

**Update your MD-380 / Retevis RT3 or
MD-390 with GPS / Retevis RT8 with GPS
from Windows running a Linux Virtual Machine**

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Revision 2.21

Obtain the latest version of this document and VM image file from github at this link:

<https://github.com/KD4Z/md380tools-vm>

This project is a fork of [kd0kkv-vm](#). Thanks go to KD0KKV for releasing the first VirtualBox image that stirred my interest in doing updates under Windows in the first place. It appears that Travis Goodspeed and Friends are creating actual Windows binaries now, so the usefulness of this Virtual Machine (VM) may be reduced in the near future.

For now, this VM steps allow you to use MD380tools to keep your radio up-to-date using a Windows based system instead of a linux or Raspberry Pi machine. Actually, you will be running linux in a Virtual Machine to do this. This VM runs well on a Windows 7, Windows 10 or Mac OS X laptops, making it highly mobile. It also adds some tricky stuff to make your life much easier.

I've been asked time and time again, "How do I do this with Windows" and so here it goes. I've just documented this stuff as text for now in order to get it out there. As time permits, I'll add screen shots and make it pretty later.

You could freshly install any Linux distribution you like in VirtualBox, however I recently ran across the image made by KD0KKV, and thought it was useful. I created this fork to enhance the image to support MD-390 radios with GPS and provide more detailed instructions in its use.

Step 1: Download the image file containing the VM

You need to download the VirtualBox Appliance image file from github.

With your favorite web browser, navigate to: <https://github.com/KD4Z/md380tools-vm>

Download the image file from the Dropbox link mentioned on that site.

Currently it links to: https://dl.dropboxusercontent.com/u/24789865/VM/tyt_kd4z.ova

Note: You might need to Right-Click on the link and Choose "Save link as.." You want to download it as a file, not view it on your screen. In the next VM release, I will be wrapping the OVA file inside an archive file using 7-Zip. This should avoid the download to view issue. The part files will also change to 7-zip part files. You can find this free utility at <http://www.7-zip.org>

You will end up with the file named tyt_kd4z.ova if it downloaded correctly. It's 811MB, so it may take a while to download. Save it where you can find it again. If you have trouble getting this large file to download, you may optionally download it in parts. You will need to use the RAR utility to extract / combine all of the parts back into the original appliance image file.

Step 2: Download VirtualBox

Download and Install Oracle VM VirtualBox on your system. It's a free download from:
<https://www.virtualbox.org/>

Choose the appropriate version of VirtualBox for your OS. If you are reading this, you likely are interested in the Windows version. At the time I wrote this, version 5.1.12 was the current version.

Download the installer for Windows from the link "Windows hosts." Install it as you normally would any other application. You will need to be a local Administrator on your workstation. You may also installing this on Mac OS X using the appropriate link. The VM works well on both Windows and OS X hosts.

Step 3: Install the Oracle VM VirtualBox Extension Pack.

You must download and install the VirtualBox Extension Pack as well. Click on the other highlighted link "All supported platforms," and save the Extension Pack file. Double-click on the Extension Pack file after downloading to install it.

I had trouble installing version 5.x when I was upgrading it from 4.x a version already on my workstation. See **Known Issues** below for what I had to do to get past a rather nasty blockage.

Step 4: Reboot your workstation

It might be prudent to reboot your workstation at this point. It shouldn't be required, however doing so may be helpful in making the USB device enumeration go smoothly in the next few steps. Might as well do it now, before starting up the VM for the first time.

If your radio isn't connected with the programming USB cable, do so now. Turn the radio on normally for now. Let it sit while you are doing the other steps. It takes Windows a long time to install the USB driver the very first time.

Step 5: Import the Virtual Machine Appliance Image file

Launch Oracle VM VirtualBox Manager.

From the File menu, choose "Import Appliance." Click on the file folder button to browse for the image file. Navigate to where you saved the tyt_kd4z.ova Appliance file. Select it and choose OK.

Take the defaults for everything else. It will take a few minutes to complete the import. When completed, you will see a VM listed in VirtualBox Manager as a linux VM having the name "tyt."

