

SOFTWARE PRODUCT DESCRIPTION

Charon-AXP/400, /2000, and /4100 for Linux

Product version 4.10

Document version 1



DESCRIPTION

Stromasys Charon-AXP/400, Charon-AXP/2000, and Charon-AXP/4100 are members of the Charon-AXP cross-platform hardware virtualization product family. They are designed to replace the following DEC AlphaServer systems by their virtual equivalents running on an x86-64 compatible standard computer system:

Charon-AXP product	Hardware to replace
Charon-AXP/400	AlphaServer 400, 1000, 1000A
Charon-AXP/2000	AlphaServer 800, 1200, 2000, 4000 (and also 400, 1000, 1000A)
Charon-AXP/4100	AlphaServer 2100, 4100 (and also 400, 1000, 1000A, 800, 1200, 2000, 4000)

Charon-AXP emulates most of the original Alpha-specific hardware. It runs the original Alpha binary code, including the operating systems OpenVMS and Tru64 UNIX, the layered products, and applications, which all continue to work as before. A small number of changes to the original software (operating system, layered products, or applications) may be required. The Tru64 kernel may have to be rebuilt.

NETWORK

Charon-AXP virtualizes the 10/100 Mbps Ethernet controllers of the DEC 21x4x and Intel 8255x families, ensuring support of any AlphaServer installation. Any protocol supported on a physical Alpha Ethernet link (DECnet, TCP/IP, and LAT) will work on a virtualized Charon link. The Charon network adapter is recognized by the operating system as a 10/100 Mbps link, but since the adapter is virtualized, it may exceed that speed when connected to a 1 Gbps / 10 Gbps adapter in the host system. The network performance also depends on design limitations of the guest OS (VMS or Tru64).

STORAGE

Charon-AXP provides support for Alpha disk, tape, and CD/DVD storage devices via virtual KZPBA SCSI and KGPSA FC adapters, translating them into 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.

PCI PASSTHROUGH

Emulex FC adapters compatible with the original AlphaServer hardware (FC KGPSA) and serial line PBXDA adapters can be used by Charon-AXP to provide direct access to SAN infrastructures and serial lines, equivalent to the physical Alpha access. Using PCI Passthrough enables up to 50% disk I/O performance improvement compared to using virtual storage controllers. It is recommended for high performance configurations with access to SAN infrastructures.

HOST SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS

A physical system or virtual appliance with multi-core CPUs (Intel Xeon Gold and Platinum CPUs with a clock frequency of 3GHz and above are recommended), dedicated Ethernet adapters, an optional USB port for the license key and enough disk space to keep the OpenVMS or Tru64 data. For every emulated AXP CPU, Charon must have exclusive access to at least 2 CPU cores on the host system. For each emulated Alpha system, Charon-AXP requires at least 2 GB of RAM plus the amount of RAM assigned to the emulated Alpha system.

PERFORMANCE

SPEC2000 tests running on Tru64 5.1B on Charon-AXP emulating an AlphaServer 4100 deliver about **SINT2000 867 and SFP2000 678** on a system with Intel Xeon Gold 6137 3.9GHz CPUs. Charon-AXP benefits from the newer, faster hardware, offering equal or better performance compared to most Alpha systems. The constant improvements Stromasys makes to the Charon products, together with rapidly developing faster hardware, will further shift the balance in favor of cross-platform virtualization. Full SPEC2000 data for all physical Alpha systems can be accessed online at <https://www.spec.org/cpu2000/>

SYSTEM MAINTENANCE

Once installed and configured, the Charon system behaves like the original Alpha system, and can be treated as an Alpha. 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-AXP 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-AXP licenses
- **ncu** ("Network Control Utility") is used to dedicate a host network interface to Charon-AXP, 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
- **VMS bypass driver** for emulating DU/DR/DG/DQ/DI disk devices
- **Power consumption optimization (IDLE) VMS utility** for implementing energy saving mode when a virtual AXP CPU is idle



