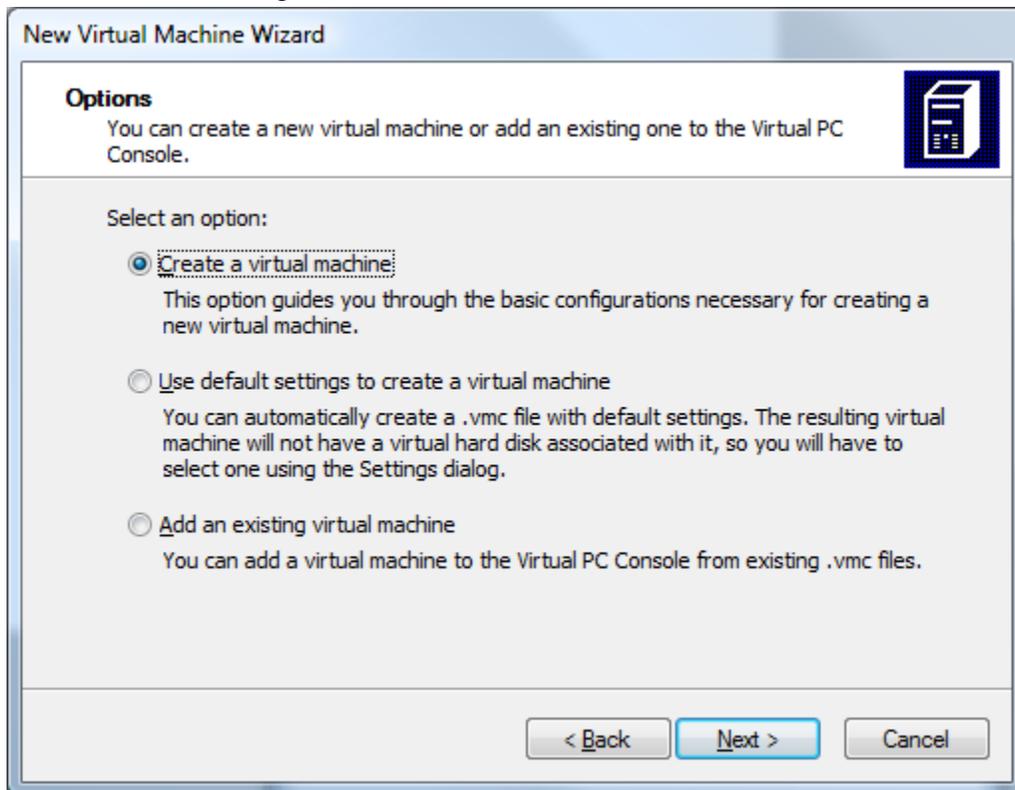# Windows 7 Free Beta Release
By Ron Mettler, January 11, 2009