Don't start the VM yet. You need to check the configuration of the network adapter first. These settings worked for my situation, however you may need to tinker to get it to work on your hardware.

With the tyt VM selected,

Click on the Settings toolbar icon in the Oracle VM VirtualBox Manager

Click on "Network" on the left side menu.

Click on "Advanced so you can see everything.

Change the values for Adapter 1 to these if not already set that way:

Attached to : **NAT**

And under advanced,

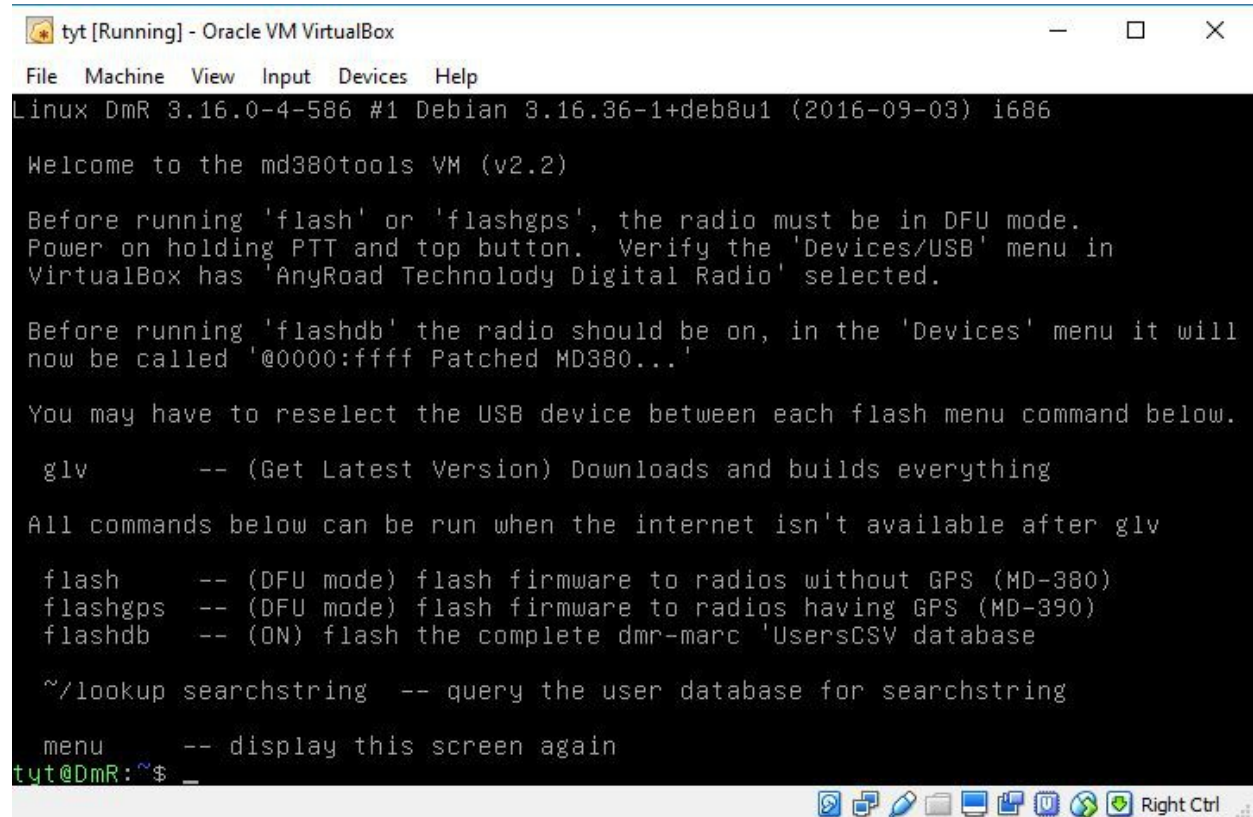
Adapter Type: **PCnet-FAST III (Am79C)**

Click OK.

As far as System memory goes, the Debian VM image is very small and actually will run at the default setting of 256MB, so no need to adjust it higher.

