totally Private" Software as a Service (SaaS) platform that provides file sync and share, collaboration, office productivity and text/audio/video communication capabilities for everyone from individuals to large enterprises. We are hosted on a private, global, highly fault-tolerant infrastructure and sit behind a wide array of cybersecurity technologies. In addition, every piece of data you put with us is backed up.

However, "security" is only secure if you use it properly because the best locks installed in the strongest door won't protect the occupants of the house if left unlocked. Similarly, if you are not careful with how you share information, your information will still get compromised.

For example, if you share your information via link with someone's Big Tech email address, your data will be protected as long as they only interact with it on our platform. However, if you email them a document as an attachment, well, you just left the locks unlocked.

Common sense is your friend so "go with your gut". If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to email us at support@bitnext.app.

Helpful things to know (quick start guide)

Here are some concepts we believe will help you get the most out of our service and some of them are absolutely necessary to know to use it at all:

- 1) You have two accounts with us. The first you created when you signed up; this is your "Portal Account", will use the email address you signed up with as your User ID, and is the only account where you set the password. This account is for things like billing details and requesting technical support from us. **THIS IS NOT BITNEXT ITSELF**, although you can login to BitNext from the portal. This is your administrative back end or, as we've termed it, your "Portal Account".
- 2) For the second account, the **ACTUAL** BitNext account, we create the User ID and password and put them in your "Portal Account". To find them, login to your portal (<https://clientportal.bitnext.app/clientarea.php>) and from the main/"Home" screen in the "Your Active Products/Services" box you'll see a small, green "Active" button. Click it and the screen you get next will contain your User ID and password (scroll down a bit); you will not be able to change either one manually. This is part of our security framework as "Dictionary Attacks" are among the most common threats on the Internet. Why? Because we're creatures of habit so our default is to, for example, use the same high school nickname for our User ID and the name of our favorite pet from childhood as

the password. And we will use these “favorite defaults” over and over across our online accounts which is part of the reason why so many hacks occur – the bad guys only have to hack us once and then they can expect to get into a lot of our accounts because we’ll recycle the same credentials again and again. At BitNext, we know this which is why we randomly-generate your User ID and password for you. This means that once our system creates your BitNext login credentials, you should make sure to copy the information and store it in your password management application. If you do not have one, we suggest going here and selecting the one you like best: <https://www.tomsguide.com/us/best-password-managers,review-3785.html>

- 3) Given that the role of BitNext is to create, collaborate and communicate with other people, BitNext is centered around your Contacts. If you’re like us, you probably have many hundreds of contacts in whatever contact manager you’re already using (Google Contacts, Microsoft Outlook, etc.). Good news! You do ***NOT*** have to manually enter these contacts into BitNext; you can import them from a “vCard” (or “VCF”) file directly into BitNext. Follow the instructions for the contact manager you use to export to a VCF file and from “Settings” (lower left) in the Contacts module in BitNext, you navigate to where you saved the VCF file, click it and then import your entire contacts list. If you’d like assistance getting your contacts exported, as odd as it may sound, we recommend using YouTube as there are literally thousands of step-by-step videos up there covering every contact manager you can imagine.
- 4) We are contributors to an Open Source Software project called “Nextcloud”. We have “forked” this project to build out some portions of BitNext. “Forked” means to take some or all of an Open Source Project and re-swizzle it so that it performs a task for you the way you want it performed regardless of how it works/might have worked in its “pre-forked” state. We have changed a significant amount of the original, added a significant amount of our own intellectual property, and hosted it on our ultra-secure, global infrastructure. So, if/when you see that name, “Nextcloud”, popup there is no need to be alarmed.
- 5) Every time we start using a new piece of software, the first and biggest question we have is, “How do I navigate this new environment?” In BitNext, the three areas of the screen you will want to know about are bottom left, top left, and top right:
 - a. **Top right** is where your personal details and settings are as well as the search function so “magnifying glass” (search), “bell” (click to enable notifications), “people” (contacts) and a “user” button that on your first login will display the first letters of your first and last name. Once you’ve uploaded your contacts, the “people” button will be a shortcut to that data. Clicking on your “user” button will take you through the settings you can change to personalize your account.
 - b. **Top left** is the “tic-tac-toe” block which, outside of the tiles that you choose to display in the user interface, is the main navigational button for BitNext. Clicking on it will offer you a dropdown menu that will take you to each of the modules that are available to you.
 - c. **Bottom left** only displays something when you’re in one of the modules; nothing is displayed there when you are at the top, or “Dashboard”, level, however, when in any of the modules there will be a “Settings” section in the bottom left that governs what you can do in that module. For instance, when uploading your contacts to the “Contacts” module, you will click “Settings” in the bottom left of the “Contacts” module screen to get to the “Import” function.
- 6) BitNext, at the present time (Q1 2022), does not offer a hosted email service. We’re... deliberating on that internally at this time. Supporting a hosted email infrastructure is not for the faint at heart; we’ve done it before and hosted many tens of thousands of email accounts and those memories are why we’re not offering that service at this time. So, “Mail” in BitNext is a connector to your existing email service provider so as to offer tighter workflow integration when you’re working within our system. Initially, when you click on the “Mail”

selection in the dropdown menu, you are taken to a screen that defaults to an “Auto” tab which asks for your name, email address, and your password (this is the password you use with your email provider). For many email providers, providing the requested information in the “Auto” tab will make the requisite connections and you’ll then have email integrated into BitNext after which clicking on the “Mail” module will simply take you to your email. For some, it will be necessary to use the “Manual” tab. If you need help with integrating email, please email us at support@bitnext.app.

