File 20101124.2108: Notes from meeting with Kevin Miller at Deer Creek this morning: I dropped off the foreign travel paperwork at Julie Kerr's desk and talked with Kevin for a while about the stock options idea on iCreate and about VMware's ESXi hypervisor kernel. It is a highly stripped down Linux kernel (the disk image size was reduced from 2 gigabytes to 100 megabytes) for hosting virtual machines on a very small attack surface. The RM developer is considering adapting the idea rather than running a straight (SE Linux) distribution like Red Hat. The developer wants a Linux distribution that is supported, which is why they did not adopt my first suggestion to define their own distribution with a customised kernel like I do all the time with FreeBSD. This time I offerred the suggestion instead that the developer attempt to licence ESXi itself rather than searching for a standard distribution, e.g., DSL, that is almost but not quite what they want. The developer asked me to investigate whether ESXi can be licenced. At the least, it is thought, VMware would have to publish their changes in accordance with the GPL.

VMware are closely working with NSA on ESXi. NSA is enamoured of the small attack surface of the minimised kernel, and seems to be sharing some very interesting technical information with VMware, judging from the evolution of the content of white papers on VMware's web site in recent months: some formerly obscure topics are represented. Boyd Fletcher confirmed that NSA IAD are extremely excited about the new development.

I spoke with John Juilfs about the DoD 8570 compliance issue and confirmed from him that the proposed incentive would likely work on software developers.

References