

Virtually Anything

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What's the hot word these days? Virtualization. Even December 2006's issue of Dr. Dobb's Journal talks about it. Even Jason Dixon talks about it.

So what's the big deal? Basically the capacity to run different software environments from a single hardware platform, and as such, to streamline operations in diverse and critical fields such as quality, testing, learning, process integration, you name it. Using virtual machines, you can:

- Set up different environments for testing applications simultaneously using different operating systems, either automatically or using ;
- Create standard learning environments for your teams, or your clients, to test new software packages, and to have an easier cleanup/setup cycle before the next training starts;
- Have environments for legacy operating systems, for which you have to maintain compatibility even if you do not own the original hardware any more.

And it all started with emulators; those little applications that eventually grow bigger and bigger and were purchased by big companies with big press releases and all the fanfare. But it all boils down, at some level or another, to this:

Mac OS 7.5.3 (on Basilisk II)

Power64

BeOS Personal Edition (!!?!), on Virtual PC 7.0.2)

Windows 2000 SP 4 (on Virtual PC 7.0.2)

PS: The image library that does these cool effects is Lightbox JS 2.02.