- a. Note: Some of the free, privacy-focused email systems like Protonmail will NOT work with BitNext until after you pay for an account with them. *****Regarding Tutanota**, we will be launching our email platform through our partnership with Tutanota very soon. They are the most privacy- and security-focused email service provider available today. Given their posture on privacy and security as it relates to email, we have to build an entire module just to integrate their encryption methodologies. They’re German so in their world there are only two ways to do things: The German way, and the wrong way. So, we’re writing a massive chunk of code to “do it the German way”. That integration will be available by the end of Q1 2022.
 - b. With respect to Google Gmail, we wish you the best of luck. For those that don’t already know, Google’s Gmail service (personal and for business) gets compromised likely more than any other hosted email service. As a result, we will not officially support it. Given that many do use it, at least for now, for Gmail you will use the “OAuth” tab and you may have to setup an “App Password” and “IMAP access” and those “How To” links are here <https://support.google.com/accounts/answer/185833?hl=en> and here <https://support.google.com/a/answer/105694?hl=en>. It may work, it may not. We’ve tried to work with them to get the connector to work, but they want us to decrease our security level, first, before they’ll allow our APIs access to Gmail. Decrease it. No thanks.
 - c. For Microsoft (Office365, Outlook.com, OnMicrosoft.com, Hotmail.com, etc.) you will use the “OAuth” tab as well and you may need to turn off “Security Defaults”, also known as “SMTP AUTH”, and that “How To” link is here: <https://docs.microsoft.com/en-us/exchange/clients-and-mobile-in-exchange-online/authenticated-client-smtp-submission#use-the-microsoft-365-admin-center-to-enable-or-disable-smtp-auth-on-specific-mailboxes>. A very helpful video is also available here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ydalru8_TmY
 - d. In the event that you do have to use the “Manual” tab, here are a list of some popular email hosts and their IMAP and SMTP information <https://docs.mailshake.com/article/191-common-smtp-settings>. Additional information is coming up in the next section.
 - e. At this time, we cannot integrate live calendars, but we can provide read-only access to many providers’ calendar systems (more in “Using Calendars”). ***Once our partnership with Tutanota is “live”, we will be able to integrate live calendars with that platform.
- 7) For office productivity tasks, we have selected the “Collabora” suite. This provides for the on-line authoring and editing of documents, spreadsheets and presentations all within the secure framework of BitNext. Before you begin to work with Collabora, go to “Files”, click the “ + ” and create the folder structure you want as your defaults; for example a “Templates” folder and a “Documents” folder. While the “ + ” dropdown menu is up, note the three options “New document”, “New spreadsheet” and “New presentation”; clicking one of these options is one of the ways to launch the relevant Collabora application.
- a. For printing from BitNext, to include Collabora, know that print jobs can only go to a printer or printing service (Kinko’s, UPS, etc.) that your computing device knows about. BitNext looks to the device you’re using for directions on how/where to print so if, for instance, you’re using a laptop that defaults to a local, USB-connected HP printer, the print job you issued in BitNext will go to that printer.

8) For the best experience with the BitNext web interface, we recommend that you use the latest and supported version of a browser from this list:

- a. Brave
- b. Mozilla Firefox
- c. Microsoft Edge
- d. Google Chrome/Chromium
- e. Apple Safari

Note: If you want to use BitNext Talk you need to run Mozilla Firefox 52+ or Google Chrome/Chromium 49+ to have the full experience with video calls and screensharing. Google Chrome/Chromium requires an additional plugin for screensharing.

As of Q1 2022, we are seeing these two browsers handle BitNext “Talk” (specifically video calls) most effectively:

- a. Brave (www.brave.com) v1.34.80 or newer
- b. Firefox (www.mozilla.org) v95.0 or newer

Many other browsers will work but our testing to date clearly indicates that these two work the best at the moment.

9) Last, and most important for those that have some understanding of networking and do a “traceroute” on bitnext.app, we’re not actually on Amazon so don’t freak out. We are using them for something very specific and that makes it look like we’re using them for everything; we’re not. We’re not going into detail, here, about how/why we use them, just know that the actual application platform is hosted on our private infrastructure and not on any of the “Big Tech” platforms so we, and you, are in zero danger of being deplatformed.

After all, the best way to hide a needle is not in a haystack... but in a stack of needles.

Mobile app information

BitNext has mobile apps for Android and Apple iOS. There are two applications; one for file syncing, sharing and access for your mobile devices, and one for BitNext “Talk” that will allow you to text/voice/video with other people from your mobile devices using BitNext “Talk”.

There is also a standalone desktop/laptop application for Linux, Apple and Windows that maintains continuous file synchronization between your desktop/laptop and your BitNext instance/file share. This is an excellent way to back up your data, by the way.

These applications are currently available for our paying customers.

Finding your email IMAP and SMTP source servers

Given that email integration is an important piece of collaboration, here are some (hopefully) helpful tips on how to have a successful “deep dive” into your hosted email service should you need to use the “Manual” tab. We do not have purview over your email provider’s service so we are limited in how much help we can give you with them. If all else fails, you can always contact their Customer Service and pray that they have some:

Apple Mail (Mac OS)

- From Mail in your Mac's toolbar > Preferences.
- In the left side-bar, click on the Account for your email.
- Select Account Information towards the top.
- Find the field for Incoming Mail Server. This is your IMAP server name.
- Now, locate the field for Outgoing Mail Server. You may need to use the dropdown menu - Edit SMTP server list to see the SMTP server name. The name of your SMTP port is also here.

Outlook for Mac

- Click Outlook in your Mac's toolbar. Then select Preferences and then Accounts.
- From the left side-bar, click the account that is your old email.
- Find the fields for Incoming server and Outgoing server. The long text box is the server name and the text box on the right is the port. Use this information as your Source Server.

Outlook for PC

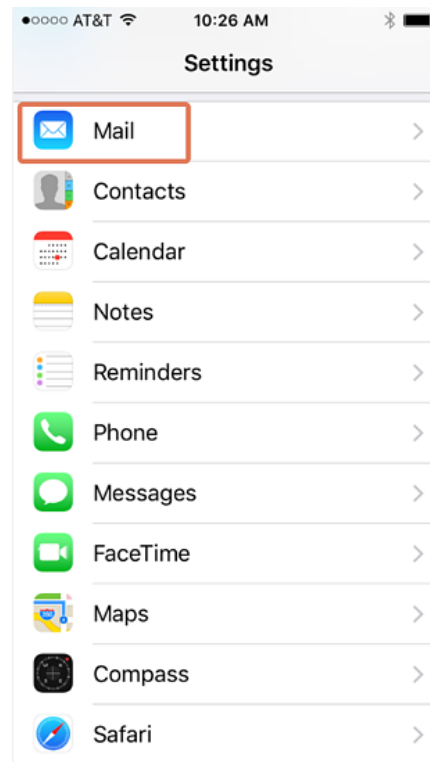
- In Outlook, click File. Then click Account Settings > Account Settings.
- In the Email tab, double-click the account that is the old email.
- Below Server Information, you can find your incoming mail server (IMAP) and outgoing mail server (SMTP) names.
- To find the ports for each server, click More settings... > Advanced.

iPhone (Apple mail)

- Go to your iPhone's Settings.



