

My Virtual Adventures with eCS on a Mac

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background

- scientist (physics) – to me, computer is a tool
- need to do calculations and simulations
(Basic, Fortran, Octave, CASs)
- ... and text editing, Tex article preparation,
& the usual Internet usage (email, etc.)

history

- used DrDOS to mid 90s – then saw walls closing in
- initially rejected OS/2, because IBM's ads turned me off
- but Windows was such a joke, I went back to get a closer look at OS/2
- started with OS/2 Warp 3 Connect

predilections

- am keyboard-centric – avoid rodents
- find white backgrounds hard on eyes
- want to customize apps to my way of working
- value robustness over 'cutting edge'

the move to Mac – theory

- Unix-based: it's solid & secure
- just acquired Intel-based hardware (2006)
- can run eCS under Parallels virtual machine
- handles latest software and existing s.w.
- ... get best of both worlds !

the move to Mac – reality

- Mac OS X is rock-solid... as long as you don't try to customize it
- the Mac is mouse-centric
- all default backgrounds are bright white
- lots of problems with Parallels for Mac

problems with Parallels, ver 2.5

- – most USB thumb drives didn't work
 - initially no clipboard transfer to Mac
 - VM had memory leak, died after ~1 day
- after initial help to get registered, neither I nor Apple tech could get any Tech Support
- wrote letter to Nova pres., got results...

... personal support

- interacted with Dmitry Romanov – very responsive, promised reg. for fixed prod.
- got clipboard visible from Mac
- discovered mem leak due to interaction with Mac app called 'Zoom' (focus follows mouse)
- but VM still invariably froze after ~1.5 days

... then it was gone

- Par. ver 4 supposed to be complete re-write
- came out early '09 – solved VM freeze prob, but introduced others:
 - frozen clock
 - no clipboard transfers
 - no USB at all
- finally asked for new reg. – learned D.M. was leaving Parallels, go to Tech Supp ...

latest Parallels for Mac

- after various hurdles, got new registration for ver 4
- continuing feedback, told to communicate directly with ver 4 Product Manager
- – no one ever got a response
 - no fixes for OS/2 after initial release
 - no longer any mention of OS/2 in manuals

other virtualization s.w. on Mac

- VMware Fusion: no support, no success
- VirtualBox:
 - no success with eCS 1.2r
 - got thru eCS 2.0 rc6a install, but phase I always aborted with error msg
'Unexpected condition' 0x1604
'SEINST install failed'

using Parallels Desktop for Mac v.4

- latest build is 3844
- regular guest is eCS 1.2r, about 2 yrs old
- + doesn't freeze
 - + networks to Mac, eCS PC, Internet, printer
 - + seamless pointer movement
- – no clipboard sharing
 - no USB
 - no clock

using Parallels – cont'd

- successfully installed from .ISO files
 - new copy of eCS 1.2r
 - eCS 2.0 rc6a
- with no USB, how to enter registration info?
answer: Chuck's 'floppy.img'
- same pluses & minuses as original

creating & running a VM

- will bring up Parallels,
step thru creation of new virtual machine
- ... look over VM configuration pages
- ... but not go thru lengthy eCS custom
installer
- brief look at running eCS VM

summary

- if you like the Mac 'personality' or know how to shape it, it's a good choice
- Parallels works with limitations, support for OS/2 & eCS doubtful
- VirtualBox still evolving, may have a brighter future