KAK - ESXi-Customizer

http://www.v-front.de/p/esxi-customizer.html

ESXi-Customizer is a user-friendly script that automates the process of customizing the ESXi install-ISO with drivers that are not originally included. Unlike other scripts and manuals that are available for this purpose ESXi-Customizer runs entirely on Windows and does not require any knowledge of or access to Linux.

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New in Version 2.7:

- Moved the TGZ2VIB5.cmd tool to the new ESXi5 Community Packaging Tools
- Replaced the *Advanced Edit* feature with more flexible choices for TGZ repacking
- When adding an Offline bundle zip file have addition of each contained VIB file confirmed

New in Version 2.6:

- Added option to create (U)EFI-bootable ISO for ESXi 5.x
- Added developer tool script **TGZ2VIB5.cmd** to convert an OEM.tgz-style ESXi 5.x driver package into VIB format. Read more about the advantages of the VIB format in the "ESXi-Customizer 2.6 and Tgz2Vib5 1.0" blog post.

New in Version 2.5:

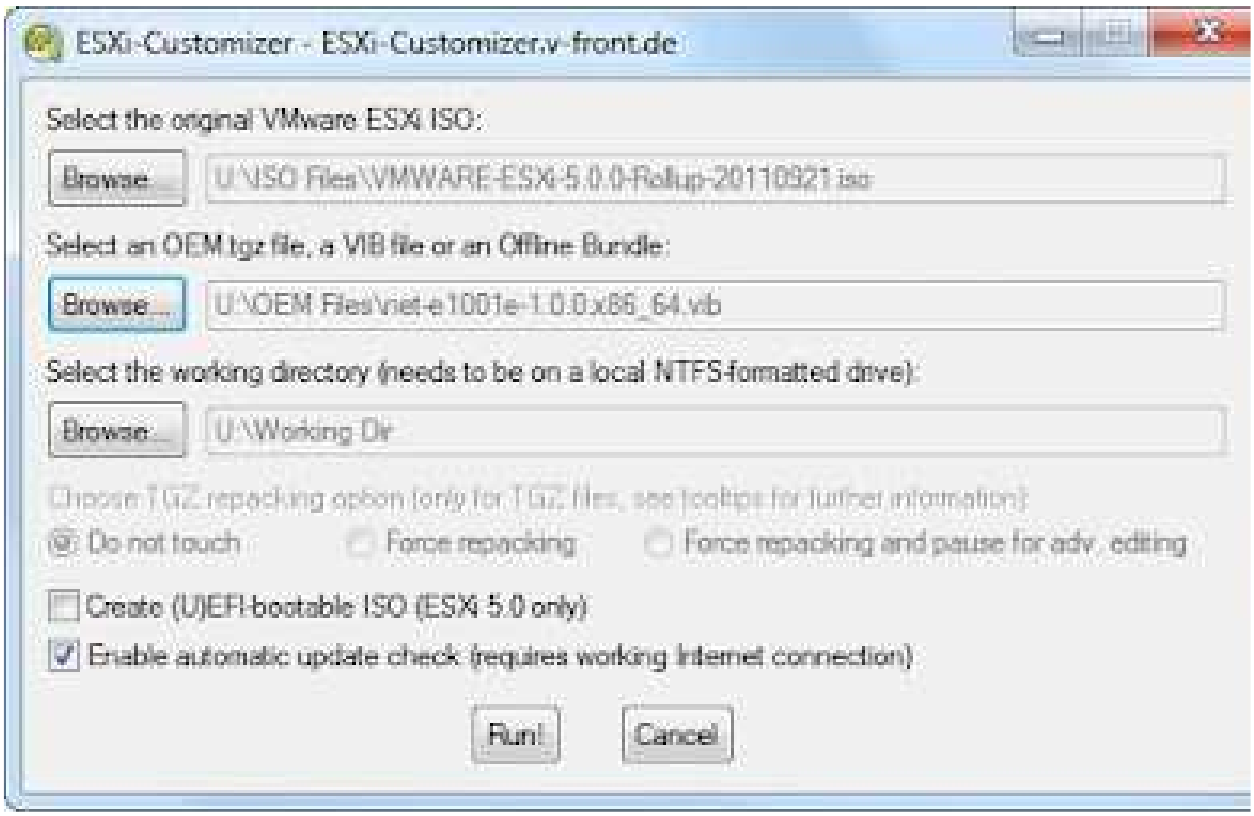
- Support for adding VIB-files and Offline-Bundles to an ESXi 5.x installation media.
- For technical background information read my blog post about "VIB-files, Offline-Bundles and ESXi-Customizer 2.5"
- Please note that you can only add ESXi 5.x compatible driver packages to an ESXi 5.x install media, drivers made for earlier ESXi versions will not work!