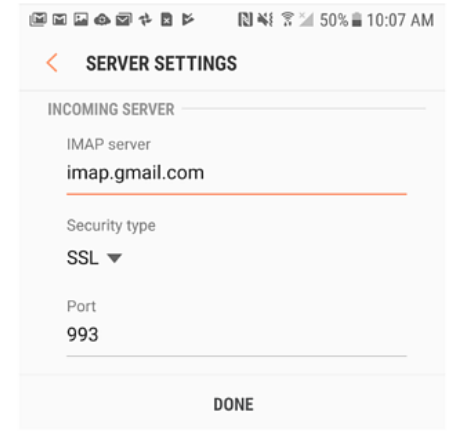
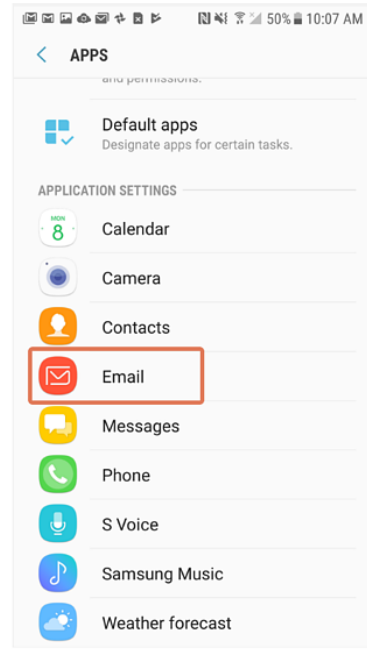
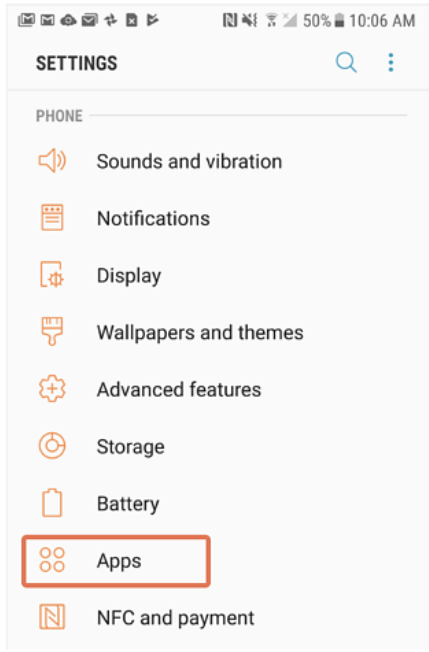
- Next screen, click Mail > Accounts.



- Select the email account that is your old email account.
- Under IMAP, select Account.
- This will display your incoming (IMAP) and outgoing (SMTP) mail server information to use as your Source Server information.

Android (native Android email client)

- Navigate to your Android's Settings, and then click Apps.
- On the next screen, click Email.
- Select your email address, and under Advanced Settings, click Server Settings.
- You'll then be brought to your Android's Server Settings screen, where you can access your server information.



HTML signature editor

Some of us like fancier signature blocks for our emails. Good news! BitNext supports HTML signatures. Our HTML signature editor is a WYSIWYG (What You See Is What You Get) style editor, meaning when you have your signature looking how you want it, you will highlight, copy and then paste into the HTML editor field to “make it so”.

To get there, go into the “Mail” module and click the ellipse (“ ... “) to the right of the mailbox for which you want to have an HTML signature. Then click, “Account settings” and you’ll see a box into which you can paste what you’ve highlighted and copied. You MUST click “Rich Text” first, below the input box, in order to activate the HTML signature option.

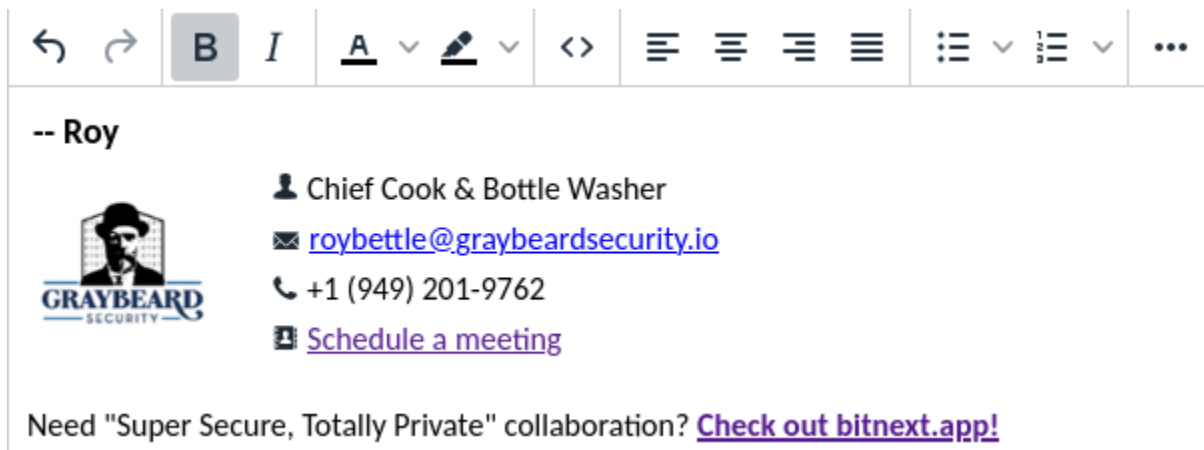
If the WYSIWYG process does not yield the precise results you seek, then you will need to make an HTML file that produces exactly what you want to see. Good news! This isn’t nearly as hard as it sounds. If you’re smart enough to be here, and be this far into the User Manual, it will probably take you less than 30 minutes to make a custom signature.

Start here: “So You Want To Make A Web Page” is the best HTML tutor we’ve ever seen. It’s delivery style is a bit campy, but it is literally the best on-line resource we’ve ever found: http://www.pagetutor.com/html_tutor/index.html

If you want even more control, you can move on to his tutorial on how to use “tables” in HTML and that link can be found here: http://www.pagetutor.com/table_tutor/index.html

Once you have this new signature looking how you want, repeat the highlight/copy/paste steps outlined above.