VIRTUALIZED HARDWARE

Charon Product	Charon-AXP/400		Charon-AXP/2000 ¹⁾				Charon-AXP/4100 ²⁾	
Emulated hardware model	AlphaServer 400	AlphaServer 1000 / 1000A	AlphaServer 800	AlphaServer 1200	AlphaServer 2000	AlphaServer 4000	AlphaServer 2100	AlphaServer 4100
Alpha CPUs (base / maximum)	1 / 1	1 / 1	1 / 1	1 / 2	1 / 2	1 / 2	1 or 2 / 4	1 or 2 / 4
Emulated RAM	Up to 1GB	Up to 1 GB	Up to 8 GB	Up to 8 GB	Up to 2 GB	Up to 2 GB	Up to 32 GB	Up to 32 GB
Virtual PCI slots	3	3/7	4	6	3	16	3	8
Virtual CPU performance level	50%		Full (100%)				Full (100%)	
Storage adapter support	Emulated PCI SCSI KZPBA adapters (1 preloaded); emulated PCI FC KGPSA adapters; up to 120 storage units (disks, tapes, and CD/DVD) supported simultaneously							
Disk storage support	Virtual disk images on a local and remote Linux file system (.vdisk container files); Logical and Physical SCSI disks (/dev/sdN) and partitions (/dev/sdNL); iSCSI disks; SAN attached storage volumes identified by WWID (/dev/by-id)							
Tape storage support	Virtual tape images on a local and remote Linux file system (.vtape container files); physical SCSI tape drives (/dev/sgN devices)							
CDROM / Floppy disk support	Virtual CD/DVDs images a local and remote Linux file system (.iso container files); physical CD/DVD drives (/dev/cdrom, /dev/srN devices) / Floppy not supported							
Ethernet network support	Emulated PCI DEC 21x4x adapters: DE435, DE450, DE500AA, and DE500BA (1 preloaded DEC TULIP 21040 for AS2x00); emulated PCI Intel 82558 10/100 Mbps adapters: DE602 and DE602AA							
Fibre Channel / FDDI support	Direct connection to SAN with physical KGPSA or compatible FC EMULEX HBA adapters (up to 8 Gbps) in Passthrough mode; direct connection to SAN with Linux supported FC HBA adapters in Presentation mode / No FDDI physical DEFPA adapter support							
Console / Serial lines	OPAO console attached to a Windows terminal emulator, a physical serial port (COMxx: device), or a TCP/IP socket / PCI Pass Through serial line controller PBXDA (8 serial lines)							
Console / Graphics	Emulated DEC ZLXp-E2 graphics adapter (PBXGA) with virtual display 1280x1024 resolution							
Supported operating systems	OpenVMS 6.2-1H3 – OpenVMS 8.4; Digital UNIX 3.2 – 4.0E; Tru64 UNIX 4.0F – 5.1B (also known as Compaq or HP Tru64 UNIX)							

¹⁾ Charon-AXP/2000 also includes all Alpha hardware models emulated by Charon-AXP/400

²⁾ Charon-AXP/4100 also includes all Alpha hardware models emulated by Charon-AXP/400 and /2000

Host system requirements

Host operating system	Red Hat Enterprise Linux (RHEL) 6.5 – 7.5 (64 bit); CentOS 7.x (64 bit); Oracle Linux (Unbreakable Enterprise Kernel (UEK) Release 4; and Red Hat Compatible Kernel)
Hypervisor	VMware ESXi 5.5 – 6.7; Microsoft Hyper-V on Windows Server 2012 R2 and 2016; Oracle VM 3.4.5
Host CPU / RAM	Number of host system CPU cores ≥ 2 * (number of emulated AXP CPU cores); host RAM = (2 GB + AXP RAM) per emulated AXP instance
Recommended hardware	HP ProLiant G10 servers or their equivalent; Intel Xeon Gold or Platinum CPUs; Intel Core 8 th generation CPUs; with frequency 3 GHz and above

Ordering information

Charon Product	Charon-AXP/400 (single CPU)	Charon-AXP/2000 (single CPU)	Charon-AXP/4100 (single CPU)	Charon-AXP/4100 (dual CPU)
Perpetual license ³⁾	CHAXP-616IP	CHAXP-626IP	CHAXP-606IP	CHAXP-806IP
Annual license ³⁾	CHAXP-616IY	CHAXP-626IY	CHAXP-606IY	CHAXP-806IY
Annual GOLD / PLATINUM support ⁴⁾	CHAXP-616IU / CHAXP-616IT	CHAXP-626IU / CHAXP-626IT	CHAXP-606IU / CHAXP-606IT	CHAXP-806IU / CHAXP-806IT
Annual GOLD / PLATINUM subscription ³⁾	CHAXP-616ICG / CHAXP-616ICP	CHAXP-626ICG / CHAXP-626ICP	CHAXP-606ICG / CHAXP-606ICP	CHAXP-806ICG / CHAXP-806ICP
Backup license ³⁾	CHAXP-616IK	CHAXP-626IK	CHAXP-606IK	CHAXP-806IK
Additional CPU ³⁾	N/A	CHAXP-CPUIP	CHAXP-CPUIP	CHAXP-CPUIP

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