

# The Virtual Way to Vista

By Frank Dietz



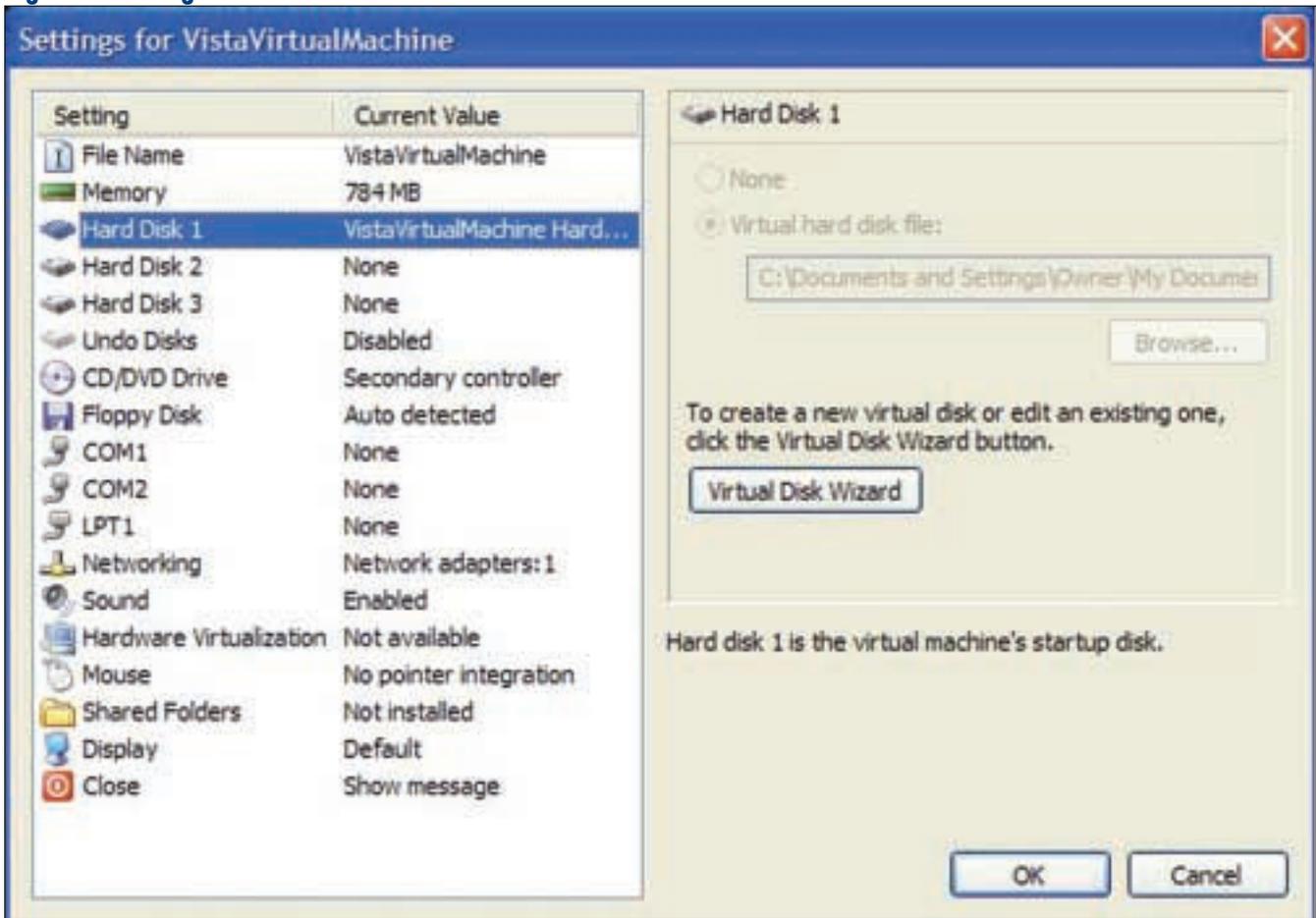
## If you have ever trans-

lated software for a localization project, you most likely have downloaded the Microsoft glossaries at one time or another. These voluminous files contain multi-language translations of software strings used in localized MS products, such as Windows, Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook, etc. These glossaries used to be available at no charge at <ftp://ftp.microsoft.com/developr/msdn/NewUp/Glossary>. I say used to, because if you go to that FTP site now, you will find the following notice:

*To provide users with more up-to-date terminology, Microsoft has replaced the glossary content that was previously posted to this site with a more concise document (CSV formatted) that is easier to use. Microsoft has consolidated and moved the data from the FTP site to the Microsoft download center in an effort to significantly increase reliability and accessibility for users.*

*This new CSV file contains over 14,000 English terms plus the translations of the terms for up to 45 different languages. Microsoft provides the Microsoft terminology data to allow their customers, ISVs, and partners to have a more consistent user experience across the products they are using and developing. To learn more about the terminology translations and download the CSV file, go to [www.microsoft.com/globaldev/tools/MILSGlossary.aspx](http://www.microsoft.com/globaldev/tools/MILSGlossary.aspx).*

Figure 1: Settings for a “virtual machine” under Microsoft Virtual PC 2007



## A virtual solution to running a target-language version of the operating system is cost-effective and avoids unnecessary trouble.