Microsoft has made available to the general public, a free download of Windows 7 Build 7000 with a file name of 7000.0.081212-1400_client_en-us_Ultimate-GB1CULFRE_EN_DVD.iso. I was able to download the file from an authorized non-Microsoft site last Friday night. For those so interested in trying the newest version of Windows, you should be able to find a site where it can be downloaded.
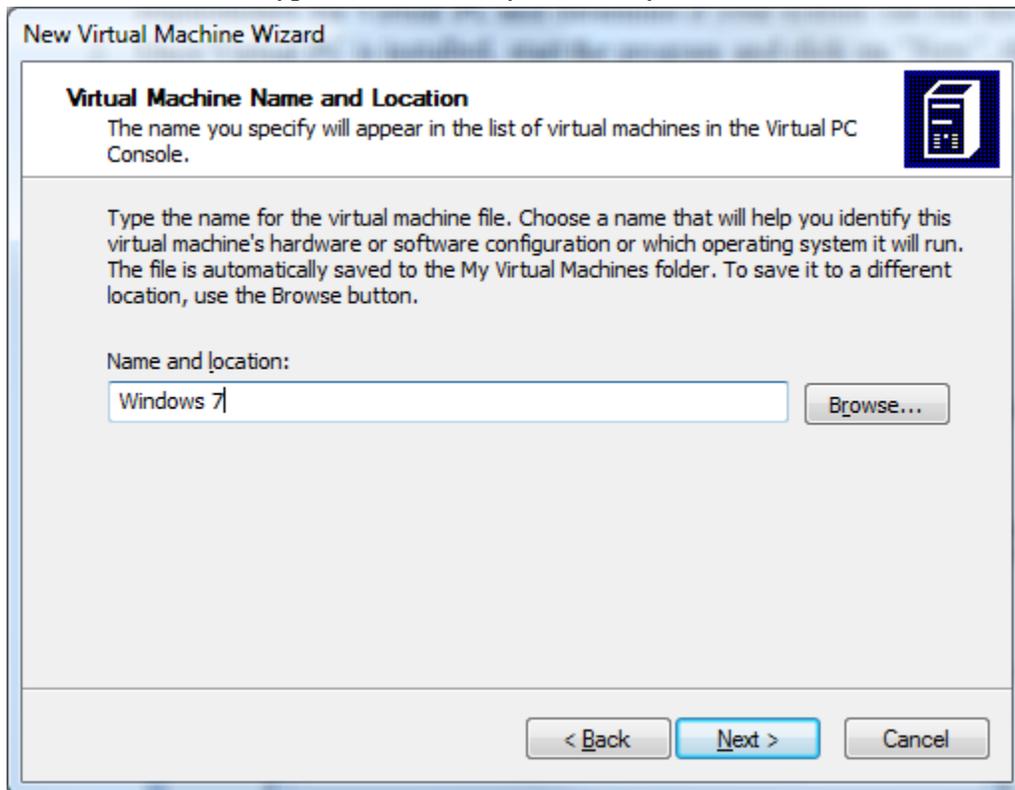
So then what do you do with it? I suggest that you consider installing it on an existing computer using Microsoft Virtual PC. Using Virtual PC, you can create a space on your hard drive in which Windows 7 can be run and stored without disturbing your existing system. James Wiegel prepared and presented at our January 12, 2008 CUGG monthly meeting, details of how to use Virtual PC. His PowerPoint presentation file can be found on the CUGG web site by going to http://www.cugg.org/presentations.htm#vpc2007 The latest version of Microsoft Virtual PC can be found at http://www.microsoft.com/downloads/details.aspx?FamilyID=28c97d22-6eb8-4a09-a7f7-f6c7a1f000b5&displaylang=en

The following is a description of the system requirements and a suggested procedure.
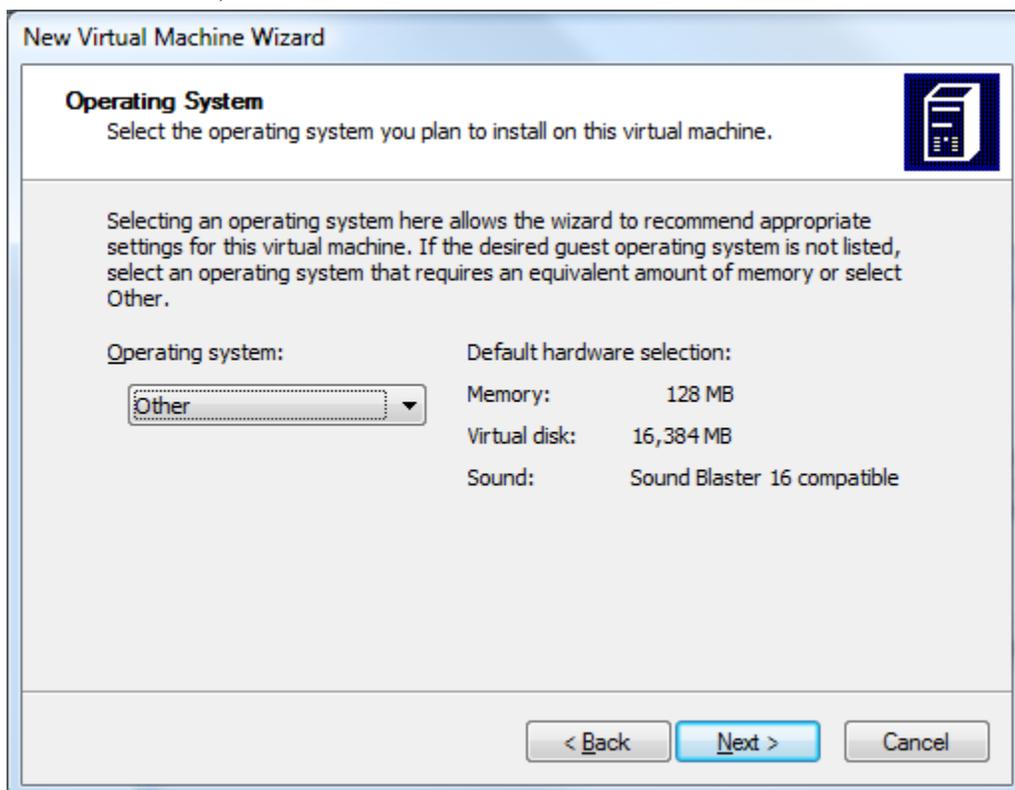
1. If your computer has at least 1.5 GB of RAM, and available hard drive space of 20 GB, you most likely can complete the installation. You should review the system requirements for Virtual PC and determine if your system can run the application.

