

An OpenVMS Future FAQ



What is OpenVMS

If you read this document, you know the answer. If you do not, you are not involved, are you?

Why should I care about the future of OpenVMS

On the 1st of January 1998, Compaq purchased DEC, who was producing OpenVMS for its VAX 32 bits and Alpha 64 bits systems. In 2000, Compaq announced the end of the VAX products line. Migration towards OpenVMS-AXP started. In 2002, HP purchased Compaq and, in 2007, announced the end of the Alpha products line to go Integrity/Intel Itanium. Migration towards OpenVMS-i64 started. In 2012, Intel announced the end of the Itanium products line to go x86-64. Migration towards OpenVMS x86-64 started.

Who is developing and maintaining OpenVMS today

A company named VSI. On the 31st of July 2014, VMS Software, Inc. (VSI) has entered into a license agreement with HPE (Hewlett-Packard Enterprise) to develop and release future versions of OpenVMS and most OpenVMS layered products ([source](#)).

What is VSI

VSI, VMS Software, Inc., is a new company created in 2014 by former Digital OpenVMS Engineers to take over the future of OpenVMS.

What is HPE

HPE, Hewlett-Packard Enterprise, is one of the two companies created in 2015 from the former HP company split. The other one is HP Development (aka HP). HPE is in the servers and data storage business, HP in laptops and printers.

What occurred to HPE Services

HPE Services merged with Computer Sciences Corporation (CSC) in 2017 to become a new company: DXC Technology.

How can I know about the VSI projects for OpenVMS

To know about the VSI projects for OpenVMS, please read the VSI Roadmap available at https://www.vmssoftware.com/products_roadmap.html.

What is exactly an IT migration

An IT migration is a complex process to port computer software from one HW platform (named the source platform) to another one (named the destination or target platform) running a different operating system.

What domains are involved in an IT migration

There are three domains involved in an IT migration: the hardware (the platform), the operating system and its layered products, and the software you developed/purchased on your source platform for your business.

What should I do to migrate my platforms

To migrate your platforms, make an exhaustive study, purchase the HW then ask your vendor to set up everything (if you wish so).

What should I do to migrate my operating system

Nothing. As far as OpenVMS is concerned, this is VSI business, don't worry.

What should I do to migrate my proprietary software

Well, we do hope that you will "just" have to compile/link your sources on your target platform, perform some "adjustments" and Bob will be your Uncle.

I still have software running on my VAXen, what should I do.

Get in touch with us, we may help. We will probably tell you to go to a Stromasys Charon-VAX solution, or start a migration project towards HPE Integrity/x86-64 servers, for which VSI OpenVMS will be ready soon (see Roadmap).

I still have software running on my Alpha servers, what should I do.

Get in touch with us, we may help. We will probably tell you to go to a Stromasys Charon-AXP solution, or start a migration project towards HPE Integrity/x86-64 servers, for which VSI OpenVMS will be ready soon (see Roadmap).

What is an emulator

An emulator is a piece of software which runs on a given platform and allows software built on another platform to run efficiently. Two good examples are Stromasys Charon-VAX and Charon-AXP which run OpenVMS on a Windows PC (this is free advertising). 😊

How do I work with an emulator

You start your PC, you start the emulator program, you create a virtual disk, you copy your software on the virtual disk, you boot OpenVMS within the emulator and you run your software. Any other question?

Are there many Vendors for OpenVMS emulators? Which ones?

Yes, there are a few Vendors offering OpenVMS emulation, but there is – to us - only one who knows better than the others about OpenVMS emulation, and that is Stromasys as this company was created by Robert BOERS and his fellow engineers working previously in the DIGITAL Migration Engineering Group, creators of DECmigrate.

I'm currently porting from Alpha to Integrity/Itanium. Am I wasting my time?

No, you are not, as the Integrity-i64 EOSL is planned for 2026 (as far as we know), so you have "plenty" of time, and OpenVMS v9.2 x86-64 is scheduled for 2020 anyway.

What should I do if I do not have some sources available

If you lost some source files or never had them, either you go to VEST/AEST binary translators, but do know that there is no binary translator planned for x86-64, or you rewrite everything...

What is VEST

VEST, VAX Environment Software Translator, is a software produced by DEC (today still maintained by Stromasys) which allows images built for VAX/VMS systems to run on an Alpha server.

What is AEST

AEST, Alpha Environment Software Translator, is a software produced by Stromasys which allows images built for OpenVMS-AXP on Alpha systems to run on an HPE Integrity/Itanium server.

Will a x86-64 Environment Software Translator be available

No. Sure not, according to Stromasys and VSI.

What should I do if some of my layered products are not ported to x86-64

Good question, asked back to 2003 by one of our Customers. Read this:

If your VAX/VMS layered product is not ported, such like the Allen-Bradley (Rockwell) Interchange product, which has been announced by HP as not being ported, there are – to us - five solutions:

- a) you follow HP's recommendation and migrate to BaseStar.
- b) you use these seven years (VAX EOSL was 2010) ahead and rewrite the software on an Itanium system. This is called replatforming.
- c) you try CHARON-VAX and run your software in emulation mode on a WINTEL PC.
- d) you VEST your software on an Alpha, then you AEST it on an Itanium machine and you see what happens.
- e) you do nothing. Don't laugh! We know of a Customer who still has today (this was in 2003) more than a hundred VAX running in factories worldwide. They told us that they are still purchasing VAX boxes on the used equipment market and building a huge spare parts warehouse to keep their systems for ten more years. They also told us that they will reconsider the problem in ten years...

Why should I trust VSI about the future of OpenVMS

You can trust VSI about the future of OpenVMS because these Folks are the same guys who are dealing with OpenVMS Engineering since ages. They just moved from one company to another. They have the use of it, as they were DEC, then Compaq, then HP, today VSI. Why not?