ReactOS Attempt

I recently just learned of ReactOS, a Free and Open Source Operating System that has been in the works for over 20 years and aims to be able to natively run Windows programs and drivers. It's still feature-incomplete alpha software, but I thought it could be a good way of running ham radio programs made for Windows so I gave it a try in Virtualbox and tried to install Winlink.

TLDR:

Winlink loads but I can't seem to be able to configure it. Here's what I've done so far and where it fails. If anyone else is interested in tinkering with this, let me know if you manage to get passed any of these issues...

Download ReactOS

• First step: Downloaded the BootCD (not LiveCD) of ReactOS 0.4.13 and save it.

Virtualbox

I used Virtualbox 6.1 under LinuxMint 20 XFCE.

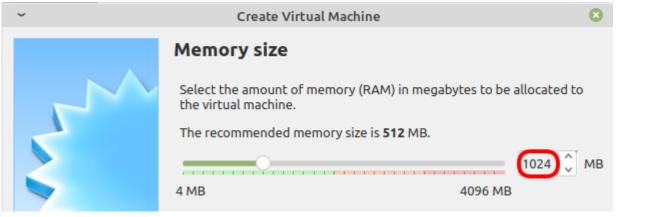
• Create a new machine.



• Name it "ReactOS" and the version will pre-populate to "Windows 2003 (32-bit)" on its own.

| ~ | Create Virtual Machine | 8 |
|---|--|--------|
| | Name and operating system | |
| 5 | Please choose a descriptive name and destination folder for the virtual machine and select the type of operating system you interinstall on it. The name you choose will be used throughout Virtue to identify this machine. | end to |
| | NamerReactOS | |
| | Machine Folder: /media/ptruchon/USB64/VirtualboxVMs | ~ |
| | Type: Microsoft Windows | 2003 |
| | Version: Windows 2003 (32-bit) | |

• I doubled the RAM to 1024MB



• To load the "install CD", click on the word "Storage":

| Storage | |
|-----------------------|--------------------------------|
| Controller: IDE | |
| IDE Primary Master: | ReactOS.vdi (Normal, 20.00 GB) |
| IDE Secondary Master: | |

| ~ | ReactOS - Setti | ngs | | 8 |
|------------------------------|--|------------------------|----------------------|------------------------|
| General | Storage | | | |
| System | Storage Devices | Attributes | | |
| Display | Controller: IDE | Optical <u>D</u> rive: | IDE Secondary Master | ~ _ |
| Storage | ReactOS.vdi | | Live CD/DVD | |
| Audio | Empty | Information | | |
| | ReactOS-0.4.13.iso and you should | see: | - | |
| ~ | ReactOS - Setti | | | 8 |
| | | | | |
| General | Storage | | | |
| General | Storage Storage Devices | Attributes | | |
| | - | | IDE Secondary Master | v • |
| System | Storage Devices | | IDE Secondary Master | × • |
| System | Storage Devices | | | ✓ ⊙ |
| System Display Storage | Storage Devices | Optical <u>D</u> rive: | | < |
| System Display Storage | Storage Devices Controller: IDE ReactOS.vdi ReactOS-0.4.13.iso | Optical <u>D</u> rive: | | ✓ ⊙. |

Install ReactOS

• The install screen will start and you simply press ENTER.

ReactOS 0.4.13 Setup
Language Selection
Please choose the language used for the installation process.
Then press ENTER.
This Language will be the default language for the final system.