For reference sake, my signature uses HTML tables:



The image shows a screenshot of an email signature editor. At the top is a toolbar with various icons for undo, redo, bold (B), italic (I), text color (A), background color (brush), source code (<>), bulleted list, numbered list, and a menu icon (three dots). Below the toolbar is a signature block for Roy. The signature includes the name "-- Roy", a profile picture of a man with a beard, and the Graybeard Security logo. To the right of the profile picture, the text reads: "Chief Cook & Bottle Washer", "roybettle@graybeardsecurity.io", "+1 (949) 201-9762", and a link "Schedule a meeting". At the bottom of the signature block, there is a line of text: "Need 'Super Secure, Totally Private' collaboration? [Check out bitnext.app!](#)"

Note: Make sure to save your signature (blue button)...

Files and file-sharing

File-sharing is a core component of collaboration and BitNext comes with a very robust file-sharing capability. To access the mechanics of file-sharing and share a file or directory, go to the “Files” module. To access the history of who’s done what with the files or directories that you’re sharing, go to the “Activities” module.

Accessing your files

You can access your files through the BitNext Web interface and create, preview, edit, delete, share, and re-share files as well as set strict rules for each person you share data with. To view or modify the access rules, from within the “Files” module, note the ellipse (“ ... ”) to the right of the “Shared” note for a given directory or file; click the ellipse, select “Details” and you will note the access options available to you.

Tagging files

You can assign tags to files. To create tags, open a file to the Details view. Then type your tags. To enter more than one tag press the return key after creating each tag. All tags are system tags, and are shared by all users on your BitNext account. You can then use the Tags filter on the left sidebar to filter files by tags. As an example, say that you’re an attorney and you do a lot of privacy work which means a lot of non-disclosure agreements. You could add the tag “NDA” to every agreement and then any time you could search for all files with the tag “NDA” and all such tagged files would be found, system-wide for your account.

Comments

Use the Details in the “Files” module view to add and read comments on any file or folder. Comments are visible to everyone who has access to the file.

Video player

You can play videos in BitNext with the Video Player app by simply clicking on the file. Video streaming by the native BitNext video player depends on your Web browser and the video format. If it doesn’t work in your Web browser, it may be a browser issue. See this link for supported multimedia formats in Web browsers https://developer.mozilla.org/en-US/docs/Web/HTML/Supported_media_formats#Browser_compatibility

File controls

BitNext can display thumbnail previews for image files, MP3 covers, and text files. Hover your cursor over a file or folder to expose the controls for the following operations:

- Favorites Click the star to the left of the file icon to mark it as a favorite and then You can quickly find all of your favorites with the Favorites filter on the left sidebar.
- The Overflow menu (ellipse, “ ... ”) displays file details, and allows you to rename, download, or delete files,
- The Details view shows Activities, Sharing, and Version information.

Previewing files

You can display uncompressed text files, OpenDocument files, videos, and image files in the BitNext embedded viewers by clicking on the file name. If BitNext cannot display a file, it starts a download process and downloads the file to your computer.

Navigating

Navigating through folders is as simple as clicking on a folder to open it and using the back button on your browser to move to a previous level. BitNext also provides a navigation bar at the top of the Files field for quick navigation.

Sharing status icons

Any folder that has been shared is marked with the Shared overlay icon. Public link shares are marked with a chain link. Unshared folders are not marked.

Creating or uploading files and directories

Upload or create new files or folders directly in a BitNext folder by clicking on the New button (“+”) in the Files module. The New button provides the following options:

- Up arrow uploads files from your computer into BitNext. You can also upload files by dragging and dropping them from your file manager.
- Text file creates a new text file and adds the file to your current folder.
- Folder creates a new folder in the current folder.

Selecting files or folders

You can select one or more files or folders by clicking on their checkboxes. To select all files in the current directory, click on the checkbox located at the top of the files listing. When you select multiple files, you can delete all of them, or download them as a ZIP file by using the Delete or Download buttons that appear at the top.

- Note: If the Download button is not visible, the option is not available for that file or folder.

Filtering the files view

The left sidebar on the Files page contains several filters for quickly sorting and managing your files:

- **All files:** The default view; displays all files that you have access to.
- **Favorites:** Files or folders marked with the yellow star.
- **Shared with you:** Displays all files shared with you by another user or group.
- **Shared with others:** Displays all files that you have shared with other users or groups.
- **Shared by link:** Displays all files that are shared by you via public link.
- **External Storage (if used):** Files that you have access to on external storage devices and services such as Amazon S3, SMB/CIFS, FTP, etc.

Moving files

You can move files and folders by dragging and dropping them into any directory.

Creating or connecting to a Federation Share link

Federated Cloud Sharing allows you to mount file shares from other BitNext users, and manage them just like a local share. “Federated Cloud Sharing” is not available for all account types and is something we have to setup for you. Contact us at support@bitnext.app for more information.

File Sharing

BitNext users can share files and folders. Possible targets are:

- public links
- users
- groups
- circles
- talk conversations
- users or groups on federated BitNext servers

Public link shares

You can share files and folders via public links. A random 15-digit token will be created so as to mask specific file data and the link will look like <https://cloud.example.com/s/yxcFKRWBjQYYzp4>. A number of options are available for public folder shares:

- Read only to allow viewing and downloading
- Allow upload and editing
- With file drop, the sharee can only upload files to a folder without seeing the files that are already in that folder.
- Hide download prevents the sharee from downloading
- Password protect
- Setting an expiration date will automatically disable the share
- Note to recipient
- Unshare to revert the share
- Add another link to create multiple public links with different rights

For public file shares, you may allow editing the file with one of BitNext's collaborative editing solutions from Collabora.

Internal shares with users and groups

When sharing with users, groups, circles or members of a Talk conversation, rights for the files or folder contents are adjustable just like with public link shares.

As a receiver to a share, you can configure if you automatically want to accept all incoming shares and have them added to your root folder, or if you want to be asked each time if you want to accept or decline the share. For adjusting the acceptance setting, go to Settings > Personal > Sharing.

Others with access

In order to find out if a file or folder is accessible to others through sharing of a superior folder hierarchy level, click on Others with access in the sharing tab. The list shows all users, groups, chats, etc., that the current object has been given access to through sharing of a superior folder in the hierarchy.

Click on the ellipse (" ... ") to:

- see who initiated the share
- see where the share was initiated (click to navigate to the folder, as far as you have access there)

Transfer Ownership

Users can transfer the ownership of files and folders to other users. Share ownerships of those transferred files/folders will also be transferred.

