

Charon-VAX/XK PLUS, /XL, and /XL PLUS for Linux

Product version 4.11

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DESCRIPTION

Stromasys **Charon-VAX/XK PLUS, Charon-VAX/XL, and Charon-VAX/XL PLUS** are members of the Charon-VAX cross-platform hardware virtualization product family. They are designed to replace **VAXserver, VAXstation, and MicroVAX models 3600 and 3900; VAX 3100-98; VAX 4000-108; VAX 4000-700 and 4000-705; and VAX 6000-310** systems by their virtual equivalents running on an x86-64 compatible standard computer system. Charon-VAX creates a virtual replica of the original DEC VAX hardware, allowing the VAX/VMS operating system and all software running in that environment to continue to work as before in their existing, binary form. No or only minimal configuration changes to the original software (operating system, layered products, and applications), operational procedures, and management are required.

NETWORK

Charon-VAX virtualizes the Ethernet controllers present in the original VAX hardware. Any protocol supported on these controllers (DECnet, TCP/IP, LAT) will work on the virtualized network link.

STORAGE

Charon-VAX/XM (PLUS) provides support for the following VAX storage device types: (T)MSCP, DSSI and SCSI. Charon translates the VAX storage to any modern technology (SCSI, SATA, SAS) by means of virtual disk images on a Linux filesystem or physical LUNs attached locally or remotely by iSCSI, SAN, or NAS.

HOST SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS

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OPERATING SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS

Red Hat Enterprise Linux (RHEL) 6.5 to 6.10, 7.x and 8.x; CentOS 7.x and 8.x; Oracle Linux (Unbreakable Enterprise Kernel (UEK) Release 4; and Red Hat Compatible Kernel) on a physical host, or on a hypervisor: VMware ESXi 5.5 – 6.7; Microsoft Hyper-V on Windows Server 2012 R2, 2016 and 2019; Oracle VM 3.4.5.

PERFORMANCE

Charon-VAX is available in a standard and a PLUS version. The PLUS version includes Advanced CPU Emulation (ACE) providing 4 – 6 times better CPU performance compared to the Standard product. On a system based on Intel Core 7th generation (3.0 GHz) CPUs, the PLUS version virtual CPU delivers approximately 125 VUPS, the standard version provides about a quarter of this number. For reference: the original hardware VAX CPU provided from 1 VUP (MicroVAX II) up to 38 VUPS (VAX3100-96). Therefore the VAX virtualization will deliver a major performance improvement.

SYSTEM MAINTENANCE

Once installed and configured, Charon system behaves like the original VAX system, and can be treated as a VAX. Guest OS and applications operating procedures remain the same. The host operating system does not require a network connection and regular patching after the installation. See user's guide for requirements regarding any updates to the host OS.

LICENSE PROTECTION

A valid license should be permanently available to Charon in the form of a local or network attached USB HASP license dongle, or a Software License. The license contains customer specific parameters and allows remote electronic updates. USB dongles enable a rapid switch-over to another host system as the Charon executable itself can be installed on multiple systems for disaster recovery purposes. Flexible licensing options allow combining multiple instances of different Charon products on a single host system

DISTRIBUTION

Charon Release notes, User manuals and Software Product Descriptions are available for download from the Stromasys Product Documentation and Knowledge Base web pages. Downloading installation kits and patches requires a partner account or credentials provided by Stromasys on an individual basis.

CHARON UTILITIES

Charon-VAX on Linux is delivered with the **Charon Linux Toolkit** which consolidates all Charon management tasks: creating and configuring Charon instances, monitoring and managing Charon licenses and logs, configuring host hardware resources for Charon needs, synchronized host and guest OS shutdown, etc. The following applications are invoked from the Charon Linux Toolkit:

- **menu** is a text based interactive menu system for setting up / configuring / monitoring / managing Charon instances
- **hasp_srm_view** displays the content of Charon-VAX licenses
- **ncu** ("Network Control Utility") is used to dedicate a host network interface to Charon-VAX, to release it back to the host, and to manage Charon virtual interfaces (TAPs)

The following command line utilities are also available:

- **mkdskcmd** is used to create empty disk images and extend existing disk images
- **mtd** for transferring data between physical tapes and Charon tape container files

Stromasys **Charon Guest Utilities for OpenVMS** version 6.1 and above are supplied on a disk image to provide the following functionality:

- **Tape Utilities Package** for manipulating virtual tape images and managing a virtual SCSI tape changer
- **Power consumption optimization (IDLE) VMS utility** for implementing energy saving mode when a virtual VAX CPU is idle
- **Slowdown VMS utility** for slowing down Charon virtual CPU to match hardware VAX performance level

