

Bootstrappers

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A bootstrapper for Windows is an executable file responsible for the initialization of updates or installations of the MSI installer.

The bootstrapper can be provided as part of a bundle and it eliminates the requirement for administrator install points and provides a more efficient method of chain installations.

Advantages of the bootstrapper:

- Checks to see whether the necessary Windows Installer (MSI) is present and installs it if not.
- Checks to see whether the product is already installed on the target computer, only moving forward if it isn't.
- Offers binary installs in which every system receives and runs the whole installer.
- By adding the msp to the installer folder and changing Setup.ini to apply that patch, it offers a straightforward method of chaining updates in the necessary sequence.
- The patch limitation that prevents an AIP from installing a quarterly update over an out-of-cycle patch does not apply to it. Installs may therefore always have the most recent version without having to restart.

Now why, for Enterprise Deployments are MSIs preferred and bootstrappers aren't? Apart from not having granular control using MSI Transform files (MST), the lack of preference for bootstrappers is described in e.g. in this [discussion on stackoverflow.com](#): "How to distribute an installer which contains a bootstrapper":
