Windows 7 Installation Guide / Tutorial

The **Windows 7** is finally here. It's released for beta testers a few days ago and I am here with a small step by step picture guided tour through the installation process. I downloaded the x86 version of the M3 build (build No: 6801) from Microsoft Connect site, which is 2.72 GB ISO. The x64 version is around 3.2 GB in size.

The installation process was just like vista setup and to my surprise completed in just around 20 minutes in my low end Virtual hardware. This surely indicates the performance improvements Microsoft has put on this windows vista replacement.

The TestMachine

I decided to install Windows 7 in a VMware workstation first to make sure that the DVD I burned is perfect. VMware is great for taking screen shots and screen captures also.

VMWare Version: **VMWare Workstation 6.5**
Virtual HArddisk : **9 GB**
RAM : **512 MB**
Processor : **Single Core**
Windows Version : **Windows 7 Ultimate M3 v6801-0-080913-2030**

Preparing the DVD from the ISO image

Since most the people are installing Windows 7 in a real hardware, a DVD should be burned from the downloaded ISO image. You will need a DVD Burner, a DVD burning software and a blank DVD-R or DVD-RW to prepare the installation disk. I used a Sony single layer DVD-R as media and used Nero 8 as the DVD burning software. But for those who don't have Nero installed, CDBurnerXP is a free Alternative.

So using the DVD burning software of your choice burn the Windows 7 ISO image to the DVD. Make sure you choose the a very low burning speed, 4x or 8x, for better results.
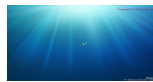
Setting up your Computer & BIOS changes (If required)

Now reboot your computer after popping in the all new Windows 7 DVD you just created in to the DVD Drive. In most cases if you do this you'll automatically boot in to the Windows 7 Installation DVD. But in some cases if the Boot device order is changed in the BIOS it may boot in to your older OS, instead of our DVD. In that case you'll need to change the BIOS settings to gt it done (More details in a different tutorial).

Booting Up and First Installation Steps

Steps from here are pretty straight forward. Read the descriptions in each pages before clicking the

Next button to avoid any disasters. IF there is options to choose in these steps you may find them with each images.

You may choose your Language options by selecting the dropdowns 'Language to install', 'Time and Currency format' and 'Keyboard or input method' here. I decided to leave everything to 'US' but it would be better for selecting the correct settings here for non-english users.

This screen is where the installation wizard begins. The install now options will leads to the advanced install options. For repairing a corrupt installation the 'Repair your computer' button located at the bottom-left can be used. For fresh installs just click the **Install now** button.

Tick the 'I accept the license terms' checkbox and click 'Next' to proceed.

Which type of installation do you want?

This screen provides two options, **Upgrade** and **Custom (advanced)**. The upgrade option is for those who wish to upgrade an existing installation of older version of Windows to Windows 7. It is confirmed that Windows Vista can be upgraded to Windows 7 with out any issues, but Windows XP is still a problem.

