

State Electronic Records Initiative, Introductory Electronic Records Institute
July 8-12, 2013, Indianapolis, Indiana
Acquisition Lab Exercise Instructions
Instructor: Cal Lee

You work at the Archives of State X. In response to deep budget cuts, the executive branch has recently undergone a major reorganization and reduction of personnel. This has included the elimination of the Department of Configuration Management (DCM) from within the state's Office of Information Technology. On her last day of her employment, the assistant to the Director of DCM (who also served as the records officer) has sent you several boxes full of records from the now-defunct unit. She tells you that all of the boxes contain at least some records that have been scheduled for permanent retention by the state archives.

One of the boxes is full of physical media (CDs, floppies, and an external hard drive). In some cases, she could tell you specifically what was on them and why it was important to retain the records. In other cases, she could only recall that the contents of the media were part of the DCM's efforts to compare configuration management efforts across different states in the U.S.

You examined one of the CDs. There are no labels on the CD itself, but the case containing it has a sticker that reads "Files." You loaded the CD into a drive and used FTK Imager to create a disk image of the CD. You then used FTK Imager to export the files, which you can now find in files.zip. For purposes of tasks 1-4, you should work from files.zip.

Summary of Tools Used in this Exercise

The following tools will be used to illustrate fundamental tasks and concepts. This is not a recommendation or endorsement of any specific applications. These are all applications that run in Windows. There are similar tools that run in Macintosh and Linux/Unix environments. For a suite of free, open-source tools that can perform a variety of forensics tasks, see: <http://wiki.bitcurator.net>.

- Tool to generate file hashes: md5summer [http://download.cnet.com/MD5summer/3000-2248_4-10050856.html]
- Hex viewer and editor: Cygnus Hex Editor [http://download.cnet.com/Cygnus-Hex-Editor-Free-Edition/3000-2352_4-10448945.html]
- Tool for mounting an ISO file so that Windows treats it like just another drive on your computer: MagicDisc [<http://www.magiciso.com/tutorials/miso-magicdisc-history.htm>]
- FTK Imager [<http://accessdata.com/support/adownloads#FTKImager>]

Task 0 – Preparation

- Copy the following:
 - files.zip [<http://www.ils.unc.edu/callee/files.zip> - save to your desktop]
 - files.iso [<http://www.ils.unc.edu/callee/files.iso> - save to your desktop]
- Create a folder on your desktop called dcm-files, then extract the contents of files.zip to that folder

Task Set 1 – Seeing what you have – looking in dcm-files

Inspection at the file level

- Based simply on the properties and names of the files and directories (don't open any files yet), try to make some inferences about what these files are and how they might be related.

Looking at names of specific files

- Find a file called Circular.596

- Do you see any other files that have similar names? If so, make note of which ones they are.

Inspection at the bitstream level

- Generate a hex view of the file called Circular.596 – using Cygnus Hex Editor
- What can you infer about this file from looking at the hex representation?
- If you identified other files in task 2, also view those in hex view. Do you notice anything similar?

Investigating the .ISO (disk image) file

- Open FTK Imager
- Go to File | Add Evidence Item...
- Select “Image File”
- Browse to files.iso and then select “Finish”
- Navigate the file tree and discuss what you observe

Task Set 2 – Investigation based on hash values

NOTE: These tasks are based on using md5summer in Windows. You can also generate individual file hashes from the command line in Mac/Unix with the md5 command or use the online utility: at http://www.webutils.pl/MD5_Calculator.

Generate hashes

- Open md5summer
- Select bigshot-files as the root folder
- Select “Create Sums”
- In the “Create list of files to sum” dialog, navigate to the dcm-files folder on your desktop, then select all of the contents of that folder and select “Add”
- Click “Ok”
- Confirm that the md5 hashes are generated
- “Save as” to your desktop as bigshot-files.md5
- Leave the md5summer application running

Finding duplicate files

- Look at the MD5 value of Circular.596
- If you identified other files in task 2, are the values the same or different?
- If you notice something interesting about the MD5 values, what can you infer about what happened to the files?

Verify hash values

- Go back to md5summer (launch it again if you closed the application)
- Select “Verify sums”
- Select the “dcm-files” directory as your root folder
- At the “Open md5sum file” dialog, select bigshot-files.md5 from your desktop and select “Open”
- Note whether there are green dots (verified) by the files or red dots (errors)

Opening files with hex editor

- Pick one or more items from the “files” folder and open them in Cygnus Hex Editor (you can drag the file onto the Cygnus icon on your desktop)
- Look at the hex view of each file and see what it reveals about the bitstream content of the file

Changing content with hex editor

- For one or more of the files, change a bit within the file in Cygnus Hex Editor and then save the changed file
- Note which files you've changed and the SPECIFIC PLACE in the files where you changed bits

Re-Verify hash values

- Be sure to exit out of Cygnus Hex Editor (if files are open in it, the hash calculation might not work correctly)
- Go back to md5summer (launch it again if you closed the application)
- Select "Verify sums"
- Select the "dcm-files" directory as your root folder
- At the "Open md5sum file" dialog, select dcm-files.md5 from your desktop and select "Open"
- Note whether there are green dots (verified) by the files or red dots (errors)

Change content back to earlier state in hex editor

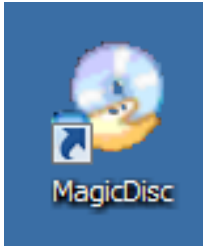
- Open one or more of the files that you changed earlier, and change the bits back to their previous state, and then save the changed file(s)

Re-Verify hash values

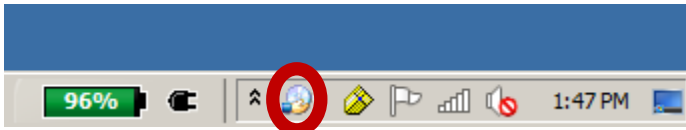
- Go back to md5summer (launch it again if you closed the application)
- Select "Verify sums"
- Select the "dcm-files" directory as your root folder
- At the "Open md5sum file" dialog, select bigschat-files.md5 from your desktop and select "Open"
- Note whether there are green dots (verified) by the files or red dots (errors)