- 1) Navigate to Settings > Personal > Sharing > Files.
- 2) Click on Choose file or folder to transfer >> A file picker opens, showing all files and folders in the user's account.
- 3) Pick a file or folder and click on Choose >> The chosen file or folder name gets displayed.
- 4) Click on Change to change the choice if necessary.
- 5) Pick a new owner by typing their name into the search field next to New owner.
- 6) Click on Transfer.
- 7) The target user receives a notification where they are being asked whether to accept or reject the incoming transfer.
- 8) If accepted, the target user finds the transferred files and folders in their root under a folder Transferred from [user] on [timestamp].
- 9) The source user gets informed about the acceptance or rejection by a notification.

Making anonymous uploads

You may create your own special upload directories so that other people can upload files to you without having to log in to the server, and without being a BitNext user. They will not be allowed to see the contents of this directory, or to make any changes. This is an excellent alternative to sending large attachments via email, using an FTP server, or using commercial file-sharing services.

Setting up your own anonymous file drop

Go to Files and create or choose the folder, the anonymous upload should be made to. Check Share Link, allow editing, hide file listing. Now you can send the link to the upload folder manually to people using email, text, etc., or by using the BitNext send function.

Uploading files to an anonymous file drop

Using the anonymous upload function is simple. You receive a link to the upload folder, click the link, and then you'll see a BitNext page with a "Click to upload" button. This opens a file picker, and you select the file or directory you want to upload. You're also able to just drop files into the window. When your upload is completed, the file you uploaded are now listed.

Data management

Managing deleted files

When you delete a file in BitNext, it is not immediately deleted permanently, only moved into the trash bin. It is not permanently deleted until you manually delete it, or when the Deleted Files app deletes it to make room for new files. Find your deleted files by clicking on the Deleted files button on the Files page of the BitNext Web interface. You'll have options to either restore or permanently delete files.

Quotas

Deleted files are not counted against your storage quota. Only your active, personal files count against your quota, not files which were shared with you.

What happens when shared files are deleted

Deleting files gets a little complicated when they are shared files, as this scenario illustrates:

- 1) User1 shares a folder "test" with User2 and User3
- 2) User2 (the recipient) deletes a file/folder "sub" inside of "test"
- 3) The folder "sub" will be moved to the trash bin of both User1 (owner) and User2 (recipient)
- 4) But User3 will not have a copy of "sub" in their trash bin

When User1 deletes "sub" then it is moved to User1's trash bin. It is deleted from User2 and User3, but not placed in their trash bins.

When you share files, other users may copy, rename, move, and share them with other people, just as they can for any computer files.

BitNext does not have magic powers to prevent this so "go with your gut" as mentioned previously.

How the deleted files app manages storage space

To ensure that users do not run over their storage quotas, the Deleted Files app allocates a maximum of 50% of their currently available free space to deleted files. If your deleted files exceed this limit, BitNext deletes the oldest files – files with the oldest timestamps from when they were deleted- until it meets the usage limit again.

BitNext checks the age of deleted files every time new files are added to the deleted files. By default, deleted files stay in the trash bin for 30 days. Files older than the trash bin retention obligation value will be deleted permanently. Additionally, BitNext calculates the maximum available space every time a new file is added. If the deleted files exceed the new maximum allowed space BitNext will permanently delete those trashed files with the soonest expiration until the space limit is met again.

Version control and backing up your data

BitNext supports a simple version control system for files as part of both enhancing your experience and as part of our backup and protection of your data. Versioning creates backups of files which are accessible via the Versions tab on the Details sidebar. This tab contains the history of the file where you can roll back a file to any previous version. A new “version” of a file, for example “Version2”, is only created if “Version1” is modified.

To restore a specific version of a file, click the circular arrow to the left. Click on the timestamp to download it. The versioning app expires old versions automatically to make sure that you don’t run out of space. This pattern is used to delete old versions:

- For the first second we keep one version
- For the first 10 seconds BitNext keeps one version every 2 seconds
- For the first minute BitNext keeps one version every 10 seconds
- For the first hour BitNext keeps one version every minute
- For the first 24 hours BitNext keeps one version every hour
- For the first 30 days BitNext keeps one version every day
- After the first 30 days BitNext keeps one version every week

The versions are adjusted along this pattern every time a new version gets created via modification as explained above. The version app never uses more than 50% of the user’s currently available free space. If the stored versions exceed this limit, BitNext deletes the oldest versions until it meets the disk space limit again.

This system of versioning informs and controls how we backup your data as well, as we backup all of your data once every 24 hours to another system. So, you will have this “version control” system available to you within your BitNext experience, and a second, full backup of your data on another system.

Project creation and management

Projects

You can associate files, chats and other items with each other in projects. The various apps will present these items in a list, allowing users to immediately jump to them. Projects can be shared with anyone who is a BitNext user. When a user shares a file that is part of a project, the share recipient can see that project, too. A click on any of the items in a project leads right to it, be it a chat, a file or a task.

Creating a project

A new project can be created by linking two items together. Start off by opening a file or folders sharing sidebar. Click Add to a project and select the type of item you want to link with the current file/folder. A selector will open that allows for selecting a Talk conversation for example. Once the item has been selected a new project is created and listed in the sharing tab of the sidebar. The same project will also appear in the sharing sidebar of the linked items. The list entry shows quick links to a limited number of items. By opening the context menu, the project can be renamed and the full list of items can be expanded.

Adding more entries to a project

If another item should be added to an already existing project this can be done by searching for the project name in the Add to a project picker.

Visibility of projects

Projects do not influence the access and visibility of the different items. Users will only see projects of other users if they have been given access to all contained items.

Using the Contacts app

The BitNext Contacts app is similar to other mobile contact applications, but with more functionality. Let's run through basic features that will help you maintain your address book in the application. Here we will discuss how to add, edit or remove contacts, upload a contact picture and manage your Contact app address books.

Adding Contacts

When you first access the Contacts app, an empty default address book becomes available. To add contacts into your address book, you can use one of the following methods:

- Import contacts using a Virtual Contact File (VCF/Vcard) file
- Add contacts manually

The fastest way to add a contact is to use a Virtual Contact File (VCF/Vcard) file.