Requirements

- The script runs on *Windows XP or newer* (both 32-bit and 64-bit).
- For customizing ESXi 4.1 *Windows 7* (32-bit or 64-bit) or *Windows Server 2008 R2* and *administrative* privileges are required
- *Windows 8* (and *Server 2012*) support: Customizing ESXi 4.1 on Windows 8 does not work, but ESXi 5.x does. Please let me know if and why you have the requirement to still use ESXi 4.1 (I'm curious to know the reasons...)
- You need to have a copy of the original *VMware install-ISO*. It is available at VMware (free registration required to download). The script currently supports *ESXi version 4.1, 5.0 and 5.1.*
- For ESXi 4.1 you need to have a OEM.tgz file with a custom driver
- For ESXi 5.x you need to have a OEM.tgz, a VIB file or an Offline Bundle ZIP file
- A good source for ESXi 4.1 and 5.x community drivers is Dave Mishchenko's vm-help.com site. See the ESXi 4.1 Whitebox HCL and the forums there.

Instructions

- Download the latest version of the ESXi-Customizer script (see *Download* section below). Since version 2.0 it is distributed as a signed self-extracting archive (created with 7-zip). Unpack the archive to a directory of your choice.
- Run ESXi-Customizer.cmd from the installation directory.
- A GUI will show up that lets you select the original VMware install-ISO, the customization file and a working directory for the script.



ESXi-Customizer 2.7 GUI

- For TGZ files you can choose a repacking option: The default is *Force repacking*, because this is how older versions behaved, other choices are *Do not touch* and *Force repacking and pause for advanced editing*. Hover your mouse over these options to get tooltips displayed with information on their purposes.
- If you select the "Create (U)EFI-bootable ISO" option the script will create an ISO file that is also bootable on modern (U)EFI-BIOS boards. Please note: ISO files created with this option cannot be further customized with ESXi-Customizer, because the current version of 7-zip is unable to extract such ISO files again.
- Please use the update check feature if possible to be informed about updates of this script.
- Press the *Run!*-button to start the customization process.
- The script will auto-detect the ESXi version.
- If you try to customize an ESXi 4.1 media and you do not have administrative privileges or have UAC (User account control) enabled in Windows you will be prompted to allow the script to run with administrative access. Enter the credentials of an administrative user if needed and select *Yes* to continue.
- The customized ISO file that is produced by the script will be stored in the working directory, together with a detailed log file (that is necessary for troubleshooting in case something goes wrong).

Licensing

- ESXi-Customizer is licensed under the GNU GPL version 3 (see the included file COPYING.txt).
- It is distributed with and makes use of several tools that are freely available, but are partly under different licenses (see the included file tools\README.txt for details.)

Support

- Please check the "Known Bugs and Issues" section first to see if your issue is covered there.
- If you have trouble using the scripts then please send an email to ESXi-Customizer@v-front.de. Be sure to include the log file(s). Otherwise I might just ignore your message.

Download

- ESXi-Customizer v2.7.1

Donate

- If you find ESXi-Customizer useful consider donating a small amount to motivate the author and support the further development. I recommend 4 EUR (approx. 5 US-$, use an Online Exchange rate calculator), but any lower or higher amount is highly appreciated.