Task Set 3 – Mounting a Disk Image

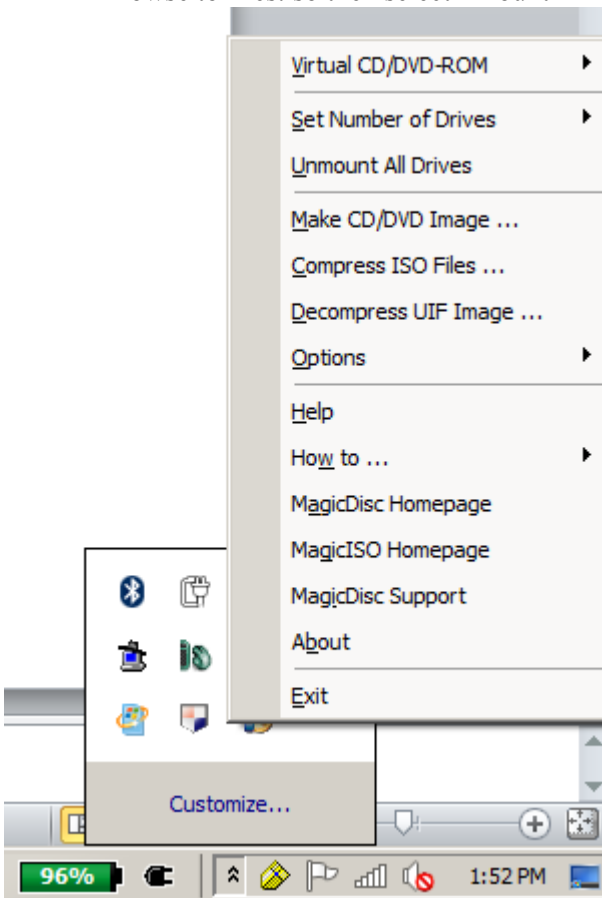
- Double click on the MagicDisc Icon



- MagicDisc will appear on the toolbar



- Browse to files.iso then select “Mount”

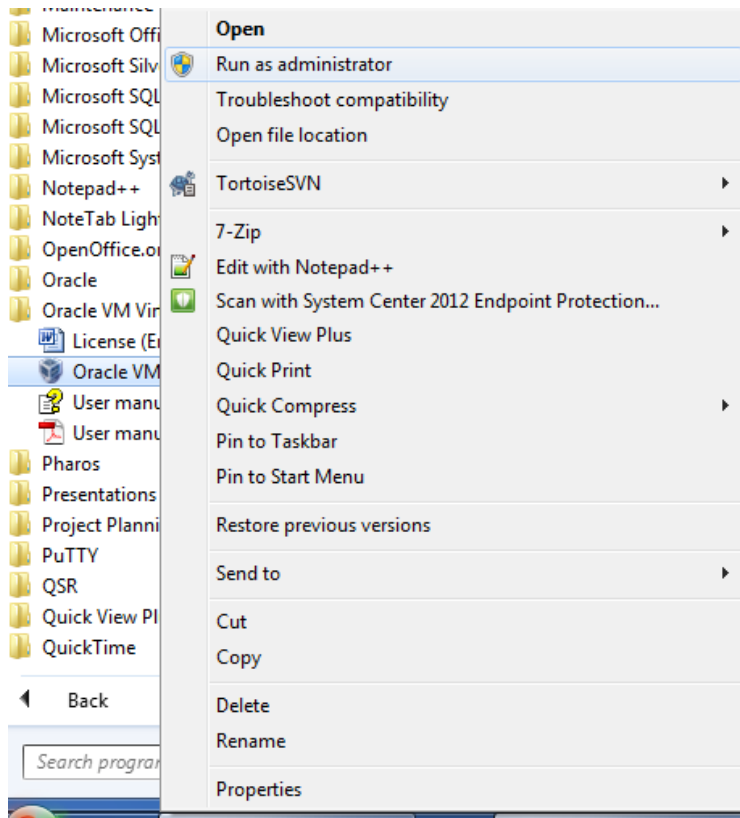


Task Set 4 – Using BitCurator

Note: The BitCurator environment is not running on the lab computers. We will be talking through the tasks listed below. I encourage you to download and install the BitCurator environment and try these tasks on your own. The software and installation instructions are at: <http://wiki.bitcurator.net>

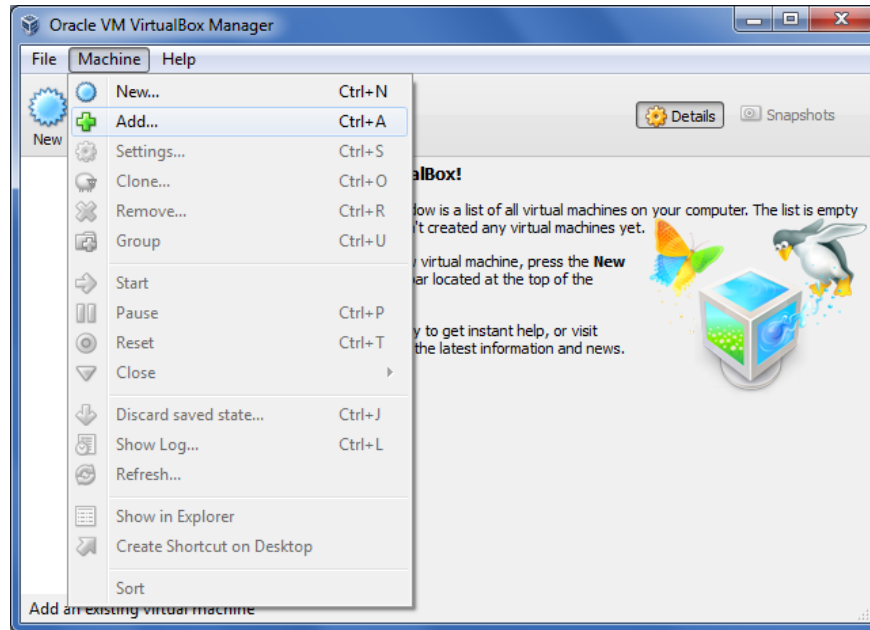
Start up Virtual Box

- Navigate to VirtualBox
- Right-click on the VirtualBox icon and select “Run as Administrator”