Importing Virtual Contacts

To Import Contacts Using a VCF/Vcard File:

- 1) Find "Settings" at the bottom of the left sidebar in the Contacts module, next to the gear button:
- 2) Click the gear button and the Contacts app "Import" button will appear. Please note that the Contacts app only supports import of vCards version 3.0 and 4.0.
- 3) Click the "Import" button and upload your VCF/Vcard file.

After the import is complete, you will see your new contact in your address book.

Adding Contacts Manually

If you can't import virtual contacts, the Contacts app enables you to add contacts manually. To Create a new contact, simply click the " + " (new) contact button. An empty new contact configuration opens in the Application View field. Fill in the fields as appropriate to create the new contact. The changes that you made are implemented immediately.

Edit or Remove Contact Information

To edit or remove contact information:

- 1) Navigate to the specific contact that you want to modify.
- 2) Select the information in the field that you want to edit or remove.
- 3) Make your modifications or click on the trash bin.

Changes or removals that you made to any contact information are implemented immediately.

Contact Picture

To add a picture for your new contacts, click on the upload button and select a contact picture. If you want to upload a new one, remove it, view it in full size or download it, click on the contacts picture.

Adding and Managing Address Books

Clicking on the “Settings” (gear) button at the bottom left of the Contacts module. This field shows all available address books, certain options for each address book, and enables you to create new address books, simply by specifying an address book’s name. This is also where you can share, export and delete address books.

Using the Calendar module

The BitNext Calendar app works much like other calendar applications you can sync your BitNext calendars and events with. When you first access the Calendar app, a default first calendar will be pre-generated for you.

Import a Calendar

If you want to sync your calendars and their respective events to your BitNext instance, importing is the best way to do so. Please bear in mind that this offers your BitNext instance **READ-ONLY** access to the imported calendar. Before you can import it to BitNext, you'll need to export it to an iCAL-formatted (.ics) file.

- 1) Click on the settings-icon labeled with Settings & Import at the left-bottom.
- 2) After clicking on + Import Calendar you can select one or more calendar files from wherever you saved them on your local device to upload.
- 3) The upload can take some time and depends on how big the calendar you import is.

Note: The BitNext Calendar application only supports iCalendar-compatible .ics-files, defined in RFC 5545.

Create a new Calendar

If you plan to setup a new calendar without importing any data from your previous calendar(s), creating a new calendar is the way you should go.

- 1) From the Calendar module, click on + New Calendar in the left sidebar.
- 2) Type in a name for your new calendar, e.g. "Work", "Home" or "Studies".
- 3) After clicking on the checkmark, your new calendar is created and can be synced across your devices, filled with new events and shared with your friends and colleagues.

Edit, Download or Delete a Calendar

Sometimes you may want to change the color or the entire name of a previously imported or created calendar. You may also want to export it to your local hard drive or delete it forever. Please keep in mind that deleting a calendar is an irreversible action. After deletion, there is no way of restoring the calendar unless you have a local backup.

- 1) Click on the three-dot-menu (ellipse, " ... ") of the respective calendar.
- 2) Click on Edit, Download or Delete.

Sharing calendars

You may share your calendar with other users or groups. Calendars may be shared with write access or read-only. When sharing a calendar with write access, users with whom the calendar is shared will be able to create new events into the calendar as well as edit and delete existing ones. Please note that Calendar shares can't be accepted or rejected; once you share them, they are shared whether the recipient wants them or not. However, if you, as the recipient, want to stop having a calendar that someone shared with you, you can click on the 3-dot (ellipse, " ... ") menu next to the calendar in the calendar list and click on "Unshare from me".

Note: The easiest way we've found to accomplish finding the iCAL URL for a shared calendar is to, from the email system whose calendar you want integrated into BitNext, share the calendar to your personal (or any other) email system. Once the email reaches you on this other system, locate the iCAL URL that is contained in that email and copy it into the new subscription described above.

Publishing a calendar

Calendars can be published through a public link (as in “to someone not on BitNext”) to make them viewable (read-only) to external users. You may create a public link by opening the share menu for a calendar and clicking on “ + ” next to “Share link”. Once created, you can copy the public link to your clipboard or send it through email. There’s also an “embedding code” that provides an HTML iframe to embed your calendar into public pages.

Multiple calendars can be shared together by adding their unique tokens to the end of an embed link. Individual tokens can be found at the end of each calendar’s public link. The full address will look like <https://cloud.example.com/index.php/apps/calendar/embed/<token1>-<token2>-<token3>>

To change the default view or date of an embedded calendar, you need to provide a URL that looks like <https://cloud.example.com/index.php/apps/calendar/embed/<token>/<view>/<date>>. In this URL you need to replace the following variables:

- <token> with the calendar’s token.
- <view> with one of month, week, day, listMonth, listWeek, listDay. The default view is month and the normally used list is listMonth.
- <date> with now or any date with the following format <year>-<month>-<day> (e.g. 2019-12-28).

On the public page, users are able to get the subscription link for the calendar and download the whole calendar directly.

Subscribe to a Calendar

You can subscribe to iCal calendars directly inside of your BitNext. By supporting this interoperable standard (RFC 5545) we made BitNext calendar compatible to Google Calendar, Apple iCloud and many other calendar-servers you can exchange your calendars with, including subscription links from calendars published on other BitNext instances, as described above.

This will be read-only access for the calendar from your hosted email provider, as described earlier, but will sync up your email provider’s calendar with your BitNext instance and any calendaring you do with it.

- 1) Click on + New Subscription in the left sidebar.
- 2) Type in or paste the link of the shared calendar you want to subscribe to. Finished. Your calendar subscriptions will be updated regularly.

Note: Subscriptions are refreshed by BitNext every fifteen minutes.

Managing Events

Given the current (Q4 2021) state of global affairs, we as a society are finding ourselves doing more and more remotely. It is in support of this need that BitNext offers a technology to manage events with the Calendar module.

Create a new event

Events can be created by clicking in the area when the event is scheduled. In the day- and week-view of the calendar you just clicked, pull and release your cursor over the area when the event is taking place. The month-view only requires a single click into the area of the specific day. After that, you can type in the event's name (e.g. "Quarterly Review"), choose the calendar in which you want to place the event (e.g. Personal, Work), check and finalize the time span or set the event as all-day event. If you want to edit advanced details such as the Location, a Description, Attendees, Reminders or to set the event as a repeating-event click on the "More" button to open the advanced sidebar-editor.