Step 6: Start the VM

Now start the VM by clicking on the green arrow toolbar icon. You want to leave it set at the default option of “normal start.” After the VM finishes loading, you will be presented with a menu screen of options. This is what you should see:



```
tyt [Running] - Oracle VM VirtualBox
File Machine View Input Devices Help
Linux DmR 3.16.0-4-586 #1 Debian 3.16.36-1+deb8u1 (2016-09-03) i686

Welcome to the md380tools VM (v2.2)

Before running 'flash' or 'flashgps', the radio must be in DFU mode.
Power on holding PTT and top button. Verify the 'Devices/USB' menu in
VirtualBox has 'AnyRoad Technolody Digital Radio' selected.

Before running 'flashdb' the radio should be on, in the 'Devices' menu it will
now be called '@0000:ffff Patched MD380...'

You may have to reselect the USB device between each flash menu command below.

glv      -- (Get Latest Version) Downloads and builds everything

All commands below can be run when the internet isn't available after glv

flash    -- (DFU mode) flash firmware to radios without GPS (MD-380)
flashgps -- (DFU mode) flash firmware to radios having GPS (MD-390)
flashdb  -- (ON) flash the complete dmr-marc 'UsersCSV database

~/lookup searchstring -- query the user database for searchstring

menu     -- display this screen again
tyt@DmR:~$
```

Notice that you have a linux prompt in the lower left corner of the VM window. You are automatically logged in with the user “tyt” The “@DmR” indicates the host name of the VM is “DmR.” The prompt will look like this:

tyt@DmR:~\$

If you are new to linux, note that commands are Case Sensitive! In this VM, every command is in lowercase.

The VM has a screen saver that completely blanks the screen. When the VM screen seems to go all black, don't panic. Press the ESC key to get back to your screen.

To safely shutdown the VM, try not to “X” the window away. Instead, choose “ACPI Shutdown” from the “Machine” menu. This will be the only correct way to shutdown the VM as you are not running as root.

You can run the **menu** command anytime you need to see the options again.

Step 7: Verify networking is working

You will need to verify that you have the network adapter working and can get to the Internet.

Try pinging a well-known host. Type this at the prompt.

ping www.google.com

Press Ctrl+C to stop the ping command after a few lines go by.

If you get successful ping replies, you are good to go. If not, look to see if your network adapter received an IP address from your router.

/sbin/ifconfig

The network adapter is "eth0". The *ifconfig* command should show that you have an IP address associated to eth0. Likely it will be in the 10.0.x.x network range. This is normal for the NAT selection.

If you don't see an IP address, you will need to tinker with the Network adapter settings until you get connectivity. As an alternative, you could change the "Attached to" setting to *Bridged Adapter*, then select your host machine's network adapter card for the "Name" setting. Using this method will make the VM obtain a real IP number in your network's DHCP range.

In order to run the commands in the VM, you will need to have the VM successfully connected to the Internet. Don't bother continuing until you can get ping responses as described above.

Now what?

The VM can be used to manually run any of the available commands provided by the MD380tools project. However, a menu of commands has been provided to make operations much simpler for beginners.

*** MENU OPTIONS ***

Menu items are one word commands for the most part. Press Enter after typing the command to execute it. Use the **menu** command to return to the menu.

glv - (Get Latest Version) Downloads all required files from the md380tools project on github.com. It also compiles the firmware files for both types of radios. (non-GPS and GPS enabled) Finally, it downloads the current worldwide dmr-marc user database, and prepares it to be sent to the radio.

Nothing happens to the radio with this command. You must always do this step first, and watch out for any errors before continuing to the next command. This step may take a minute or two to finish. Don't worry about all of the gobble-gook scrolling by --that is totally normal.

When the glv command is finished, you have all you need to flash and update radios in the VM. The Internet connection isn't needed for any of the remaining commands.

flash (DFU Mode) - Flashes the firmware to NON GPS radios. Use this for MD-380 and MD-390 radios that do NOT have a GPS. Your radio must be in DFU mode for this command. See the next section "DFU Mode" for the simple procedure to start your radio in DFU mode.

Check the USB Device menu to make sure the device for the radio is selected, before executing this command.