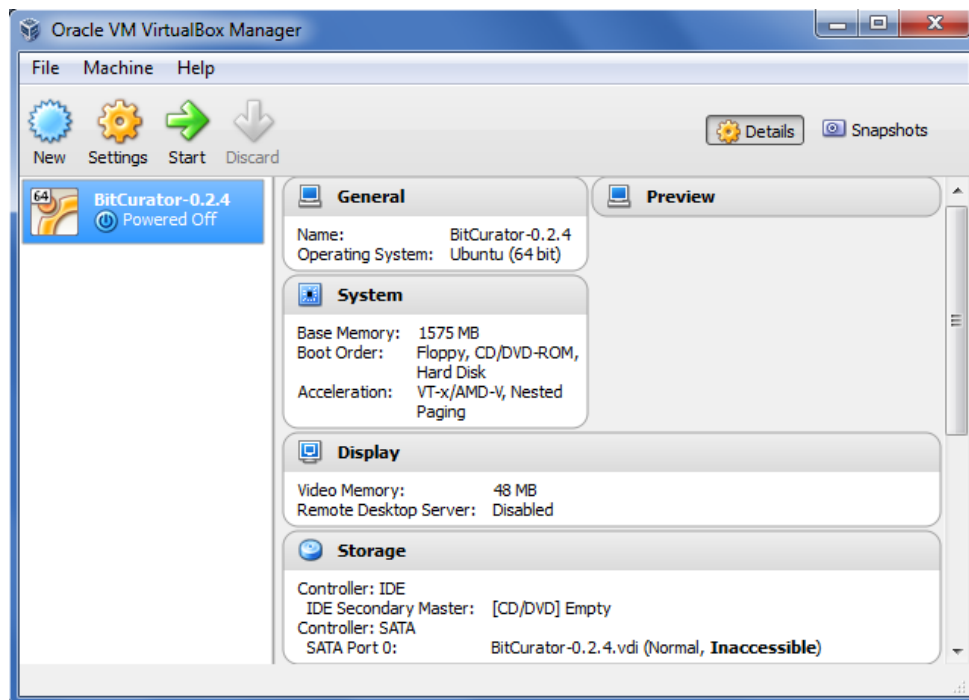
Add the BitCurator Virtual Machine

- From the Machine menu, select Add...

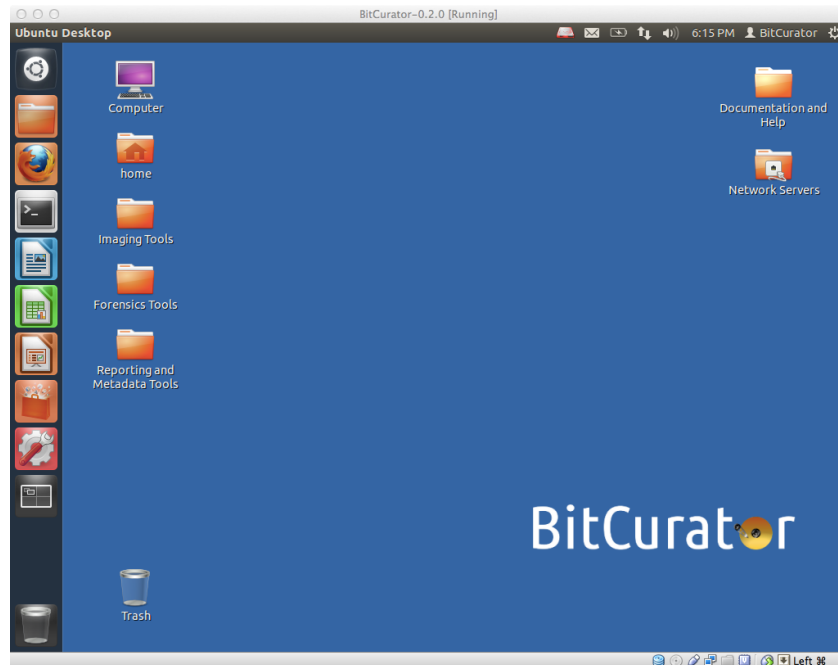


- Navigate to C:\BitCurator\ and select the BitCurator VM file.
- Click on Open.

Start the BitCurator Virtual Machine

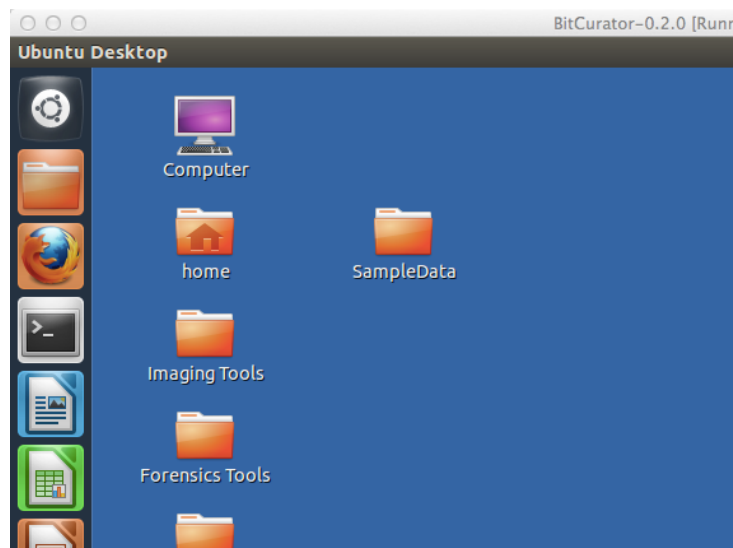


- Clicking on the green “Start” arrow in the Manager screen will start the BitCurator environment. You’ll see a startup screen, and then the BitCurator environment will boot and automatically log in.