We will opt for the second option here, the **Custom** install.
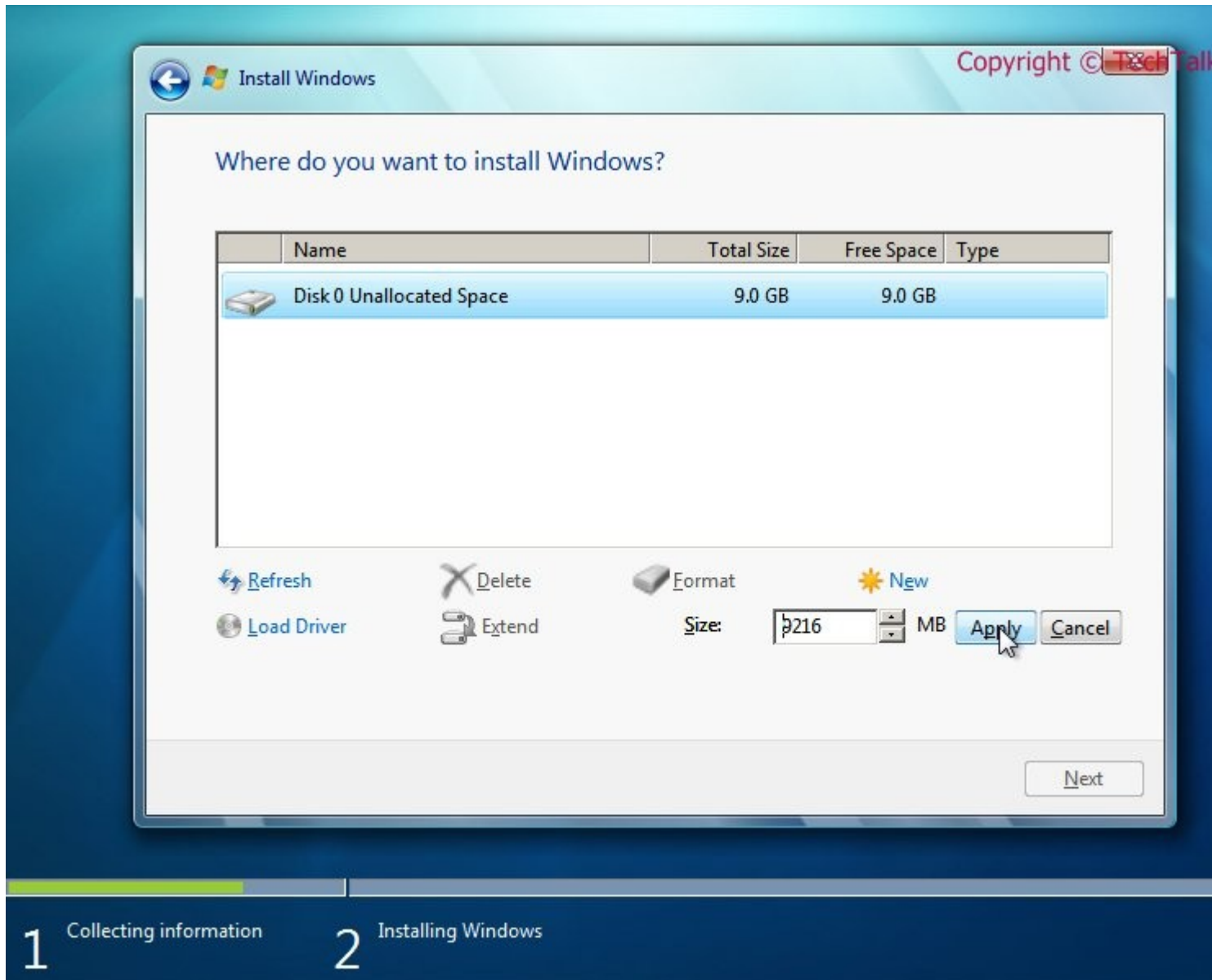
Where do you want to install Windows?

Clicking on the 'Custom' button brings the install location selection screen. In the test machine we have an un-partitioned empty disk. But in the case of a normal installation all your hard drive partitions (e.g. C:\ , D:\ etc.) will be listed here. Choose the drive as you like (a 15 GB size is recommended). Make sure the drive don't have any important data or the Windows 7 installation will wipe-out the contents of

that partition. You can backup the data to another partition (e.g. for installing in D:\ drive move important files from there to say E:\ drive or to an external usb drive) for safe keeping.