When actually writing to the radio, a value indicating percentage of completion will indicate progress. It should take less than a minute to complete this process.

flashgps (DFU Mode) - Flashes the firmware to GPS enabled radios. Only use this command for radios that has GPS support. If you flash this by accident, your non-gps radio will hang at startup. (Ask me how I know this!)

Your radio must be in DFU mode for this command. Like the flash command, check the USB Device menu to make sure the device for the radio is selected, before executing.

flashdb (ON) - Flash the user database to radio. You can use this command on any supported model of the radio.

The radio is in the turned on state, not in DFU mode. But you still need to check that the USB device as noted before entering the flashdb command.

The USB device may display differently than in DFU mode. It will be listed something like @00000010:ffffff Patched MD380

When running, it will first erase the flash area for the user contact data, then flash in the new user contact data. This will take a few minutes to complete.

When it first starts, a count of how many contact records are being written will be printed. At this point, you should sit back and say "Wow" to yourself.

*** Recipes ***

The typical recipe of steps to execute will consist of three commands, one at a time, in sequence. Be sure to follow any directions displayed to restart the radio when prompted to do so. Some commands actually restart the radio for you, so you don't have to actually do it twice.

MD-380 / Retevis RT3 Recipe: (If you have a non-gps MD-390, use this option –I hear they exist)

glv

flash

flashdb

MD-390 / Retevis RT8 (with GPS) Recipe:

glv

flashgps

flashdb

Update UsersCSV only Recipe: (use for all radios with 16 Meg flash size)

glv

flashdb

After running a command, you can execute the **menu** command to see the menu options again.

At this point, you are done! If you are going to flash multiple radios, there is no need to run the **glv** command each time. Just run the appropriate flash command for each radio type, again and again.

As mentioned above, the **glv** command pulls down everything needed from the Internet, compiles the latest firmware and contact user data file. You can run this command anytime you want to bring down the latest features / bug fixes / user data.

You don't need to use the **flash** or **flashgps** commands every time either! Likely, all you may want to do is keep the user contact database up-to-date. Use **flashdb** when you start seeing DMR IDs that are showing up as "Unknown ID" instead of the usual name / call sign data. Just run **glv**, then **flashdb** to keep your contact data up-to-date.

If you have one of the very first MD-380 models, especially a VHF model, you might not be able to use the **flashdb** command. If you get an error about flash size, you can not use this feature at all. It won't hurt to try it, as the **flashdb** command will not attempt to force the issue and cause damage.

*** Fun Times ***

If this is the first time you have flashed the MD380tools firmware into your radio, you will need to enable a few new settings to fully utilize the new abilities. Go into the radio *Utilities* menu and navigate to the new sub menu item *MD380tools*.

You will need to enable the menu item *UsersCSV*. This enables the new firmware to utilize the massive contact database now stored in your radio. Currently, that includes almost 50 thousand records from the DMR-MARC user registry. When this option is disabled, the contacts embedded in the code plug are used. Not likely what you want now.

Other fun things to do in the MD380tools menu:

Change Date Format to: **Alt. Status**

It's all the way down at the end of the scrolling list of date formats. This turns off the Date and Time display and shows you Last Heard information instead. Trust me, you will like this.

You will notice the date and time display will be gone, to be replaced by: "lh" followed by the call sign, and an arrow pointing to the Talkgroup number they were using.

Promiscuous Mode: **Enabled**

This is the feature that started it all. Enable it to hear any activity on the time slice of the channel you have selected. Any talkgroup will come in, so be sure to look at the Last Heard data to see where they were talking before going back to them. It's a lot like having Scan enabled all the time.

Mic Bargraph: **Enabled**

This enables a cute flashing VU Meter when you are transmitting. Use it to see how hot your voice level is and adjust your mouth-to-radio distance or voice to make it consistent. Digital radio voices that are too hot sound awful, so use this feature as a reference for good operating practice.

Edit DMR ID:

You can now change the radio's DMR ID without using the CPS software. Handy if you need to switch identities in the field.