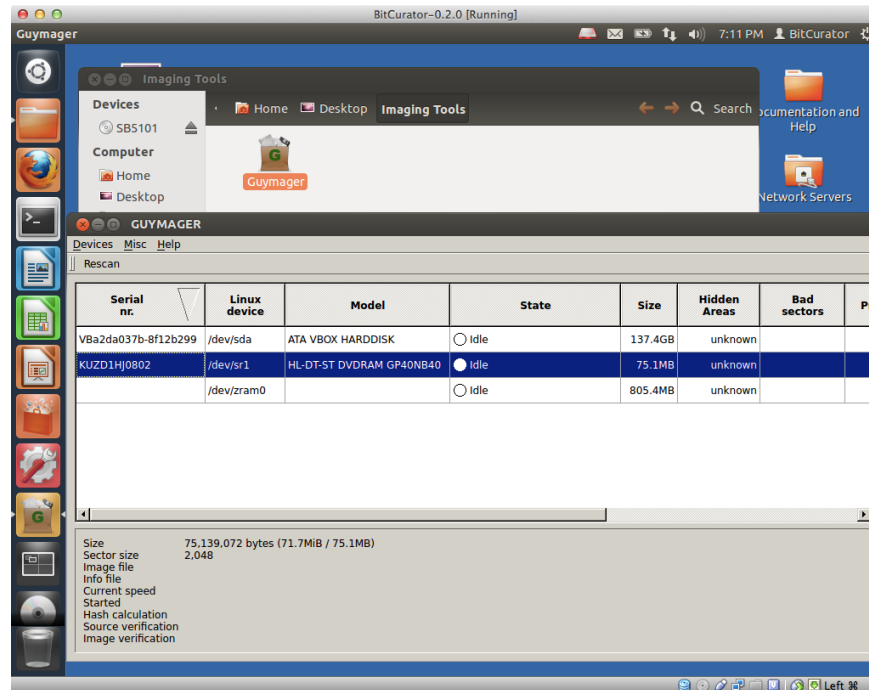
Adding a folder to hold disk images and output data

- Right-click anywhere on the desktop, and select “Create New Folder”. A folder named “Untitled Folder” will appear on the Desktop.
- Click on the name and rename it to “SampleData”. We’ll use this location to store the data for the rest of the exercise.

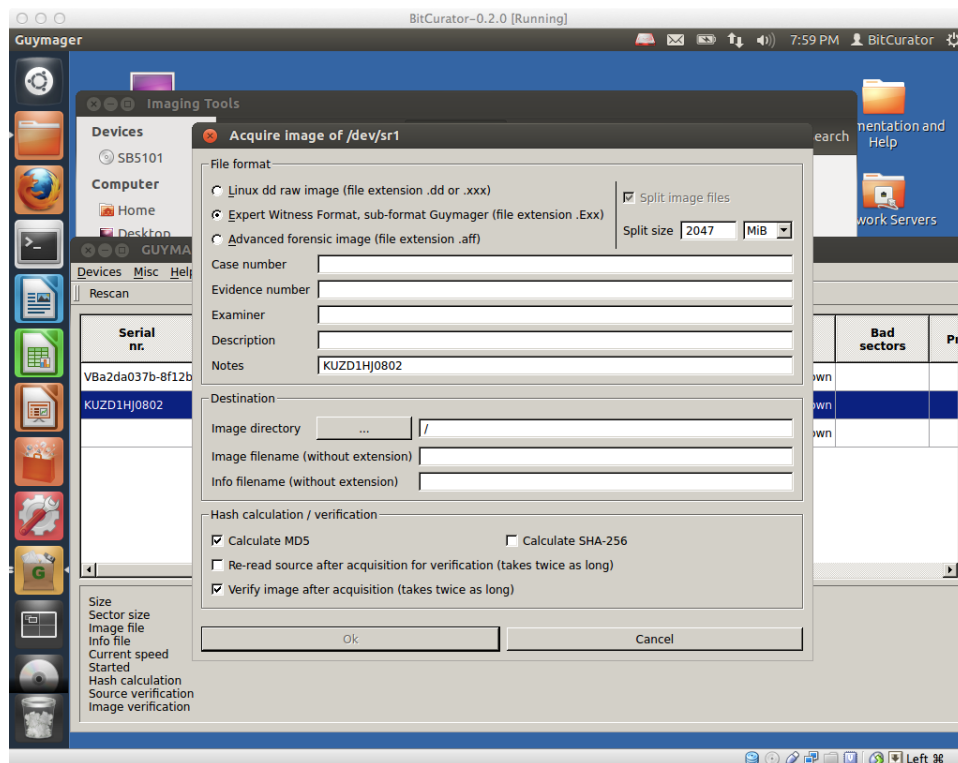


Imaging a disk

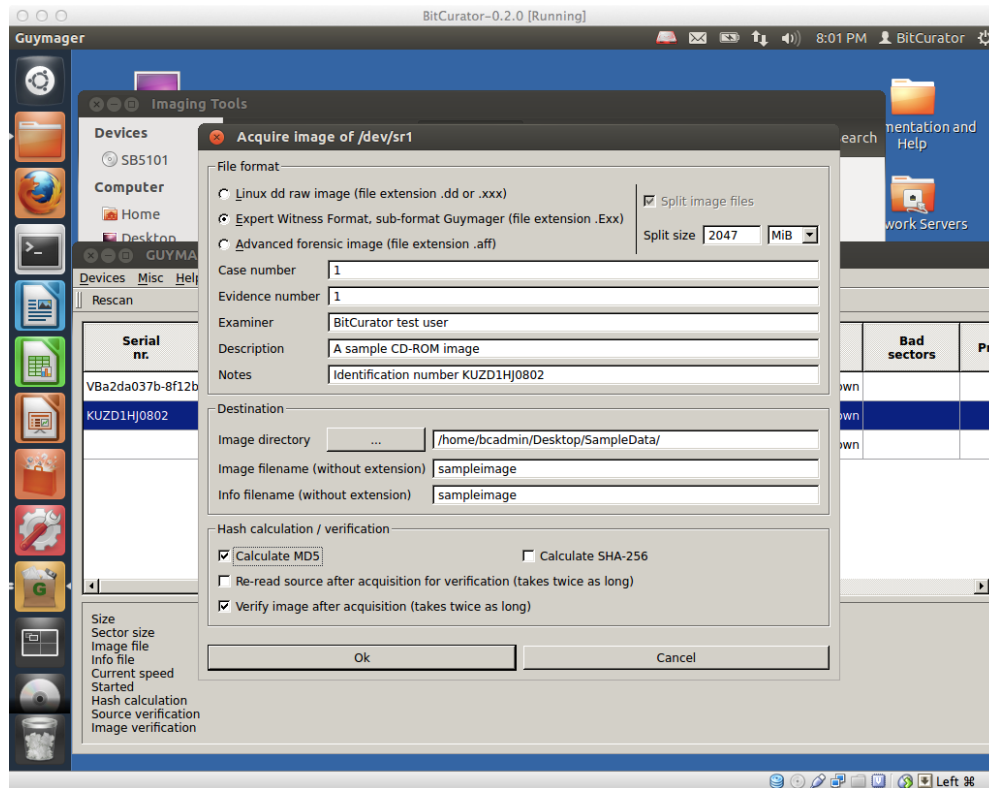
- Make sure that your flash drive is plugged into the computer.
- Double-click on “Imaging Tools” on the Desktop, and then double-click on Guymager. The CD-ROM is selected in the picture above.