Unfortunately, in this case, “concise” means that the new glossaries are smaller and less comprehensive than the old glossaries, which are now only available to paying subscribers of Microsoft Developer Network (MSDN) for a substantial membership fee.

The loss of this free resource has created a problem, especially since Microsoft introduced its new operating system, Vista, shortly after pulling the old glossaries from the FTP site. Software and

hardware manuals are now being rewritten for Vista, but the latest Microsoft terminology is not readily available to everyone in an open forum like the old FTP site. So, where can translators find the exact phrasing of a specific menu, button, dialog box, or message when translating Vista manuals into their target languages if they do not have access to the latest software glossaries? There are several options available for translators located in the U.S., including:

### Join MSDN

*Pro:* Access to full glossaries, including those for applications.

*Con:* High membership fee (see [msdn.microsoft.com](http://msdn.microsoft.com) for details).

### Buy a computer loaded with a target-language version of Vista

*Pro:* Vista is pre-installed.

*Con:* If you buy the computer abroad, customer support may be an issue.

### Buy a computer loaded with Vista Ultimate

*Pro:* Vista is pre-installed and offers multi-language options for the user interface.

*Con:* As of July 2007, only 16 language packs were available. Also, many manufacturers only offer high-end computers with Vista Ultimate.

**Figure 2: The Virtual PC console, from which you start the virtual operating system**



desktop, each of which virtualizes the hardware of a complete physical computer. Use virtual machines to run operating systems such as MS-DOS, Windows, and OS/2. You can run multiple operating systems at once on a single physical computer and switch between them as easily as switching applications—instantly, with a mouse click.

### Installing Microsoft Virtual PC 2007

Before installing Microsoft Virtual PC 2007, make sure that your computer is powerful enough to run it. A PC with a 2 GHz processor (Microsoft only requires “400 MHz or faster” and recommends 1 GHz, but that seems rather unrealistic) and at least 2 GB of RAM is recommended, although more RAM would be even better. Of course, before installing any major software application, you should back up all important data. I had absolutely no problems with Microsoft Virtual PC 2007, but that does not guarantee that you will not.

### Setting Up a Virtual Machine

You can use Microsoft Virtual PC 2007 to create a “virtual computer” and assign memory to it (see Figure 1). The suggested 512 MB RAM for Vista seemed rather low, so I assigned it more RAM. Note that the program will take this amount of memory from the computer’s physical memory, so do not leave too little for the “real” operating system (in my case, XP Home Edition).

Next, the program will create a “virtual disk” on your hard drive that will house the virtual operating system. The virtual console you now created only has to be “filled” with the operating system of your choice (see Figure 2).

### Upgrade your computer to Vista Ultimate

*Pro:* Lower cost than buying a new computer.

*Con:* Compatibility issues (drivers for older hardware and software).

### Run a virtual copy of the target-language version of Vista

*Pro:* Lower cost, continue using XP for working system.

*Con:* Memory requirements.

For myself, I decided to run a virtual copy of the target-language version of Vista. This option combined relatively modest cost (a copy of the German version of Vista, plus a memory upgrade from 1 GB of RAM to 2 GB) with the ability to keep my XP