*** Hidden Easter Eggs ***

Some very interesting hidden features can be enabled under the Utilities | MD380Tools menu. Scroll down to DevOnly!! and enable it. I believe you need to have Promiscuous mode enabled as well. This enables hidden menu items that are accessed with the single digits of the numeric keypad. Here are the most interesting items:

- 8: Display screen one of diagnostic information . This screen displays some interesting data including current channel, zone, and talk group number. There appears to be an RSSI value, with normalized values from 1 to 5. There is an open ticket with the MD380Tools group to change this to display RSSI in dBm in the future.
- 9: Display screen two of diagnostic information. This screen displays calibration values for current power level, the TX and RX frequencies, color code, time slice and talk group name.
- 4: Display the last 10 stations heard. Includes a time stamp, and the talk group heard on.
- 5: Clears the list displayed in option 4 above.
- 3: Temporarily changes the current talk group that the radio will transmit on to the last station heard was using. This is of particular interest to those using the promiscuous mode. If you are monitoring stations with promiscuous mode enabled, you may hear stations come through that are not using the talk group your radio is currently using on the selected memory channel. You can press "3" on the keypad, and go directly back to the station you last heard. This works very well if you are using a sharkRF Openspot device.
- 7: Exits from the hidden diagnostic screens.

*** DFU Mode (aka Download Firmware Update or Bootloader Mode) ***

If your radio is ON, turn it off and connect the USB cable to your radio and your computer's USB port.

Hold down PTT and the Upper user programmable button at the same time, then power the radio back ON. The busy LED should be flashing Red/Green. If the busy LED isn't flashing, turn the radio off and try again.

From Devices menu in the select USB, then "AnyRoad Technology Digital Radio" if you see it, or anything mentioning the MD-380. The menu should show a check mark in front of the radio selection if you were successful.

I received an error every time I tried this setup the very first time. See the Known Issues section below for possible tips to get past issues I encountered. You must have the USB port selected before continuing with the rest of the firmware update steps.

Note that when the radio is simply powered on, the USB device may display differently than in DFU mode. It will be listed something like @00000010:ffffff Patched MD380. This is normal, and you would want to have it selected so you can perform run the **flashdb** command.

*** Power users ***

If you aren't into using hardwired menus. You can forgo using the menu commands completely and follow the notes that Travis has clearly documented here:

<https://github.com/travisgoodspeed/md380tools/blob/master/README.md>

In a nutshell, this VM has all the of the MD380tools project files. So you can tinker with building / flashing new firmware and users by following the directions starting with "Flash updated firmware for linux based installations" in the README.md file on Travis Goodspeed's github page. (This should be required reading by the way.)

Just change to the MD380tools directory manually before invoking any of the commands provided by MD380tools. You might want to poke around and see what is going behind the scenes. I'd start in the md380tools/dist directory. You can find date stamped versions of the firmware files there, plus a zip file containing the Windows binaries that could be useful to you.

Observant users may notice a shell script named **lookup** in the tyt home directory. This little wrapper script allows you to do quick case-insensitive searches in the user database.

usage:

~/lookup data

Data can be anything in the dmr-marc datafile. Callsigns, names, city, or DMR-ID will work.

For example:

~/lookup kk4vcz

~/lookup 313180

*** Static DMR Users ***

If you were used to manually adding local or private DMR IDs into your code plug, you may have noticed that they don't show up now with the *UsersCSV* mode enabled. To support private IDs, a local file of contact information can be created and will be pulled in using a simple bash script. In the next release of the VM image, the file will be pulled in automatically with the **glv** command. For now, it will have to be manually executed after the **glv** command.

This file must be created in the tyt home directory and be in the exact same format of the file created by the md380tools scripting. That file format is simple, but must contain the same number of fields as the user.bin file. Name the file: **static.users**

The file that you need to create is a basic text file. You can use the *nano* text editor inside the VM to create and maintain it. The format is simple, yet critical in structure. However it is very easy to emulate as there are only 7 data fields to fill in, separated by commas. Each contact is placed on a separate line.