(lbanian
Arabia)
Arabia)
Arabia)
Arabia)
Batsque
Belaguasian
Chinese (Latin)
Belaguasian
Chinese (Taiwan)
Chinese (Taiwan)
Chinese (Taiwan)
Chinese (Taiwan)
Chinese (Taiwan)
Chinese (Hong Kong S.A.R.)
Chinese (Hong Kong S.A.R.)
Chinese (Hong Kong S.A.R.)
English (Custralia)
Profish (Bustralia)
Profish (Custralia)
Profish (Gustralia)
English (Gustralia)
English (Gustralia)
English (Gustralia)
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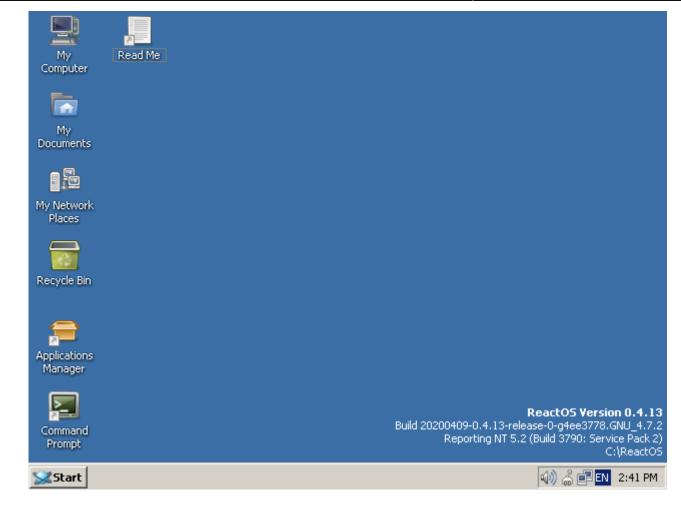
- ENTER = Continue F3 = Quit
- In fact, you'll have to press ENTER a few times until this next screen, where you need to press P first, and then ENTER:

| The spac | list below shows existing partitions and unused disk e for new partitions. |
|-------------|---|
| • | Press UP or DOWN to select a list entry. |
| • | Press ENTER to install ReactOS onto the selected partition. |
| • | Press P to create a primary partition. |
| • | Press E to create an extended partition. |
| • | Press L to create a logical partition. |
| • | Press D to delete an existing partition. |
| 20 | GB Harddisk Ø (Port=Ø, Bus=Ø, Id=Ø) on uniata [RAW] |
| | Unpartitioned space 20479 MB |

• ReactOS will show a bunch more screens, simply follow the prompts. It'll reboot and install more things. Then at some point, it'll ask to remove the CD. This is done using the CD icon at the bottom of the Virtualbox screen:



• That looks promising! ReactOS has a Windows 2000 look, which I personally prefer to all the other versions of Windows.



Install Firefox

Now that ReactOS is installed, we're ready to install some programs.

• Click on the Applications Manager:

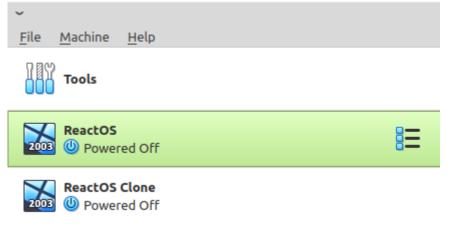


• Search for Firefox and install version 48.

| 🖴 ReactOS Applications Manager | | | |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------------|------------|-------------------------|
| Eile Programs Help | | | |
| 2 2 3 2 9 | × 📲 | firefox | |
| I Available for installation | Name | Version | Description |
| | Adobe Flash Player 29 NPAPI Plugin | 29.0.0.171 | Flash Player plugin for |
| Video | Mozilla Firefox 28 | 28.0 | A popular Web browse |
| Graphics | Mozilla Firefox 3.6 | 3.6.28 | A popular Web browse |
| Games & Fun | Mozilla Firefox 48 | 48.0.2 | A popular Web browse |

• Once Firefox is installed, do **not** let it update; that broke it for me.

• Up to this point, everything works fine, but we're about to break things so before we continue, let's create a clone of the Virtualbox install...



Attempt #1

- The first thing I tried was to install Winlink Express.
- It installed but wouldn't load at all.

Attempt #2

This Winlink with Wine page says to install these in the following sequence:

- 1. .NET 3.5 sp1
- 2. "Microsoft Visual Basic 6 Runtime Service Pack 6"
- 3. "Microsoft HTML Rendering Engine 8"
- 4. "Visual C++ 14.0"

I got stock at step 1...

• At first, it looked like it was gonna work:

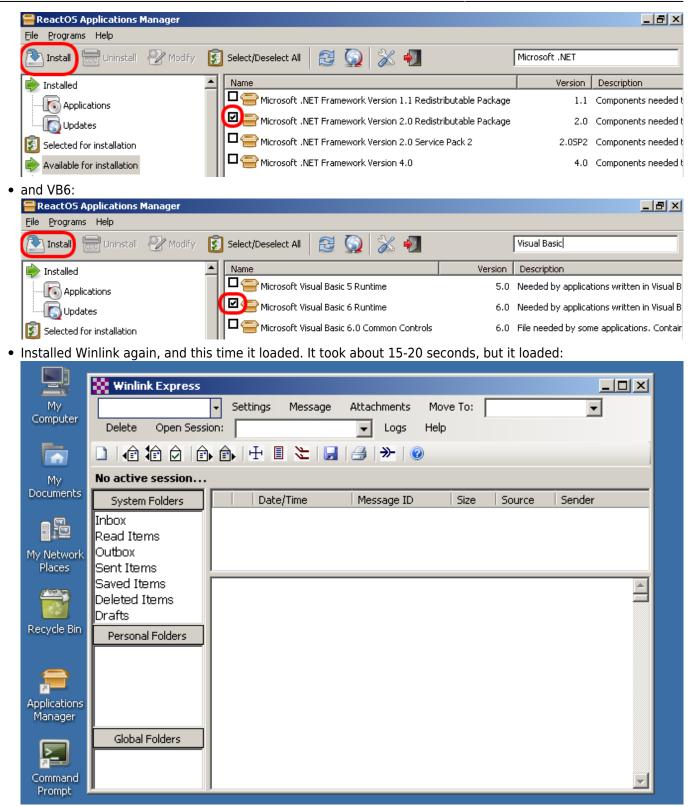
| Kicrosoft .NET Framework 3. | 5 SP1 Setup | | |
|---|----------------------------|-----------------------|--------|
| Welcome to Setup | .n | et Fram | ework |
| Be sure to carefully read and under license terms. You must accept the | license terms before you c | an install the softwa | |
| MICROSOFT SOFT | WARE SUPPLE | MENTAL | - |
| Press the Page Down key to see m | ore text. | | Print |
| • I have read and ACCEPT the te | rms of the License Agreem | ent | |
| C I DO NOT ACCEPT the terms of | | | |
| Send information about my setu Details regarding the <u>data collection</u> Download File Size: Download Time Estimate: | | Corporation. | |
| | | Testall > | Canad |
| | | Install > | Cancel |
| But then it seems it got stock | ~ | omponents and a | |
| Microsoft .NET Framework 3. | 5 SP1 Setup | | |
| Download and Install Progr | ess . | et Fram | lework |
| Downloading: | | | |
| | | | |

Status: Re-establishing connection with the server (attempt 5 of 5). Total Download Progress: 170 MB / 268 MB

Attempt #3

I deleted the machine and re-cloned the clone I made earlier.

• From the Applications Manager, I installed .NET version 2:



• But unfortunately, when I go to Settings → Winlink Express Setup... and fill out the information, it doesn't "Update".

| 👯 Winlink Express Properties | | × |
|--|----------------------------------|---|
| Call Signs My Callsign: VA7FI My Password: ********** | Contact Information (Option | al) |
| Callsign suffix (optional) (Used for country code) Show password | Name: | |
| | Street address 1: | |
| Password recovery e-mail: va7fi@rbox.me | Street address 2: | |
| (Non-Winlink e-mail address where lost password will be sent when requested) | City: | |
| Remove Callsign Request password be sent to recovery e-mail | State/Province: | |
| | Country: | |
| C Auxiliary Callsigns and Tactical Addresses | Postal code: | |
| Add Entry | Web Site URL (optional): | |
| Remove Entry | Phone number: | |
| Edit Entry | Non-Winlink e-mail: | va7fi@rbox.me |
| | Additional information (opti | onal): |
| My Grid Square: CN89EK Lat/Lon to Grid Square | | <u>_</u> |
| Winlink Express registration key: | | <u>×</u> |
| Service Codes | Recalculate HF path quality if S | |
| PUBLIC | Keep logs for 2 🛨 weel | |
| (Use PUBLIC for ham call signs. Separate multiple service codes by spaces.) | | ning messages prior to download |
| If you change service codes, you must update the list of channels. | | stations noiding messages n to be sent to the Winlink Development Team |
| | | st (beta) versions of Winlink Express |
| Update Cancel | | |

Attempt #4

I tried the same thing as the previous attempt but with .NET version 2 SP2. Same result.

Attempt #5

I tried the same thing as the previous attempt but with .NET version 4 and Winlink wouldn't even load.

RMS Express.exe - .NET Framework Initialization Error

Unable to find a version of the runtime to run this application.

OK

To Be Continued...

... maybe. I don't really know what else to try so I'll leave this aside until I think of something else to try. If you have ideas, please let me know! - *Patrick, VA7FI 2020/09/28 10:15*