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.

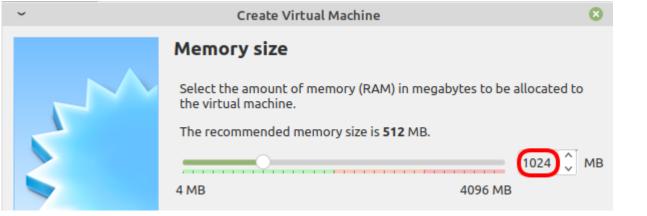
• Create a new machine.



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



• I doubled the RAM to 1024MB



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

Storage		
ontroller: IDE		
IDE Primary Master:	ReactOS.vdi (Normal, 20.00 GB)	
IDE Secondary Master:	[Optical Drive] Empty	

~	ReactOS - Settings			
General	Storage			
System	Storage Devices	Attributes		
Display	合 Controller: IDE	Optical <u>D</u> rive:	IDE Secondary Master	~ <mark>(</mark>)
Storage	ReactOS.vdi		Live CD/DVD	
Audio	CO Empty	Information		
	e ReactOS-0.4.13.iso and you should	see:	-	
~	ReactOS - Setti	ngs		8
General	Storage			
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Display	合 Controller: IDE	Optical <u>D</u> rive:	IDE Secondary Master	× •
Storage	ReactOS.vdi		Live CD/DVD	
	ReactOS-0.4.13.iso	Information		
Back to the first s	creen, you can now start the machine.			
<u> </u>				
The start	· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·			

Install ReactOS

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

• 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:

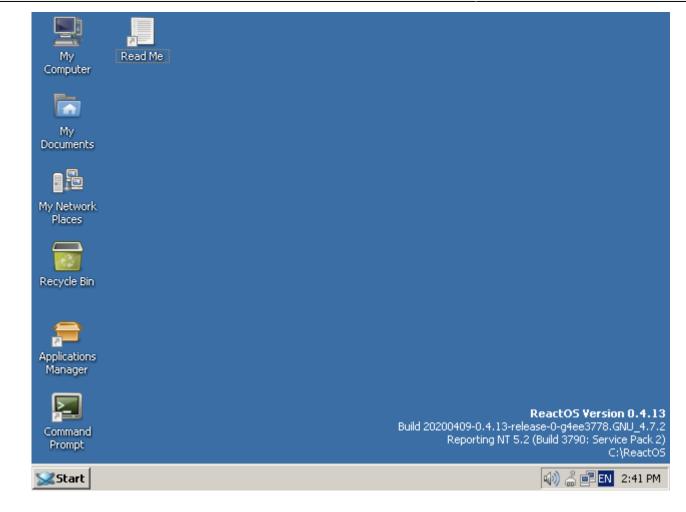
On version 0.4.15, press C instead of P

[he space	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:

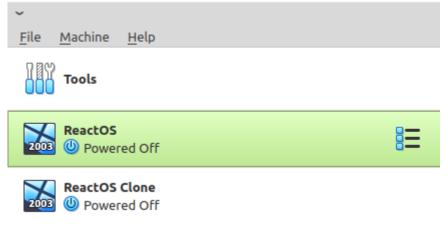


• Search for Firefox and install version 48.

🖴 ReactOS Applications Manager			
<u>Eile</u> Programs Help			
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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:

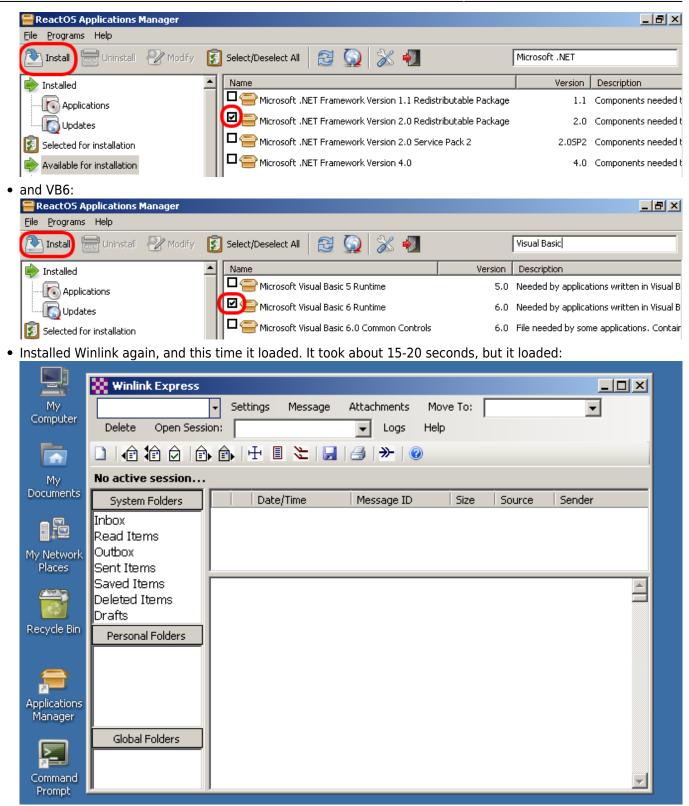
•	.5 SP1 Setup	
Welcome to Setup	. Microsoft Fr	amework
	erstand all the rights and restrictions des e license terms before you can install the	
1		
MICROSOFT SOF	TWARE SUPPLEMENT	AL 🚽
Press the Page Down key to see r	nore text.	Print
I have read and ACCEPT the t	erms of the License Agreement	
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Status: 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:	
(used for country code)	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:	
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 (option	onal):
My Grid Square: CN89EK Lat/Lon to Grid Square		×
Winlink Express registration key:		<u> </u>
- Service Codes	Recalculate HF path quality if 9	5FI changes more than: 30
PUBLIC	Keep logs for 2 🗧 weel	ks. Keep deleted messages for 30 days.
(Use PUBLIC for ham call signs. Separate multiple service codes by spaces.)	Display list of pending incom	ning messages prior to download
If you change service codes, you must update the list of channels.	Warn about connections to	· · ·
		n to be sent to the Winlink Development Team st (beta) versions of Winlink Express
Update Cancel		S (BOCO) YOUSIONS OF YMMINK EAPTOSS

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

Attempt #6

I tried the same thing as all the previous attempts with the daily version of ReactOS without luck. It looks like they did fix a small bug in Firefox though.

🔊 ReactOS	ABOUT	• <u>NEWS</u> •	<u>COMMUNITY</u> -	DEVELOPMENT -	DONATE	DOWNLOAD
Image Types Oot CDs		x86 GCC De 86 GCC Re x86 MSVC I x86 MSVC I	lease Debug			
Q Search	Browse all created Builds	Browse GitHul	Repository			
Found 1 files!						
File name				Size	Date	
reactos-bootcd-0.4.15-dev-1070-ge	a01de-x86-gcc-lin-rel.7z			66.19 MB	2020-09-28 1	8:28

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*