Note: If you always want to open the advanced sidebar-editor instead of the simple event editor popup, you can set a simple event editor-checkmark in the Settings & Import-section of the app.

Clicking on the blue Create-button will now create the event.

Edit or Delete an event

If you want to edit or delete a specific event, you just need to click on it. After that you will be able to re-set all event details and open the advanced sidebar-editor by clicking on "More". Clicking on the Update-button will update the event. To cancel your changes, click on the close icon on top right of the popup or sidebar editor. If you open the sidebar view and click the three dot menu (ellipse, "...") next to the event name, you have an option to export the event as an .ics file, which you can then email as needed, or remove the event from your calendar.

Invite attendees to an event

You may add attendees to an event to let them know they're invited. They will receive an email confirmation and will be able to confirm or cancel their participation to the event. Attendees may be other users on your BitNext instances, contacts in your address books and direct email addresses. You also may change the level of participation per-attendees, or disable email confirmation for a specific attendee.

Tip: When adding other BitNext users as attendees to an event, you may access their Free/Busy information if it's available, helping you to determine when is the best time slot for your event. This is an excellent reason to make sure and set your working hours to let others know when you are available.

Assign rooms and resources to an event

Similar to attendees you can add rooms and resources to your events, if this capability has been preconfigured in your BitNext instance. The system will make sure that each room and resource is booked without conflict. The first time a user adds the room or resource to an event, it will show as accepted. Any further events at overlapping times will show the room or resource as rejected.

Note: Rooms and resources are not managed by BitNext itself and the Calendar app will not allow you to add or change a resource. Your Administrator has to install and possibly configure resource back ends before you can use them as a user.

Setup Reminders

You can set up reminders to be notified before an event occurs. Currently supported notification methods are:

- Email notifications
- BitNext platform notifications

You may set reminders at a time relative to the event or at a specific date.

Note: Only the calendar owner and people or groups with whom the calendar is shared with write access will get notifications. If you don't get any notifications, but believe you should, contact us at support@bitnext.app.

Note: If you synchronize your calendar with mobile devices or other 3rd-party clients, notifications may also show up there.

Add recurring options

An event may be set as "recurring", so that it can happen every day, week, month or year. Specific rules can be added to set which day of the week the event happens or more complex rules, such as every fourth Wednesday of each month. You can also set when the recurrence ends.

Availability (Working Hours)

The general availability independent of scheduled events can be set in the groupware settings of BitNext. These settings will be reflected in the free-busy view when you schedule a meeting with other people in Calendar. Some connected clients like Thunderbird will show this data as well.

Birthday calendar

The birthday calendar is an auto-generated calendar which will automatically fetch the birthdays from your contacts, if this data is in their contact record. The only way to edit this calendar is by filing your contacts with birthday dates if you didn't have them already. You cannot directly edit this calendar from within the Calendar module.

Appointment setting

There are many applications and platforms, such as “Calendly”, which offer people the ability to book themselves into your schedule without your direct involvement. The Appointments module can generate appointments which other BitNext users, and people without a BitNext, can book. This creates granular control over when you are free to meet up and that streamlines dialogue.

In this section we’ll use the term organizer for the person who owns the calendar and creates appointment slots. The attendee is the person who books one of the slots.

Quick Start Guide

- 1) First create the calendar in the “Calendar” module that you’ll be making available to the “Appointments” module.
- 2) Go to the “Appointments” module and under “Manage Appointment Slots”, select the calendar you just created.
- 3) Then click the down arrow next to “Check for conflicts in...” and select the other calendars you want it to take into consideration when allowing someone to book an appointment with you.
- 4) Then click “Advanced Settings” and make the changes you want (lead time, what to do when someone cancels, etc.).
- 5) Before the next section, make sure to click “Edit Template” to set the days, hours, time increments (30 minutes, 1 hour, etc.) for your available slots and click “Save”.
- 6) Fill out “User/Organization Info” to your tastes.
- 7) Now go into “Settings”... in here you will set a variety of variables ranging from what the public page, what a prospective attendee sees when they click your appointments link, looks like to how you’re both notified of the appointment to how reminders will work, etc.

Note: There is a “Help/Tutorial” button on the bottom which may also be helpful.

Creating an appointment configuration

As an organizer of appointments, you open the main Appointments module web UI. In the left sidebar you’ll find a section for appointments, where you can open the dialogue to create a new one.

One of the basic attributes of every appointment is a title describing what the appointment is about, e.g. “One-on-one call” when the organizer wants to offer attendees a personal call. The duration of the appointment can be picked from a predefined list (15 minutes, 30 minutes, 1 hour, etc.). Next, you can set the desired increment. The increment is the rate at which possible slots are made available within your predefined availability.

For example, you could have 1-hour long slots, but you give them away in 30-minute increments so an attendee can book at 9:00AM but also at 9:30AM. Optional information about location and a description give the attendees some more context such as “BitNext Video Talk session, [organizer] will initiate”.

Every booked appointment will be written into one of your calendars, so you will need to decide which one that should be. Only slots that do not conflict with existing events in your calendar(s) will be shown to attendees.

Appointments can be public or private

Public appointments can be discovered through the profile page of a BitNext user, when that profile page is shared publicly. Private appointments are only accessible to the people who receive the secret URL. The organizer of an

appointment can specify at which times of the week it's generally possible to book a slot. This could be the working hours but also any other customized schedule.

Some appointments require time to prepare, e.g. when you meet at a venue and you have to drive there. The organizer can choose to select a time duration that must be free to accommodate travel and/or related preparations required for the appointment. Only slots that do not conflict with other events during the preparation time will be available. Moreover, there is the option to specify a time after each appointment that has to be free.

To prevent an attendee from booking too short notice it's possible to configure how soon the next possible appointment might take place.

Setting a maximum number of slots per day can limit how many appointments are possibly booked by attendees.

The configured appointment will then be listed in the left sidebar. You can copy its link and share it with the target attendees, or let them discover your public appointment via the profile page.

Booking an appointment

The booking page shows an attendee the title, location, description and length of an appointment. For a selected day there will be a list with all the possible time slots. On days with no available slots, too many conflicts or a reached daily maximum limit of already booked appointments, the list might be empty.

To book an appointment, attendees have to enter their name and a valid email address. Optionally they can also add a comment. To verify that the email is valid, a confirmation email will be sent. Only after clicking the confirmation link from the email will the appointment booking will be finished. Until then the time slot might also be booked by another user who confirms their booking earlier. The system will detect the conflict and offer to pick a new time slot.