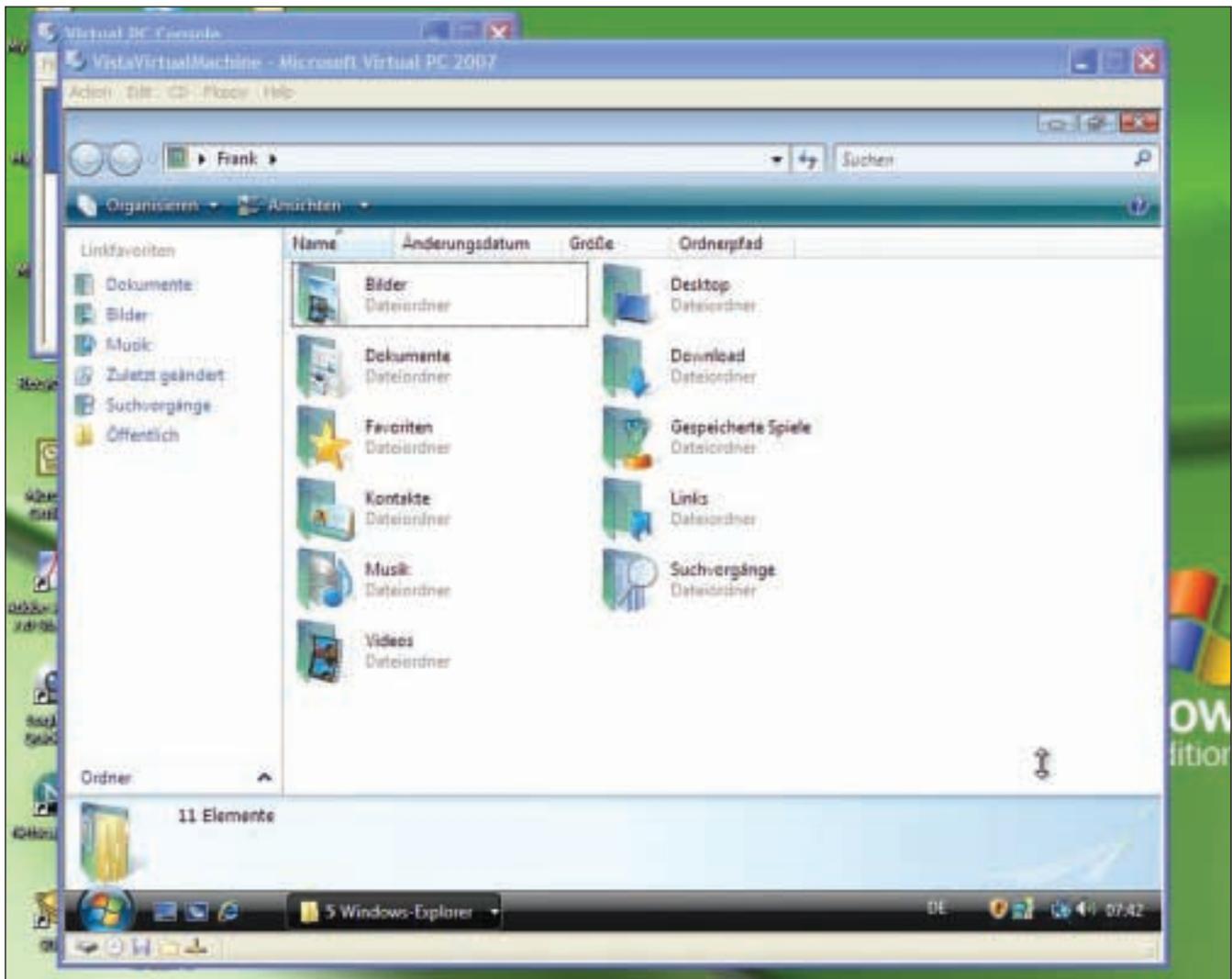
system isolated from any incompatibilities or bugs still associated with Vista.

This article will describe how I set up a virtual copy of (German) Vista Home Premium on a machine running (English) Windows XP Home Edition. The installation procedure is the same for all language versions, and you can even install more than one language version. Fortunately, the main tool I used to do this is free: Microsoft Virtual PC 2007, which can be downloaded at [www.microsoft.com/windows/products/winfamily/virtualpc/default.mspx](http://www.microsoft.com/windows/products/winfamily/virtualpc/default.mspx).

Here is what Microsoft has to say about the program:

*Virtual PC lets you create separate virtual machines on your Windows*

**Figure 3: German Vista running virtually under English XP Home Edition**



### Installing Vista

Next, you get to install Vista. Insert the Vista DVD into your DVD drive and start the virtual machine by double-clicking on it. Select “Use Physical Drive [drive letter]” from the menu CD to boot from the DVD drive and install Vista. The installation follows the normal Windows procedure, and you will have to enter the product key and show some patience while Vista slowly moves through the various steps. Interestingly enough, many of the restarts that Vista went through during installation were also only virtual, and did not shut down the host computer.

Once Vista is installed (see Figure 3), you can call up any menu or folder in it, just as if it were actually running on your computer. Once you are done looking up an interface element, you simply close Microsoft Virtual PC 2007 (it will save the current setting of your “virtual machine”) and return to XP.

### The Outlook

I currently have a copy of German Vista Home Premium running virtually under English XP Home Edition (of course, you could also run a non-English version of Vista under an English one). Vista reacts a little bit slowly sometimes,

but it is fast enough for what I need to do. This allows me to continue working in a stable operating environment while having access to the German interface of Vista. Considering that computer manufacturers currently even offer “downgrades” from Vista to PC to some clients ([www.pcwelt.de/start/software\\_os/vista/news/85799](http://www.pcwelt.de/start/software_os/vista/news/85799)), it might be a good idea for me to stick with XP for a while. Eventually, most Vista problems will be solved, but until then, a virtual solution to running a target-language version of the operating system is cost-effective and avoids unnecessary trouble.

*ata*