2. Once Virtual PC is installed, start the program and click on "New", then next and you will be at the following window:
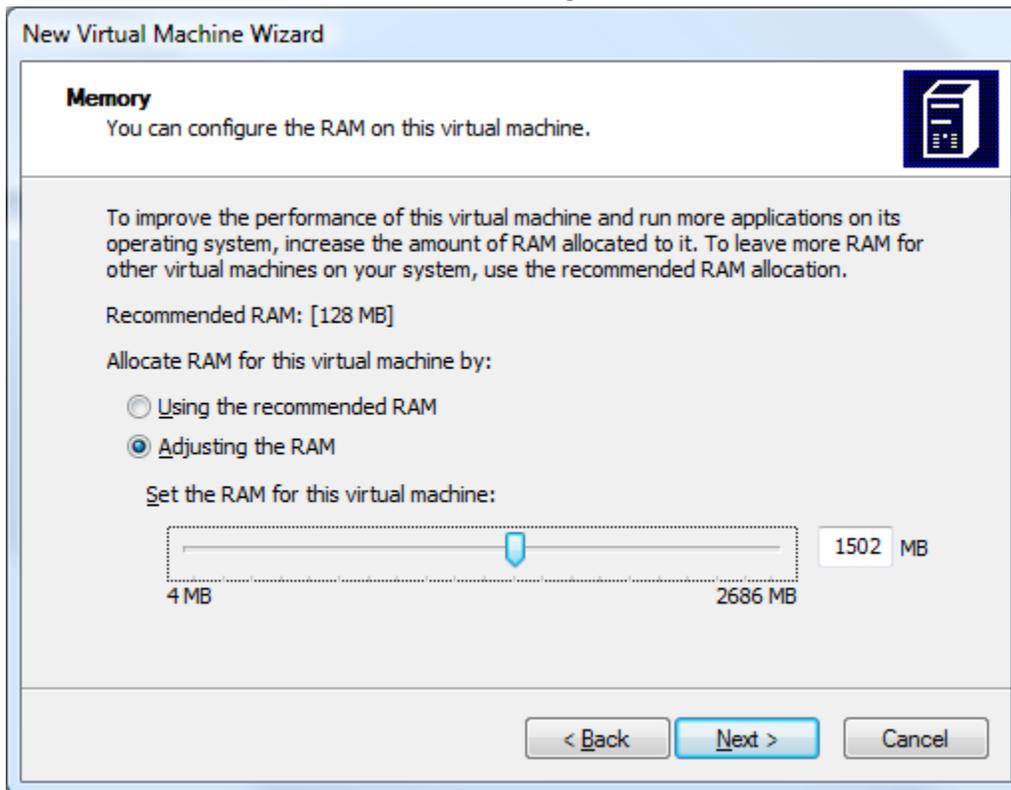
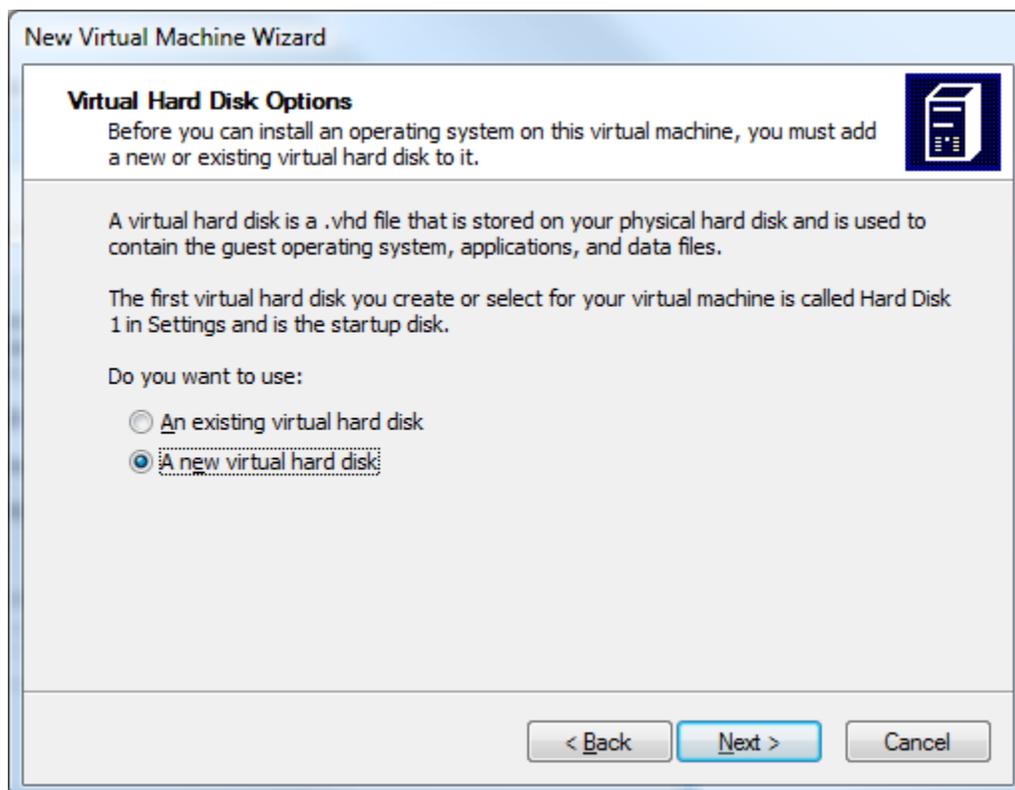3. Click next and then type in a name for your new system:

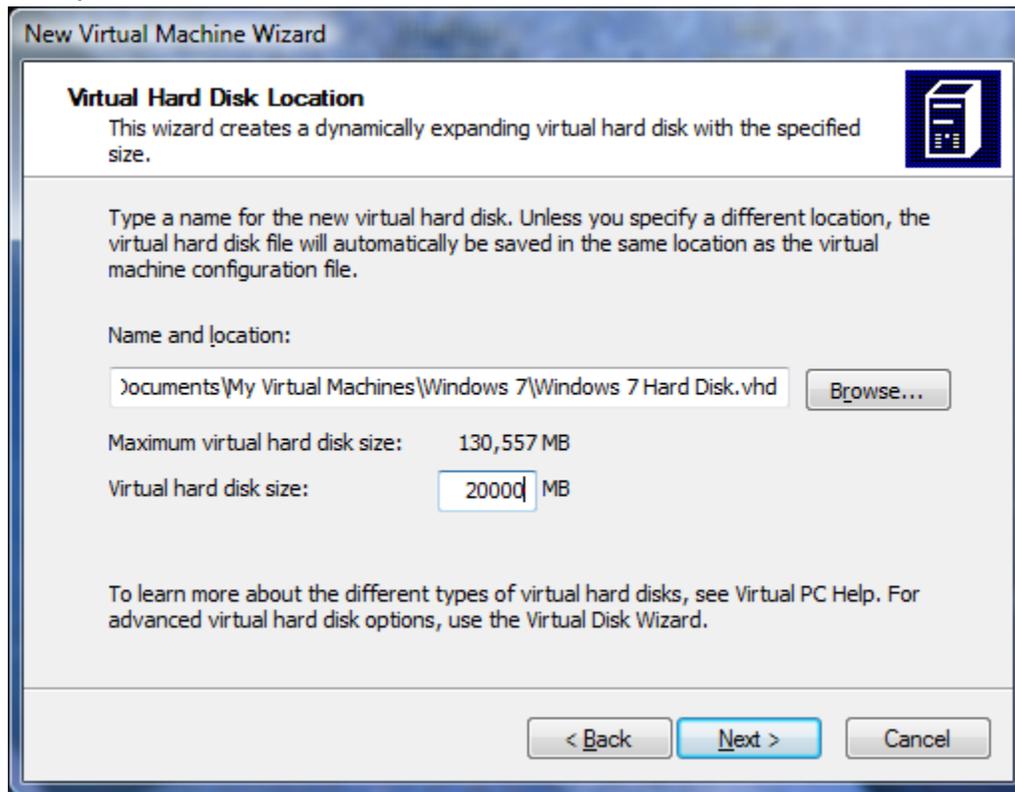4. Click on "Next", then at the next window leave "other":