- Right-click on the item that represents the flash drive, and click on “Acquire image” in the menu. You’ll see a new dialog window appear, which will prompt you to enter some acquisition metadata.



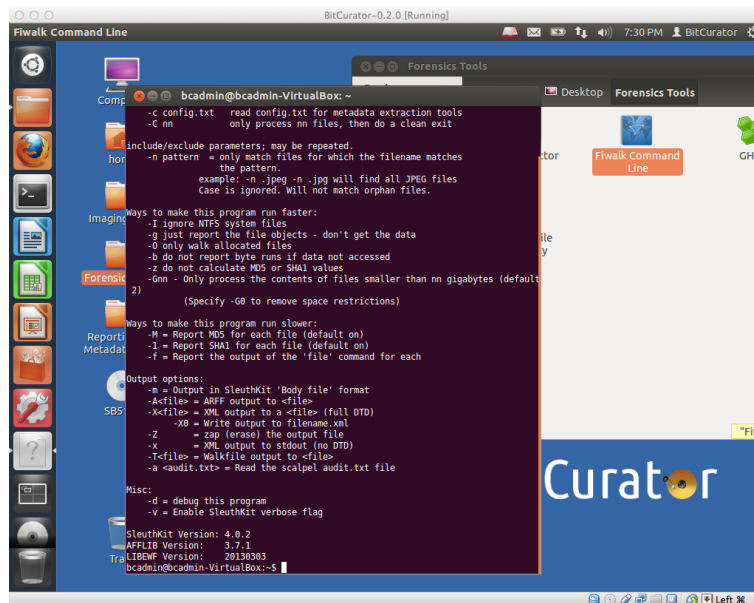
- Select an image format (the example below uses .e01) and enter some other metadata. For the “Image directory,” select the “SampleData” directory that you created earlier on the desktop, and name the image. Then click “Start”.



- You’ll see the main dialog state change to “Acquisition Running”. Note that the BitCurator environment runs at a resolution of 1024x768 by default. If you wish to see the whole dialog, just make the window bigger. The resolution should resize automatically.
- Cancel the acquisition. We won’t have time to run the whole imaging process in this lab. Normally, you would wait for the acquisition to finish and see an “OK” message in State.
- Once the process has completed, in your SampleData folder, there should be two files: the .E01 image file, and a .info file specific to Guymager.

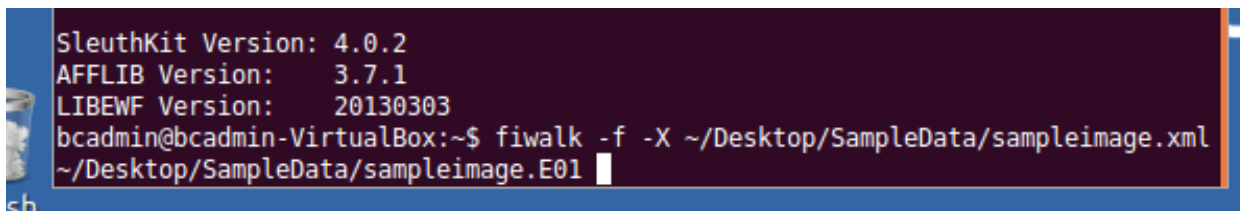
Producing a DFXML report of the File System Contents

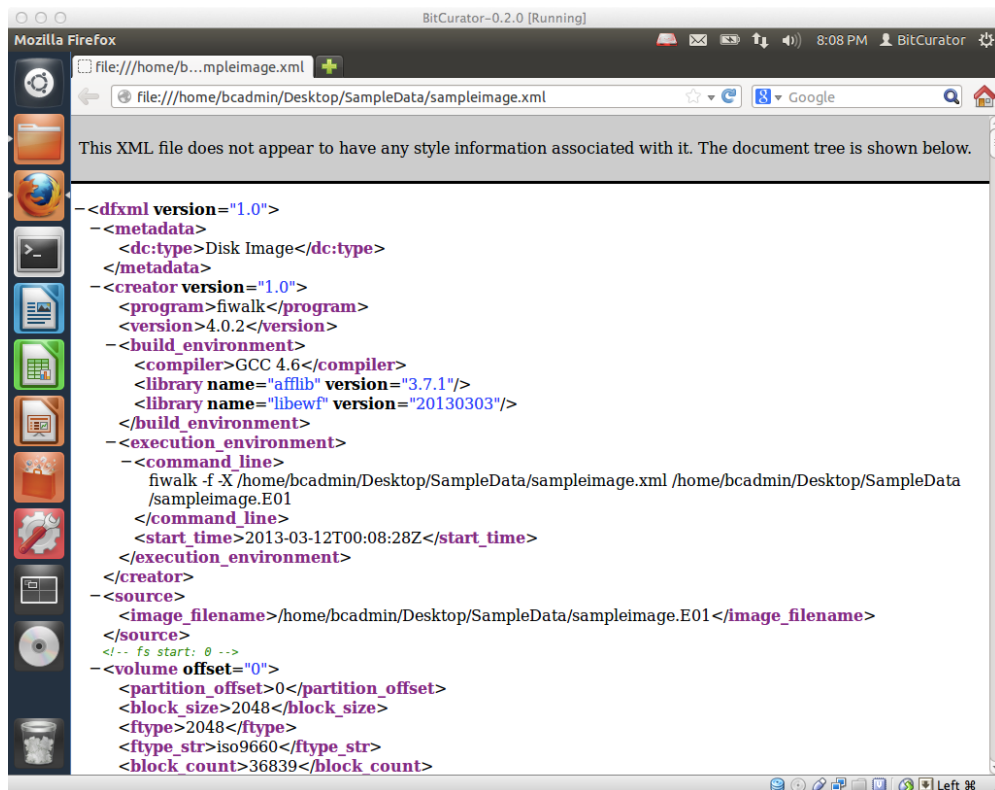
- Double-click on the “Forensics Tools” folder, and then double click on the “Fiwalk Command Line” launcher. You’ll see a terminal pop up and execute the help dialog for fiwalk.