Known Bugs and Issues

- ESXi 5.x install ISOs that were customized with ESXi-Customizer can not be imported into VMware vCenter Update Manager. There is no resolution for this issue.
- With ESXi-Customizer you cannot apply a VMware patch bundle to the ESXi 5.x ISO, because it is much more complex than a driver package (Error message: *Cannot apply VIB esx-base, it contains a wrong number of payloads*). There is no resolution for this issue.
- Special characters in the customization package file name (like parentheses can cause ESXi-Customizer to fail. Workaround: Rename the file to not include special characters.
- When using Windows 8 (or Server 2012) you can customize ESXi 5.x, but not ESXi 4.1 (see *Requirements* above). There is no resolution for this issue.

Changes/History

v2.7.1 (2012-07-15):

- Fixed "Dell" bug (% in host profile xml name, QFE270001)
- Minor code changes to adapt to upcoming minor update releases of ESXi 5 (5.x)

v2.7 (2012-02-21):

- Moved the TGZ2VIB5.cmd tool to the new ESXi5 Community Packaging Tools
- Replaced the *Advanced Edit* feature with more flexible choices for TGZ repacking
- When adding an Offline bundle zip file have addition of each contained VIB file confirmed
- Added *Deprecated* warning when adding TGZ file to ESXi 5.x
- replaced some UnxUtils tools with busybox calls

v2.6.2 (2011-12-13):

- now really fixed the bug with VIB handling resulting in error messages like this one:
  IOError: [Errno 2] No such file or directory: '/tardisks/net-e100.v01'

v2.6.1 (2011-12-04):

- fixed a bug with VIB handling resulting in error messages like this one:
  IOError: [Errno 2] No such file or directory: '/tardisks/net-e100.v01'
- Updated TGZ2VIB5.cmd to version 1.0.1: fixes "Advanced edit mode"

v2.6 (2011-11-17):

- added option to create (U)EFI-bootable ISO for ESXi 5.x
- warn if a ESXi 4.x OEM.tgz file is to be added to an ESXi 5.x ISO (the top support issue ...)
- added developer tool script TGZ2VIB5.cmd to convert an OEM.tgz-style ESXi 5.x driver package into vib-format

v2.5 (2011-09-29):

- added support for adding VIB files and Offline bundles (zip-format) to ESXi 5.x
- Fixed UAC-related issues/bugs when customizing ESXi 4.1
- Fixed bug with unpacking OEM.tgz files
- Force re-packaging of OEM.tgz-files to fix broken files
- Changed logging to be less verbose on console

v2.0 (2011-08-25):

- added support for customizing ESXi 5.x with standard OEM.tgz files. For ESXi 5.x customizations Windows XP is the minimum OS requirement and administrative rights are not needed.
- tools\getparams.exe: Network shares will no longer be accepted for the working dir, because the script only supports local hard drives that are NTFS-formatted.
- Enable more Windows-like script interaction by using message boxes
- tools\mksiofs.exe: reverted back to cdrtools-3.0, because mkisofs-3.01a05 builds ISOs that 7zip cannot extract
- changed distribution format to a signed self-extracting archive created with 7-zip

v1.2 (2011-08-10):

- Finally fixed OEM.tgz re-packaging in advanced edit mode (now using Windows-port of busybox)
- fixed wget timeout settings for update check

v1.1 (2011-07-28):

- Changed OEM.tgz re-packaging in advanced edit mode (using 7zip.exe results in ESXi installation errors)
- added update check feature to inform users about newer versions of the script
- added README.txt to installation directory
- launch explorer.exe in advanced-edit mode
- tools\mksiofs.exe: updated to cdrtools-3.01a05 to enable building ISOs with efi-boot support (needed for ESXi 5.0)
- tools\getparams.exe: fixed URL typo in window title, set default workdir if not defined, get updateCheck flag

v1.0 (2011-07-25):

- first release