5. Then move the slider to at least 1024 or greater:

New Virtual Machine Wizard

Memory
You can configure the RAM on this virtual machine.

To improve the performance of this virtual machine and run more applications on its operating system, increase the amount of RAM allocated to it. To leave more RAM for other virtual machines on your system, use the recommended RAM allocation.

Recommended RAM: [128 MB]

Allocate RAM for this virtual machine by:

○ Using the recommended RAM

◉ Adjusting the RAM

Set the RAM for this virtual machine:

1502 MB

4 MB   2686 MB

< Back   Next >   Cancel

6. Then select "A new virtual hard disk:

New Virtual Machine Wizard

Virtual Hard Disk Options
Before you can install an operating system on this virtual machine, you must add a new or existing virtual hard disk to it.

A virtual hard disk is a .vhd file that is stored on your physical hard disk and is used to contain the guest operating system, applications, and data files.

The first virtual hard disk you create or select for your virtual machine is called Hard Disk 1 in Settings and is the startup disk.

Do you want to use:

○ An existing virtual hard disk

◉ A new virtual hard disk

< Back   Next >   Cancel

7. In the next Window, type in at least 15000 for the Virtual hard disk size (I used 20000 for my installation).

8. Then click on finish. At this point, you will need to highlight the new Virtual Windows 7 installation and click on start and the next Window will popup. Select the CD icon along the top of the window and then "Capture ISO Image". Browse to the saved Windows 7 ISO file 7000.0.081212-1400_client_en-us_Ultimate-GB1CULFRE_EN_DVD.iso or whatever your downloaded files is named. Then click on Action in the upper left of the window and "Reset". The system will then start loading the Windows ISO file as a new Windows installation. You will then have Windows 7 installed and you can run it by starting Virtual PC and then starting Windows 7. The first task you should do after you have Windows 7 running is to go to the Action tab and select Install or Update Virtual Machine Additions. This puts an added set of features into Virtual PC that you will need to change some items such as screen resolution. Change the screen resolution by right clicking on the desktop background then select "Screen Resolution". Now the setting you should use is one size smaller than what your normal system is set at. Go to your normal operating system background and determine your screen resolution. In my case it is 1280 x 1024. For my Windows 7 Virtual screen resolution, I then selected 1152 x 864 for the Virtual PC screen.
9. Experiment as you wish from then on.