The fiwalk program needs to know three things:

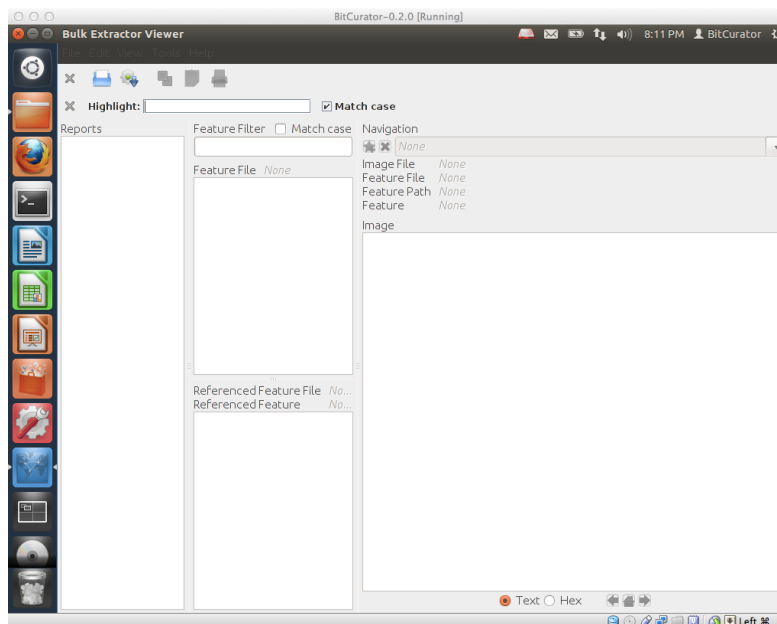
1. Whether you want to run “file” to identify the file formats in the file system (the ‘-f’ option)
2. The name of the DFXML file that will be produced (‘-X’, followed by the file path)
3. The name of the image to process.



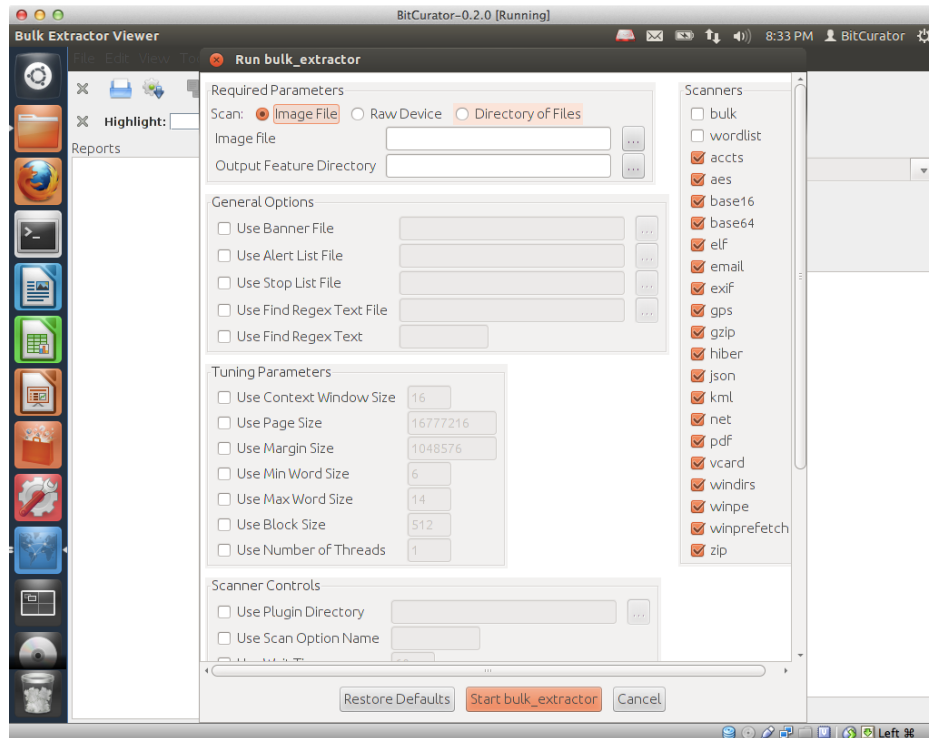


Generating “Feature” (potentially sensitive or personally revealing information) reports with Bulk Extractor

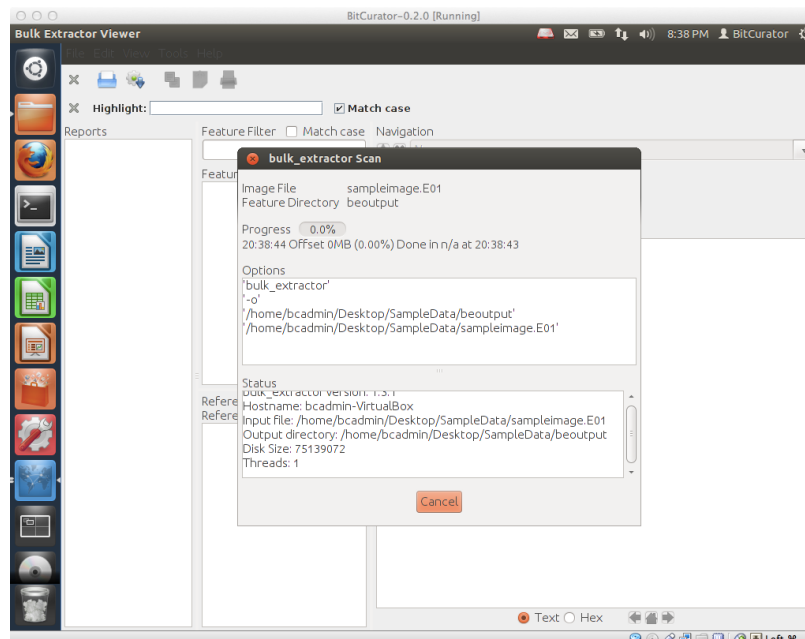
- From the desktop, double-click on “Forensics Tools”, and then double-click on the “Bulk Extractor Viewer” icon. This will launch the GUI front-end to Bulk Extractor, a tool to identify various “features” contained within the bitstream extracted from the source media.