Working with the booked appointment

Once the booking is done, the organizer will find an event in their calendar with the appointment and attendee details. As with any other event that has attendees, changes and cancellations will trigger a notification to the attendee's email. If attendees wish to cancel the appointment they have to get in contact with the organizer, so that the organizer can cancel or delete the appointment.

Using Talk

BitNext Talk provides integrated audio, video and text chat. It offers a web interface and is integrated into our mobile apps.

The basics

BitNext Talk lets you chat and have audio/video calls in your own, private space. Chats and calls take place in conversations. You can create any number of conversations. There are two kinds of conversations:

- 1) **One-on-one conversations.** This is where you have a private chat or call with another Talk user. You can't add other people to this conversation or share it with a link. You start a direct one-on-one chat by looking for another user in the search bar and then clicking their name.
- 2) **Group conversations.** Besides the person who created the conversation, a group conversation can have any number of people in it. A group conversation can be shared publicly with a link, so external guest users can join a call. It can also be listed, so other people on your BitNext server can join the conversation.

Creating a chat

You can create a direct, one-on-one chat by searching for the name of a user, a group or a circle and clicking it. For a single user, a conversation is immediately created and you can start your chat. For a group or circle you get to pick a name and settings before you create the conversation and add the participants.

If you want to create a custom group conversation, click the plus button next to the search field. You can then pick a name for the conversation and select if the conversation should be open to external users and if other users on the server can see and join the conversation.

In the second step, you get to add participants and finalize the creation of the conversation.

You can cancel the creation of a conversation by clicking outside the white menu area at any time.

Sharing files in a chat

You can share files in a chat in 3 ways:

- 1) You can simply drag'n'drop them on the chat.
- 2) You can select a file from your BitNext Files or a file manager by choosing the little paperclip and selecting where you'd like to pick the file from.
- 3) You can add more files until you are done and decide to share the files.

All participants in the chat will be able to click the files to view, edit or download them, irrespective of them having a user account. Users with a BitNext account will have the file automatically shared with them while external guest users will get them shared as a public link.

Inserting emoji

Emojis. You can't live with them, you can't live without them. So, you can add emoji using the picker on the left of the text input field.

Replying to messages and more

You can reply to a message using the arrow that appears when you hover over a message. In the ellipse (“ ... “) menu you can also choose to reply privately. This will open a one-on-one chat.

Here you can also create a direct link to the message or mark it unread so you can scroll back there the next time you enter the chat. When it is a file, you can view the file in Files.

Managing a conversation

You are always the moderator in a conversation you created. In the participant list on the right you can elevate other participants to moderators using the ellipse (“ ... “) menu to the right of their user name, or remove them from the conversation.

Moderators can configure the conversation. Select Configuration settings from the ellipse (“ ... “) menu of the conversation on the top to access the settings.

Here you can configure the name, guest access privileges, if the conversation is visible to others on the server and more.

Starting a call (audio or video)

When you’re in a conversation, you can start a call any time with the Start call button. Other participants will get notified and can join the call. If somebody else has started a call already, the button will change in a green Join call button.

During a call, you can mute your microphone and disable your video with the buttons on your video on the bottom-right, or using the shortcuts M to mute audio and V to disable video. You can also use the space bar to toggle mute. When you are muted, pressing space will unmute you so you can speak until you let go of the space bar. If you are unmuted, pressing space will mute you until you let go.

You can hide your video (useful during a screen share) with the little arrow just above the video stream. Bring it back with the little arrow again.

You can access your settings and choose a different webcam, microphone and other settings in the ellipse (“ ... “) menu on your video.

Starting a screen share

You can click the monitor icon on your video stream to share your screen. Depending on your browser, you will get the option to share a monitor, an application window or a single browser tab.

Changing view in a call

You can switch the view in a call with the little four-block icon in the top-right between promoted-view and grid view. The grid view will show everyone equally big and if the people do not fit on the screen, buttons will appear on the left and right that let you navigate.

The promoted view shows the speaker large and others in a row below. If the people do not fit on the screen, buttons will appear on the left and right that let you navigate.

Advanced Talk features

Lobby

The lobby feature allows you to show guests a waiting screen until the call starts. This is ideal for webinars with external participants, for example. You can choose to let the participants join the call at a specific time, or you can do it manually.

Commands

BitNext Talk allows users to execute actions using commands. A command typically looks like:

```
/wiki airplanes
```

Administrators can configure, enable and disable commands. Users can use the help command to find out what commands are available.

```
/help
```

Find more information in the administrative documentation for Talk.

Talk from Files

In the Files app, you can chat about files in the sidebar, and even have a call while editing it. You first have to join the chat. You can then chat or have a call with other participants, even when you start editing the file.

In Talk, a conversation will be created for the file. You can chat from there, or go back to the file using the ellipse ("...") menu in the top-right.

Create tasks from chat or share tasks in chat

If Deck is installed, you can use the ellipse ("...") menu of a chat message and turn the message into a Deck task. From within Deck, you can share tasks into chat conversations.

Join a call or chat as guest

If you received a link to a chat conversation, you can open this in your browser to join the chat. You can change your name by clicking the Edit button, located top-right. Your camera and microphone settings can be found in the Settings menu. There you can also find a list of shortcuts you can use.

Managing connected browsers and devices

The personal settings page (from “Dashboard”, top right, “User” icon) allows you to have an overview on the connected browsers and devices.

Managing connected browsers

In the list of connected browsers you see which browsers connected to your account recently. You can use the trash icon to disconnect any of the browsers in the list.

Managing devices

In the list of connected devices you see all the devices and clients you generated a device password for and their last activity. You can use the trash icon to disconnect any of the devices in the list.

At the bottom of the list you find a button to create a new device-specific password. You can choose a name to identify the token later. The generated password is used for configuring the new client. Ideally, generate individual tokens for every device you connect to your account, so you can disconnect those individually if necessary.

Note: You have only access to the device password when creating it, BitNext will not save the password, hence it's recommended to enter the password on the new client immediately.

Note: If you are Using two-factor authentication for your account, device-specific passwords are the only way to configure clients. The server will deny connections of clients using your login password then.

Device-specific passwords and password changes

For password changes in external user backends the device-specific passwords are marked as invalid and once a login of the user account with the main password happens all device-specific passwords are updated and work again.