A COMPARISON BETWEEN "ORACLE VM VIRTUALBOX" AND "VMWARE PLAYER" FROM A "LINUX" PERSPECTIVE

SUMMARY:

BASIC COMPARISON

VIRTUAL HARD DRIVE ADAPTER DIFFERENCES

VIRTUAL NETWORKING DIFFERENCES

BASIC COMPARISON BETWEEN "VIRTUALBOX" AND "VMWARE PLAYER"

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"Oracle VM VirtualBox"("VirtualBox") and "VMware Player" are both free applications that you can use to create/install virtual machines, which are also known as "guest operating systems".
(VMware also offers a free virtual machine system called "VMware Server".
"VMware Server" only runs reliably on the server versions of Windows and Linux.
In 2009, Francis tried to run "VMware Server 2" on a "Windows Vista Home" computer and it overwhelmed this computer, resulting in unrecoverable Windows registry corruption.)

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Both "VMware Player" and "VirtualBox" are "freeware", but "VMware Player" is not "open source" while "VirtualBox" is "open source".

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"VMware Player" runs on "Windows" and Linux hosts.
"VMware Player" does not run on a Macintosh host.
(VMware's non-free "Fusion" application runs on Macintosh computers.)
"VirtualBox" runs on "Windows", "Macintosh OS X", and many Linux distros.

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Both "VMware Player" and "VirtualBox" are now equivalently competent at providing you control of physical USB, IDE, and SATA devices. The current version of "VirtualBox" is 4. The 3.x versions of "VirtualBox" were not as good at controlling these sorts of devices as "VMware Player".

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It is easier to create a "virtual hard drive" in "VirtualBox" compared to the same process in "VMware Player.
In "VirtualBox" you can create a new "virtual hard drive" at any time using the "Virtual Media Manager" applet.

"VMware Player" does not have this capability.

VIRTUAL HARD DRIVE ADAPTER DIFFERENCES

"VMware Player" still has very limited options for virtual hard drive adapters relative to "VirtualBox":
For virtual machines in "VMware Player, virtual hard drives can only be connected with a virtual SCSI adapter or a virtual IDE adapter.
A virtual SATA adapter is not available for virtual machines in "VMware Player".
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"VirtualBox" allows you to provide the following virtual hard drive adapters for each virtual machine:
virtual SATA adapter,
virtual IDE adapter,
virtual SAS adapter ("SAS" = "Serial Attached SCSI")
and
virtual SCSI adapter.
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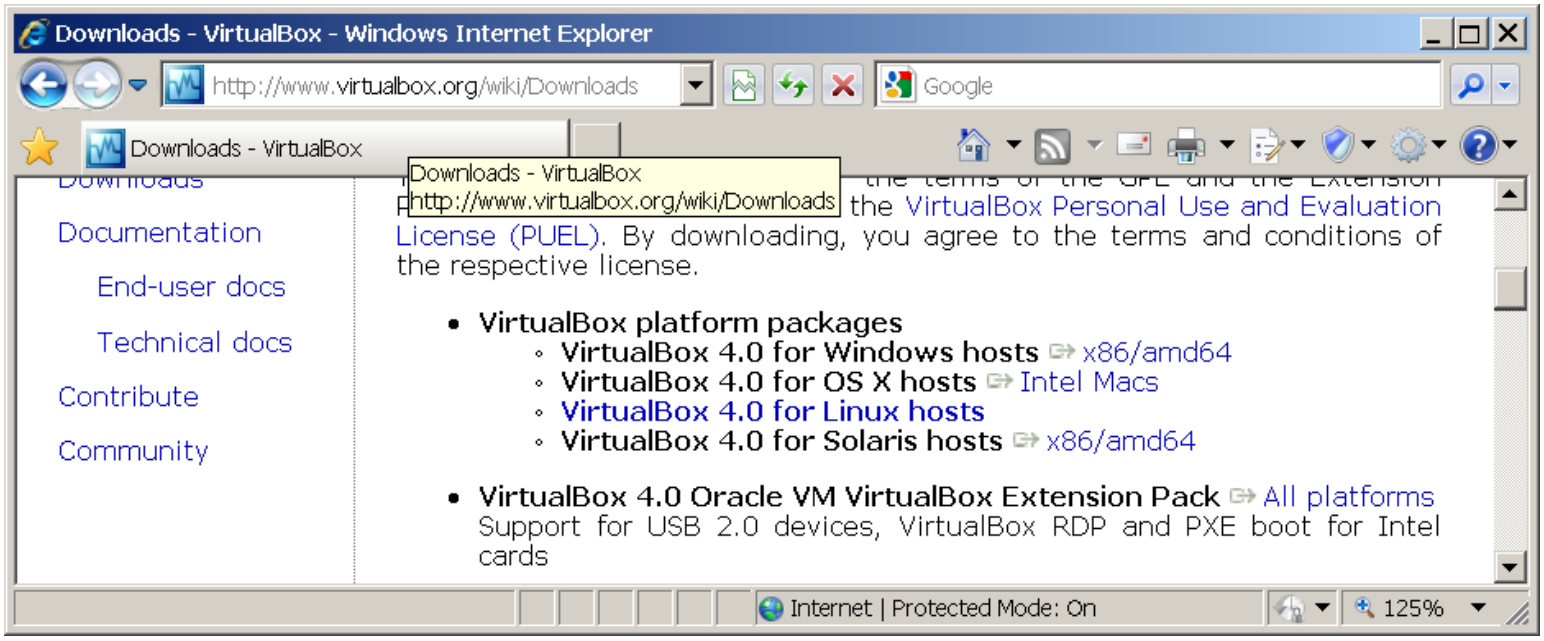
There is no Firewire support real or virtual in "VMware" or "VirtualBox".