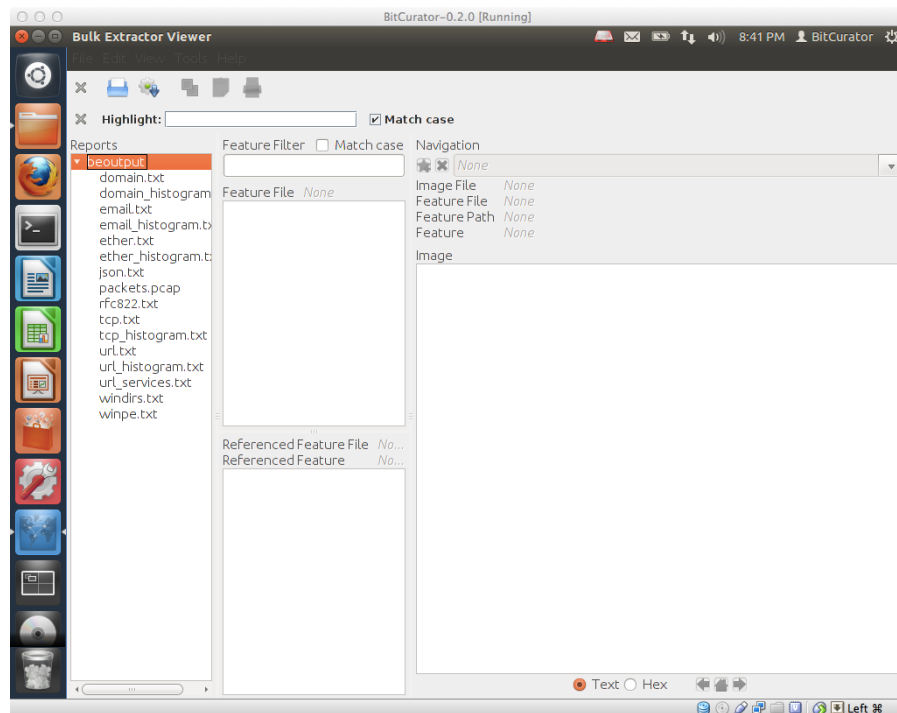
- Click on the “Tools” menu in the top of the window, and select “Run Bulk Extractor”. This will bring up a dialog that allows you to select which scanners to run, and where to generate the report directory.



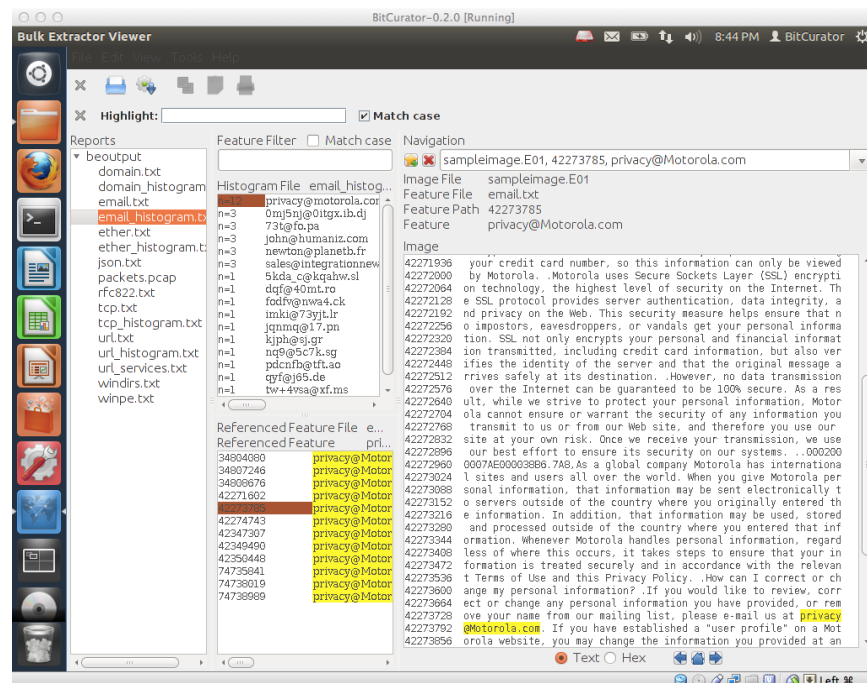
- Using the “...” icons to the right of the “Image File” and “Output Feature Directory” text boxes, you can select the image file you’ve produced and tell Bulk Extractor to output the report in a new directory “beoutput”, within the SampleData directory you made previously on the desktop.
- You can click on “Start Bulk Extractor” at the bottom of the dialog and then see a new dialog appear, indicating the progress made so far. For large disk images, it may take a while for the process to complete.



- Once the process has completed, the report directory will be available in the relevant location (in our case, the directory “beoutput” within SampleData). The features identified can also be viewed in the main Bulk Extractor Viewer window, by clicking on the report name in the “Reports” subwindow.