The first two fields are required, with the remaining fields are optional. You must place hold them with commas however. Be sure to count commas in each line, maintaining that 6 commas exist on each line. The first field is obviously the DMR ID number you want to define. The remaining fields can be filled in as desired. Here is a sample of what you need in the **static.users** file:

```
101,call1,name1,city1,state1,nickname1,country1
102,call2,name2,,,nickname2,
103,call3,name3,,,,
```

The first line shows each field being utilized. The second and third lines show how fields can be left blank. Again, be sure to count commas. Each line must have six commas! An example file *static.users.example* is provided on github for reference.

Advanced users may use ftp to download a file from outside the VM, however be sure to save it in Unix format, not Windows. That means, each line is separated with a line feed (LF) only, not Carriage Return-Line Feed (CRLF) You can use the popular open-source editor Notepad++ for this. In Notepad++, use the Edit | EOL Conversion menu and select Unix (LF) format. If you created the file using Windows Notepad, Notepad++ can be used to convert it to Unix format.

If you are new to linux, you might need to get used to using the *nano* text editor. To create the file, enter these commands:

```
cd ~
```

```
nano static.users
```

You can enter as many private contacts as you like. Press Ctrl + X to when finished. Answer with a "Y" to save your changes. Then press "Enter" to accept the filename unchanged and *nano* will exit.

Your private file is appended to the user.bin file when you execute the script **addstatic**. After running **glv**, execute **addstatic** like this:

```
./addstatic
```

You will need to run this command every time after you have executed **glv**, but before **flashdb**.

*** Installing support for static DMR IDs ***

If you are running version 2.2 or lower of the VM, the scripting for inserting static DMR IDs is not present. Starting with version 2.3, you will not need to install anything as it will already be included. However, you may install it easily or run this step to update the scripts if any changes have been made.

From the tyt home directory, type and execute this command exactly, all on one line:

```
wget https://raw.githubusercontent.com/KD4Z/md380tools-vm/master/install_static -O install_static &&  
bash ./install_static
```

Note that there is a period and slash in front of the second `install_static`.

If you managed to type all of that correctly, you should see a few files downloaded to your home directory. If you type **dir** then enter, you should see two new files appear.

addstatic

static.users.example

The `addstatic` file is the bash script that will append your `static.users` file into the `user.bin` file.

Use the `static.users.example` as a guide. It is a small file, so you can have it display on your screen with this command:

cat static.users.example

The modified recipe for updating the UsersCSV data will now be:

glv

./addstatic

flashdb

Note, you should only run the **./addstatic** command one time after **glv**. Duplicate entries would result if you run it multiple times.

Known issues ***

When installing VirtualBox 5.x, the installer got stuck with an error dialog that stated:

"The application "iphlpvc.dll" needs to be closed for the installation to continue"

If you run into this message, you may be able to solve it without canceling the installation.

Go to your search box in Windows and search for "View local Services" Launch the Services Snap-in. Scroll down and find "IP Helper", Click on "Stop Service"

Then click on Retry. You also may cancel the installation and run the VirtualBox installer again. It will likely think the last install was partially finished and offer up "Repair" or "Remove" options. Choose "Repair" and it will run the installer for you again and finish things up. You can restart the IP Helper service after Virtual Box has finished installing.

You might just want to stop the IP Helper service ahead of time to avoid this issue.

Those stupid USB devices!

I ran into another issue where I couldn't get the USB port to attached to the radio. USB devices seem to be the hardest issue to overcome with Virtual Machines in general. The USB driver for the MD-380 was no exception.

You may have to do these steps with the radio connected and turned on:

From the Devices menu in the VM window:

Choose Settings | Ports | USB | USB Settings ...

Click the icon on the right side with a USB plug and a + sign, to add a new USB Filter

Choose the device which cannot be attached. (*Patched MD380*)

Click on the next icon down from the + icon, it looks like it is a USB plug with a dot.

This should bring up a window that allows editing of the USB device properties.