USB 2 DIFFERENCES

"VMware Player" comes with "USB 2" support for real USB 2 devices without anything special that you have to do.

In "VirtualBox", you have to install an extension to get support for real USB 2 devices. This extension is called the " VirtualBox 4.0 Oracle VM VirtualBox Extension Pack":



To install this "Extension Pack":
Start "VirtualBox".
Click on "File".
Click on "Preferences.."
Click on "Extensions".
Click on the "Add Package" button on the right.

For more details, see the user manual at
http://download.virtualbox.org/virtualbox/4.0.0/UserManual.pdf
or

http://www.virtualbox.org/manual/UserManual.html

OPTIONAL SOFTWARE FOR EACH VIRTUAL MACHINE

Both "Virtualbox" and "VMware Player" provides you with some optional software that you can install from inside a virtual machine.
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In "VirtualBox", this optional software is called "Oracle VM VirtualBox Guest Additions". See
http://www.virtualbox.org/manual/ch04.html#id448025

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In "VMware Player", this optional software is called "VMware Tools". See
http://www.vmware.com/support/ws55/doc/new_guest_tools_ws.html

VIRTUAL NETWORKING DIFFERENCES

To make "Shared Folders" work in "VirtualBox", you have to install the "Oracle VM VirtualBox Guest Additions" from inside each virtual machine. It installs from a virtual CD.

To make "Shared Folders" work in "VMware Player", you have to install the "VMware Tools" from inside each virtual machine. It installs from a virtual CD.

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Both "VirtualBox" and "VMware Player" have a virtual "Network Address Translation" router configuration.

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In "VirtualBox", the "Network Address Translation" router blocks file sharing in both directions between the host and virtual machines. This router also blocks file sharing between virtual machines.

In "VMware Player", you can disconnect the host from the "Network Address Translation" router. When the connection between the host and the "Network Address Translation" router is enabled, this router allows file sharing between the host and virtual machines and it also allows file sharing between virtual machines.

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Both "VirtualBox" and "VMware Player" have a virtual "Bridged" bridge configuration.

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Both "VirtualBox" and "VMware Player" have a virtual "Host-Only" router configuration.

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A virtual "Internal Network" (LAN switch) networking configuration is available in "VirtualBox".
"VMware Player" does not provide a virtual "Internet Network" (LAN switch) networking configuration directly.
However, you can use the "Host-Only" router with the host's virtual network adapter disconnected to simulate a "Internet Network" networking configuration in "VMware Player".

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You can create as many virtual network adapters as you wish for a "VMware Player" virtual machine..
In contrast, you can only create up to four virtual network adapters for a "VirtualBox" virtual machine.
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