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## **Bart's PE Builder Review**

### *Windows without Windows!*

Microsoft Windows is the well known Operating System of the Redmond's software giant. We all use it, as a part of our daily work, study or at home. And it is used world wide, Bill Gates' OS being on top with a high and comfortable advantage on its pursuers. As Windows captured the market in such a fast way, the problems didn't wait to appear. We all remember those Windows 9x BSOD (Blue Screen Of Death); I still recall those sleepless nights when trying to get my machine stable, installing it over and over. But as years went by, Microsoft got better in its work, developed new strategies and implemented better solutions in their products. Yet sadly, even the problems evolved. More powerful viruses, exploits and all kinds of malware that can take over the security bugs. This goes to a terrible headache for people who are in charge of PC security, network administration or IT supervisors. Because Windows could have a problem when least expected. There are many ways to manage a smooth functioning of Windows OS and to try to revive it if something bad occurs. But today, I want to talk about the highest nightmare of all, when you desperately say "It won't boot". Well, apart that I advise you to always have a full backup of a fresh installed Windows (just in case all would go wrong) I must say that in the backup and recovery field, there are many types of software and one of these being the preloaded environments. These ones are built for helping you in doing some PC maintenance tasks (your system could work fine, you can use it for other inspecting jobs too) with the help of a bootable CD/DVD you can burn it for yourself. So, if you're having troubles and want to see what's in, you definitely must try Bart's Preinstalled Environment (BartPE) bootable live windows CD/DVD. Yes, dear readers, that's the name. BartPE is developed and kept alive by [Bart Lagerweij](#), a Dutch programmer whose software helped me a lot through the last 3 years. Many advanced and expert users might have heard about and used it; I'm referring to those who want to try this wonderful tool. As the official site says "BartPE is Admin's best friend..." "What else should I say? I warmly recommend it. Give it a try. So, our deep inside journey begins. Your horses should be hold by now - just put on your seat belt and enjoy what follows. We'll take it piece by piece. First, the user interface. The main window of PE Builder is built with a neat graphic interface - not a breathtaking one, but it surely displays all building parts for your bootable CD. Simple and efficient. This main interface has two panes - Builder and Media Output. You can select the source of the installation files necessary for building the CD, can include your own and select the name of the output location. In the media part, you can create an ISO image of your work or simply burn the installation onto the CD/DVD. BartPE has a classic menu, composed of three parts: Builder, Source and the Help one, of course. Within the Builder menu, you can choose from different options: you can build your customized files onto the media support or build an ISO file if you created one. Here, you can view the log of the last build or manage your plugins. The Options set is also here, allowing you to change the language or autodetecting it, verify your written data and some other advanced useful features (remove the ISO and clean the output folder after burning and others). I must say a few extra words about the Plugins tool. It's a powerful and fully configurable extension that will let you choose from a various list of existing tools and programs you can use when you will have booted up your damaged Windows installation. You can add your own set of tools, enable/disable or configure the existing ones. The second menu is the Source one. Not much to say for it - it has three options - Search, Check and Slipstream. Of course you can let the installer search your Windows installation files, with the first one. Or check the path of the given source if already chosen, it will tell you whether it's valid or not. The last one will mix the installation files with a service pack file

and enable you to output those files in a desired location on the hard drive. *As a final word*, I must remind you: this tool is only an installer, you have to build your own bootable CD with all the plugins you want and need for your work. **The good**A very good part is the network support. Yeah, you can use this without loading Windows. Ever wanted to test a network device/application but didn't want to make any change to the current configuration? That's the point with BartPE. You can do almost everything with the bootable CD made with this installer. **The bad** can't say a bad thing about this one. Really. That's the best helping tool I've ever seen in my work with Windows OS. Maybe some graphic improvements have to be done. A more professional look, I mean. **The truth**As the producer says "BartPE is Admin's best friend". What else should I add? If in trouble and want to see what's beneath the Windows installation, then Mister, you MUST have this one. And if you're an IT specialist and never heard of BartPE, well my friend, I guess you were never pissed off by reinstalling a Windows in the last three or four years. *Here are some snapshots of the application in action:*