

Why does my PXE Windows installation fail complaining about network drivers?

Q: Why does my PXE Windows installation fail complaining about network drivers?

- Why does my PXE Windows installation fail complaining about network drivers?
- Why do I get an error about missing network drivers when trying to install / reinstall my WIN.MIT.EDU computer over the network?
- Why does installing my brand new computer using a PXE network install of Windows on MITnet not work?

Context

- MIT central Windows domain, WIN.MIT.EDU
- MIT network Windows install via PXE / RIS
- New computers with new Ethernet drivers
- Error message during install: "The operating system image you selected does not contain the necessary drivers for your network adapter. Try selecting a different operating system image. If the problem persists, contact your system administrator. Setup can not continue."

Answer

The MIT Windows PXE install images have a large collection of network card drivers, but do not always contain drivers for the latest and greatest network cards. If you get the above error message the most likely cause is that your network card is too new or too uncommon for the MIT install image to contain a driver.

The MIT central Windows domain administrators can add network card drivers to the central PXE install images. To do so you will need to provide them with the driver(s) that shipped with the computer. Note that this applies primarily to Dell hardware, the supported Intel/Windows hardware on campus. For non-Dell computers you can still ask to have drivers added, but if there are conflicts this may not be possible. There may also be other compatibility issues with non-Dell hardware and the standard image that cannot be easily resolved.

On Dell machines, network card drivers are located in the `C:\Drivers` directory.

How to submit drivers for consideration

- If you are a WIN.MIT.EDU container administrator
 - Please collect a copy of the `C:\Drivers` directory from the machine's factory drive image/drive contents, or from its recovery disks
 - Contact the WIN.MIT.EDU domain maintainers the same way you would for other central domain issues, to let them know the model and configuration information of the machine and that you will be sending them the contents of the drivers directory
 - Send a copy of the drivers directory to them in whatever way is most convenient (burn to CD and send in Interdepartmental Mail, download via file server or WIN.MIT.EDU DFS share, etc.)
- If you are *not* a WIN.MIT.EDU container administrator
 - Grab a copy of the `C:\Drivers` directory
 - Please work through your department's / group's WIN.MIT.EDU container administrator to submit them to the WIN.MIT.EDU domain maintainers
- If you are not sure who your department's / group's container administrator is
 - Please contact the [IS&T Service Desk](#)
 - You'll need to be able to provide information (host name or IP address) for one or more managed Windows machines in your group to allow them to look up the container administrator