Shutdown VMS utility for an orderly shutdown (Charon after VMS)



VIRTUALIZED HARDWARE

	VAX 4000-108	VAX 3100-98	VAX 3600/3900	VAX 4700/4705	VAX 6310
Virtualized VAX CPU	KA54-A	KA56-A	KA650-A/B / KA655-A/B	KA692-A/KA694-A	KA-62B
Earliest VMS version	5.5-2 (5.5-2H4 if second SCSI adapter is used)		4.5	5.5-2	5.5-2
Max. virtual VAX memory	XK PLUS: 256 MB; XL and XL PLUS: 512 MB				
XMI and BI subsystems	No		No		Yes (KDB50)
QBUS subsystem	Yes ¹⁾	No	Yes ¹⁾	Yes ¹⁾	No
UNIBUS subsystem	No		No		Yes (TUK50)
DSSI subsystem	Yes (HSD50)	No	No	YES (two built-in PAA/PAB and two optional PAC/PAD DSSI adapters, HSD50 storage controller)	No
SCSI subsystem	2 controllers, each supports 7 SCSI IDs. Each SCSI ID could be used with up to 8 LUNs		No	No	No
Emulated VAX disks:	Container files; local, iSCSI and SAN partitions; physical SCSI disks		Container files; local, iSCSI and SAN partitions	Container files; local disk drives, iSCSI and SAN partitions	Container files; local, iSCSI and SAN partitions
Emulated VAX tapes:	Container files, physical SCSI tape drives				
Network	Up to 5 Ethernet controllers in total including a built-in SGEC and QBUS controllers: DEQNA, DELQA, DESQA	1 built-in Ethernet controller SGEC	Up to 4 QBUS Ethernet controllers: DEQNA, DELQA, DESQA	Up to 5 Ethernet controllers in total including a built-in SGEC and QBUS controllers: DEQNA, DELQA, DESQA	Multiple BI DEBNI Ethernet controllers (limited by number of available virtual bus slots)
Network performance	Standard version supports 10 Mbps connections; PLUS version supports 100 Mbps connections. PLUS version could be used with 1 Gbps connections provided it is tested in advance.				
VAX/VMS clustering	NI or Shared Disk Cluster with emulated MSCP or DSSI controllers	NI Cluster	NI cluster or Shared Disk Cluster with emulated MSCP controllers	NI or Shared Disk Cluster with emulated MSCP or DSSI controllers	NI Cluster
Asynchronous serial lines	QUART (4 lines), CXA16, CXB16, CXY08, DHQ11, DHV11, DHW42-AA, -BA, -CA	QUART (4 lines), DHW42-AA, -BA, -CA	UART, CXA16, CXB16, CXY08, DHQ11, DHV11	CXA16, CXB16, CXY08, DHQ11, DHV11	UART
Graphics subsystem	No	No	Dummy VCB_02 can be loaded in order to force VMS to accept D type licenses ²⁾	No	No

¹⁾ Configurable QBUS components are the MSCP disk controller RQDX3, the TMSCP tape controller TQK50, the serial line controllers as above and the Ethernet controllers DEQNA, DELQA and DESQA. MSCP disk emulation is the preferred storage device emulation in case of heavy disk I/O.

²⁾ An X-Windows emulator on an MS Windows or a Linux system can be used to display graphics provided by an X Client running on Charon

Each virtual VAX model follows the characteristics of its VAX hardware equivalent. It requires the corresponding level of license units and supports the peripherals particular to that VAX model. The virtual VAX does not include diagnostic and maintenance modes or delays to simulate mechanical device behavior.

Ordering information	Charon-VAX/XK PLUS	Charon-VAX/XL	Charon-VAX/XL PLUS
Perpetual / Annual license ³⁾	CHVX-221-PE / CHVX-221-YE	CHVX-021-PF / CHVX-021-YF	CHVX-221-PF / CHVX-221-YF
Annual GOLD / PLATINUM support ⁴⁾	CHVX-221-UE / CHVX-221-TE	CHVX-021-UF / CHVX-021-TF	CHVX-221-UF / CHVX-221-TF
Annual GOLD / PLATINUM subscription ³⁾	CHVX-221-PE-CG / CHVX-221-PE-CP	CHVX-021-PF-CG / CHVX-021-PF-CP	CHVX-221-PF-CG / CHVX-221-PF-CP
720-hour backup license ³⁾	CHVX-221-KE	CHVX-021-KF	CHVX-221-KF

³⁾ Please contact Stromasys Sales team for Charon licensing details

⁴⁾ Please refer to Charon Service Descriptions for GOLD and PLATINUM terms, conditions, and SLAs