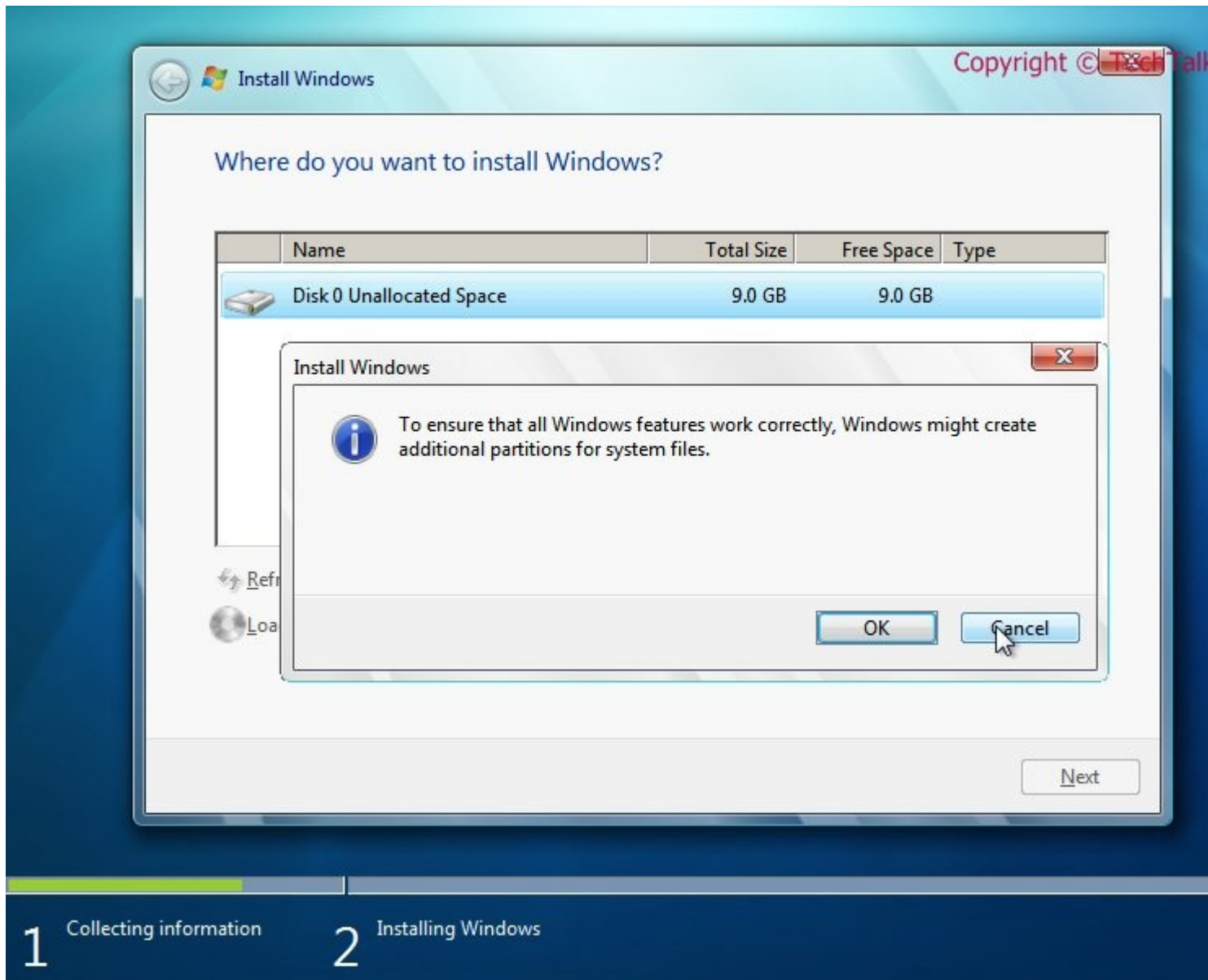**Partitioning /Creating or Modifying Partitions**

Click the **Drive options (advanced)** for advanced partition management options like 'Delete', 'Format', 'New' and 'Extend'. To create a new partition click the **New** button. But if you have list of partitions in the previous screen, choose the one where you are planning to install windows 7 and click **Format**. Then click 'Next' to proceed.

The 'New' option provides a text box to enter the size of the partition you wish to create in MBs. A 15 GB (15*1024 = 15360 MB) is recommended. In this case I opted for the full size of my virtual drive, i.e. 9216 MB. Click the **Apply** button to continue. You may be greeted with a message **To ensure that all Windows features work correctly, windows might create additional partitions for system files.** . This is a new feature in Windows 7 to have a small boot partition for system files. Click **Ok**to

continue.

So here we are, A new primary partition of 8.8 GB is created along with a **System** type partition of 200 MB. Select the partition you just created and click **Next** to continue.

All right, we are all set. The Windows 7 installation begins. time to grab a cup of coffee for and wait for 15 - 30 minutes for the all new OS!