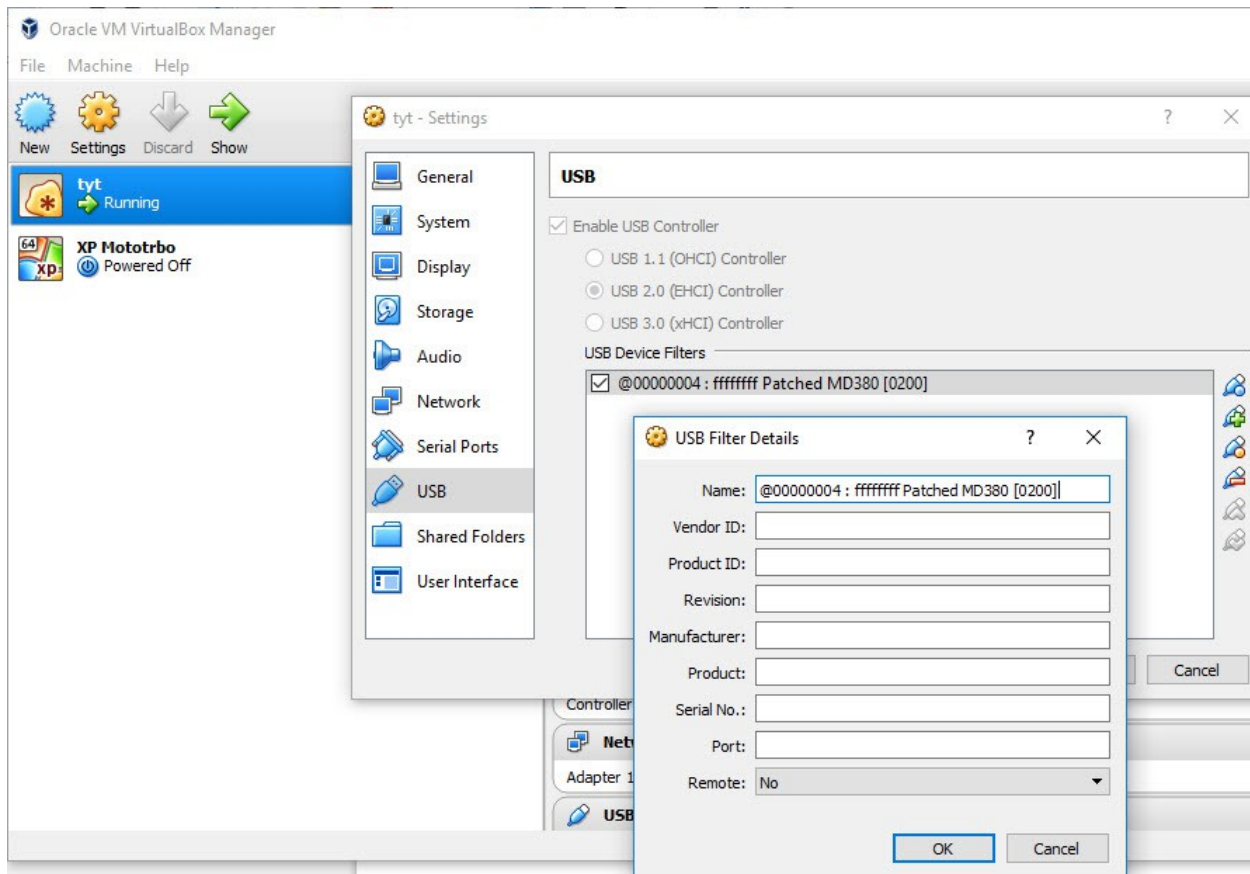
Clear all fields except the name, and click Save.

Unplug the USB device. (***You must do this!***)

Plug in the USB device again.

Go back to the Devices | USB menu, and try to attach the USB device again.

This is how it should look:

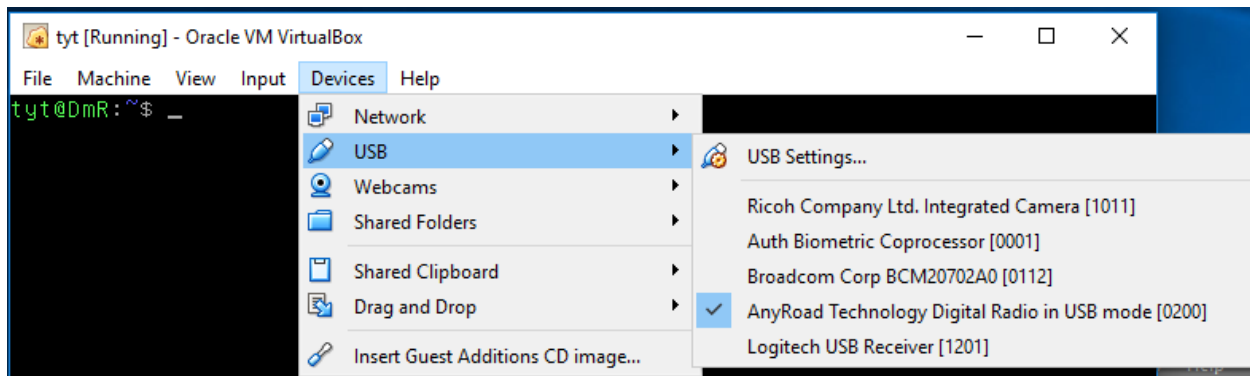


If this doesn't work, shutdown the VM, then restart it and try again. Still stuck, I'm out of ideas, start Googleing.

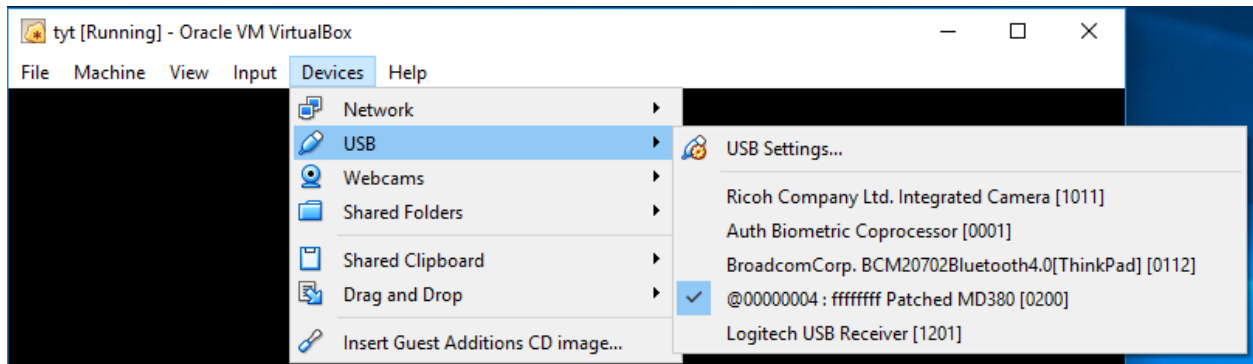
I had to do the unplug / plug back in dance a few times in order to get the USB Device selected.

When you get a check mark in front of the radio device, you are good to go.

For reference, the screen shot below shows how it should look in when the radio is connected and in DFU mode.



The next screen shot shows how the USB Device selection screen should look when the radio is connected and turned on normally.



Good luck and your mileage may vary! Note that you are responsible for issues experienced with any of this. Use the MD380tools Yahoo forum to post questions.

If you run into Travis Goodspeed, KK4VCZ be sure to buy him a beer for his trouble. I'd accept the same for mine.

73 de KD4Z

Warren Merkel

Version History:

1.0 December 9, 2016

Release of documentation only.

2.0 December 13, 2016

Initial release of forked project containing VM image.

2.1 December 16, 2016

Removed the “flashlast” commands as they are now redundant. Refactored the **glv** command to compile everything needed. The compiled firmware bin files are copied to the tyt home directory for use by the flash commands. You can use the ftp command to copy them elsewhere if desired.

Refactored the **glv** command to download and build everything normally needed.

Refactored the **flash**, **flashgps** and **flashdb** command to be executable when not connected to the Internet.

2.2 December 17, 2016

Added a **lookup** script to facilitate easy searches for text in the user database. Updated this document as well.

2.21 December 24, 2016

Added support for static DMR ids to be added to the UsersCSV contact data. Added screen shots of USB configuration menus. Added mention of Easter Eggs.

This PDF document is also linked in the github page, so you can always find the latest version posted here:

<https://github.com/KD4Z/md380tools-vm>

End of Document.