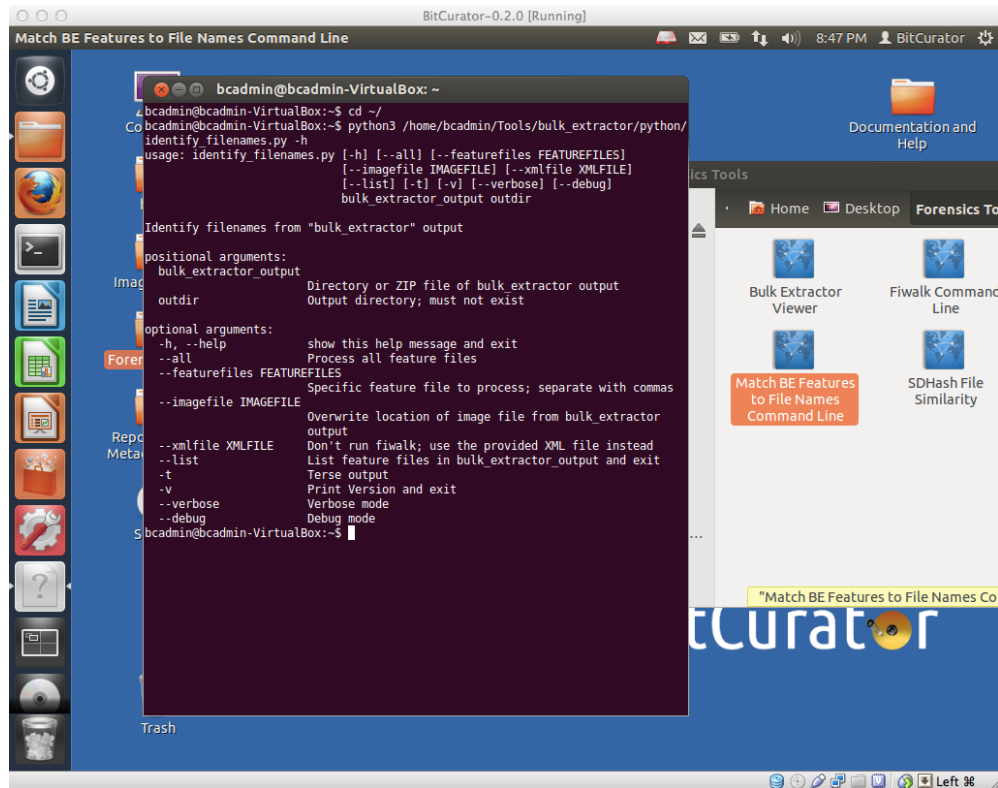


- Individual features may be examined, for example by selecting the histogram file associated with a particular feature type (in the example above, emails), clicking on a particular instance of a feature in the “Referenced Feature” window, and examining that feature in the Image map on the right.



Bulk Extractor extracts these features from a disk image by scanning the raw bitstream – not by parsing the filesystem. In order to determine the folders or files where the features appear (or if they appear on an area of the disk not associated with the filesystem), you need to run an additional tool called “Identify File Names.” You can do this by:

- Returning to the desktop, double-click on “Forensics Tools”, and double clicking on “Match BE Features to File Names Command Line”. You would then see a new terminal pop up.



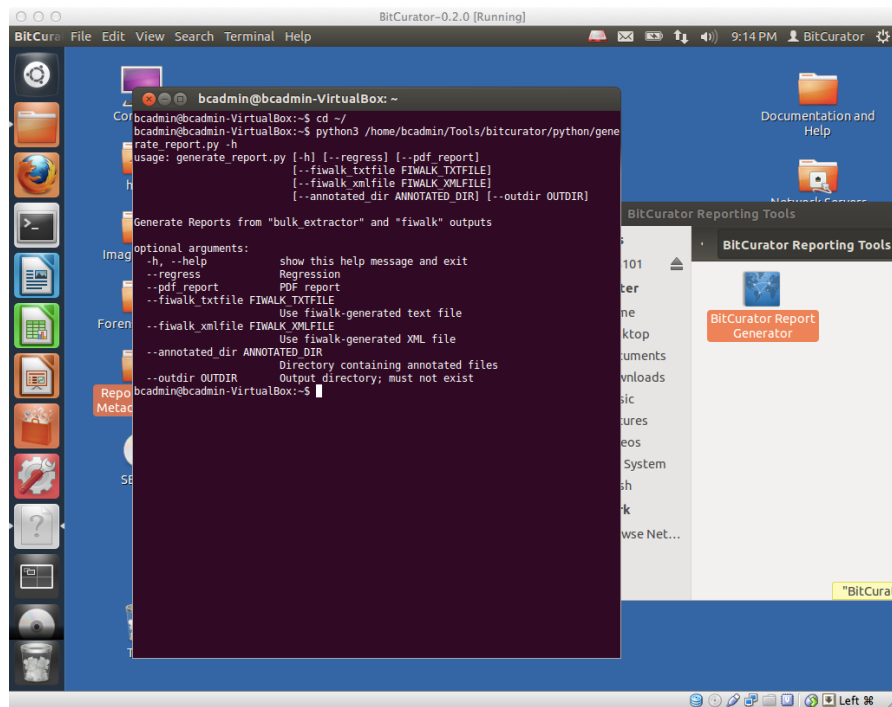
Identify Filenames needs to know five things:

1. Which feature reports to work from (here we've used the “all” flag to tell it to use all of them)
2. Where the image file is (“—image file [FILE LOCATION]”)
3. Where the fiwalk output is (“—xmlfile [FILE LOCATION]”)
4. Where the bulk extractor output is (just the location)
5. Where we want to generated the output. In this case, we're telling it to make a new directory called “beannotated” in our SampleData directory on the desktop.

```
bcadmin@bcadmin-VirtualBox:~$ python3 /home/bcadmin/Tools/bulk_extractor/python/identify_filenames.py --all --imagefile ~/Desktop/SampleData/sampleimage.E01 --xmlfile ~/Desktop/SampleData/sampleimage.xml ~/Desktop/SampleData/beoutput ~/Desktop/SampleData/beannotated
```

Generating Human-Readable Reports

- Double-click on “Reporting and Metadata Tools” on the desktop, open “BitCurator Reporting Tools”, and double-click on the “BitCurator Report Generator” launcher



The “Generate Report” program needs to know about four things:

1. Whether to generate the reports as PDFs (currently the only option), specified by `--pdf-report`
2. Where the fiwalk output is (“`--fiwalk_xmlfile [FILE LOCATION]`”)
3. Where the annotated bulk extractor report directory (the one we generated in the last step) is (“`--annotated_dir [DIRECTORY LOCATION]`”)
4. Where we want to generate the output. In this case, we’re telling it to make a new directory called “bcsamplerereports” in the SampleData directory on the desktop.

There are also a couple prompts for configuration. You can use the defaults by typing “Y” and enter for the first prompt, and simply hitting enter for the second.

```
bcadmin@bcadmin-VirtualBox:~$ python3 /home/bcadmin/Tools/bitcurator/python/generate_report.py --pdf_report --fiwalk_xmlfile /home/bcadmin/Desktop/SampleData/sampleimage.xml --annotated_dir /home/bcadmin/Desktop/SampleData/beannotated --outdir /home/bcadmin/Desktop/SampleData/bcsamplerereports
>>> Do you want to specify the configuration file?: [Y/N]:Y
>>> Please specify the configuration file[/etc/bitcurator/bc_report_config.txt]:
```