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DATA CENTER

Extreme Network OS

Target Path Selection Guide

Extreme Network OS Target Path releases are recommended code levels for Extreme VDX Ethernet Data Center switch platforms. Use the guidelines in this document when trying to determine the ideal version of Extreme Network OS software; consider these guidelines with other requirements that may be unique to your particular environment. This document is updated periodically when Extreme has modified or added new Target Path release recommendations.

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Overview

This document provides guidance for selecting an ideal Extreme Network OS code version for use on Extreme VDX Data Center Ethernet (DC-IP) switch platforms and optimum versions of code to use when migrating from one version of Extreme Network OS to another. These recommended Extreme Network OS versions are referred to as “Target Path” releases.

Use the Extreme Network OS Target Path release recommendations in this document with any special requirements of your particular environment. Always refer to the Extreme Network OS release notes, and carefully review the “Important Notes and Known Defects” information before selecting and installing any version of Extreme Network OS on a switch.

This document is updated on a periodic, as-needed basis to reflect the latest Extreme Network OS Target Path release recommendations. Always consult the latest version of this document when planning to install a new Extreme Network OS release on an Extreme VDX switch.

Definition of a Target Path Release

A Extreme Network OS release may be identified as a Target Path release only when it meets the following criteria:

- The release is an Extreme Network OS version of firmware that was created primarily for stability and reliability and not for the introduction of new features. This version of firmware may contain Reliability, Availability, and Serviceability (RAS) improvements and enhancements, but it typically does not contain new software features or support for new hardware.
- The specified code level (or an earlier patch at the same release level) must be deployed in a sufficient number of end-user production environments for at least two months and must have no known critical or pervasive issues or defects.

After a specific Extreme Network OS code version is identified as a Target Path release, newer patches (that is, releases that vary only with a different letter appended to the release number) that are released on the same code stream can also be considered safe as the designated Target Path release. In some situations, it may be ideal to select one of the later patch releases to pick up a fix for an issue that is applicable to a particular site or environment. These newer patch releases may also be formally announced as the Target Path release for that code level, and, in some cases, they may be designated as a Target Path release after fewer than the two months of customer exposure. Because patch releases typically contain minimal changes from their predecessors, it is not necessary to wait for this additional field exposure.

Always review the latest version of the Extreme Network OS release notes for the code level you are loading—and for the code level you from which you are migrating—before updating firmware. The Target Path designation does not guarantee that you will not encounter defects or that there are no limitations in upgrading or downgrading firmware levels. However, following the Target Path release recommendations produces the most trouble-free environments for data center customers using Extreme VDX switching platforms.

Target Path Release Designations

Table 1 specifies the Target Path release for each major version or family of Extreme Network OS releases that is actively supported in the field. In general, Extreme recommends running the most recent major code level that is supported by a particular hardware platform, although it is not necessary to upgrade if you do not need the new features or capabilities introduced in the later major release levels.

For some release levels, the Target Path release may contain some exceptions for special-purpose hardware platforms and functionality, such as embedded switches. The Notes column in Table 1 lists these exceptions for each major release.

Table 1. Target Path Releases by Major Extreme Network OS (NOS) Level

Major Extreme NOS Level	Target Path Release	Notes
NOS 4.1	NOS 4.1.3d	NOS 4.1.3c and 4.1.3d remain as valid Target Path versions for those devices that cannot be upgraded further.
NOS 5.0	NOS 5.0.2c	No longer recommended as Target Path.
NOS 6.0	NOS 6.0.2h	Recommended Target Path for all Extreme VDX platforms.
NOS 7.0	NOS 7.0.2b	Recommended Target Path for all Extreme VDX platforms.
NOS 7.2.0	NOS 7.2.0a3	Recommended Target Path for all Extreme VDX platforms.

Note: All patches released after the listed Target Path on the same major code release level will also be considered Target Path releases. The recommendation for new upgrades is to always select the highest patch on the Target Path code stream.

Note: More-recent versions of Extreme Network OS code provide additional functionality. Customers who want to deploy these latest features and who cannot wait for a Target Path designation on that release level should use the latest release available as a general recommendation.

Customers who do not have an immediate need for the latest features should follow the provided Target Path recommendations, selecting the latest Target Path release that provides the required level of functionality.

Future Target Path Releases

Because a Target Path release is based on proven reliability and a lack of critical issues, it is impossible to predict future Target Path releases. However, based on the very mature qualification process and planned release schedules for maintenance and patch releases, Extreme can provide some guidance as to the main code stream for the next Target Path release.

The future Target Path release level and time frame are subject to change without notice.