



UKI Addons and extensions

safely extending UKIs kernel command line and
initrd

Emanuele Giuseppe Esposito

February 03, 2024

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- ▶ UKIs are flexible, and security is not sacrificed
- ▶ Attempt to advertise UKIs and their features

Let's first look at Vitaly's slides...

https://fosdem.org/2024/events/attachments/fosdem-2024-2394-linux-on-a-confidential-vm-in-a-cloud-where-s-the-challenge-/slides/20266/slides_fosdem2024_vkuznets_k3pOduv.pdf

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Vitaly's March 2023 presentation

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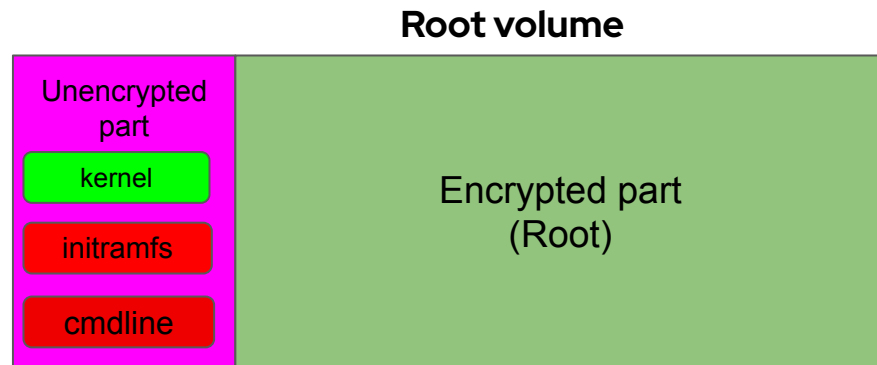
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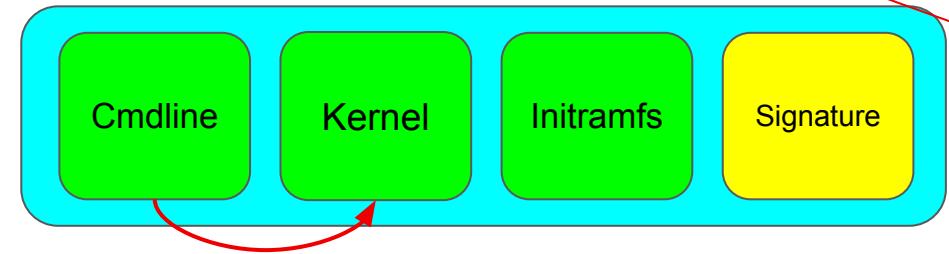
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- ▶ The host is still able to disrupt execution of the VM, e.g. it can stop it.
- ▶ Hardware (AMD SEV-SNP, Intel TDX) is responsible for encrypting memory and CPU state.
- ▶ Storage encryption is necessary for security and must be done by the guest OS.



- ▶ While kernel binary is signed by Red Hat, initramfs and kernel command line are locally produced and are not signed.
- ▶ Locally produced initramfs/cmdline have unpredictable measurements.

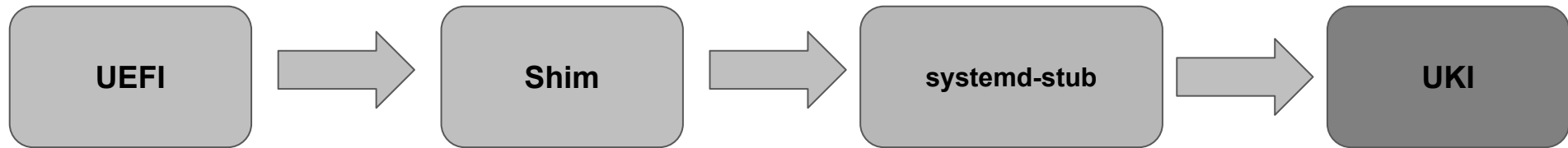
Unified Kernel Image (UKI)



- ▶ A single binary (UEFI application) produced **and signed** in Red Hat build system.
- ▶ The base for building UKI is systemd-stub.
- ▶ Contains vmlinuz, initramfs, and cmdline as PE sections.

Vitaly's March 2023 presentation

Booting UKI



Vitaly's March 2023 presentation

Kernel cmdline is now immutable

- ▶ Systemd GPT auto generator ([link](#)) must be used instead of "root="
- ▶ "Limited" customization is still required:
 - "crashkernel=" like options
 - debugging, tuning options
- ▶ A mechanism to have more than one cmdline in the UKI was requested ([link](#)).
- ▶ An additional "allowlist" of options which are allowed for customization is needed.
 - E.g. the basic "root=", "init=",... can't be allowed

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- ▶ Secure
 - Whoever modifies the cmdline is authenticated.
 - By default, nobody.
- ▶ Easily extensible
 - No need from RH to ship a new UKI every time cmdline changes, or have multiple UKIs with multiple cmdline

Adding kernel cmdline to an UKI

1. The embedded UKI .cmdline section

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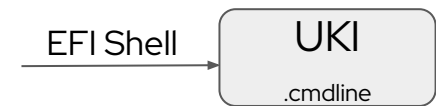


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- ▶ .cmdline PE section inside the UKI, created when the UKI is generated
- ▶ Advantages
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- ▶ Disadvantages
 - Static, impossible to modify unless UKI is re-generated and shipped again

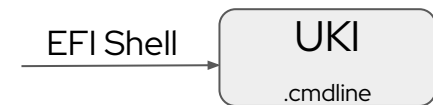


2. EFI Shell



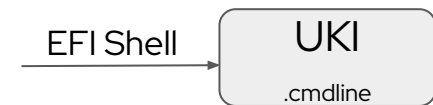
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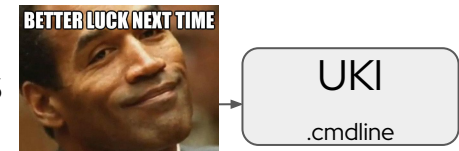
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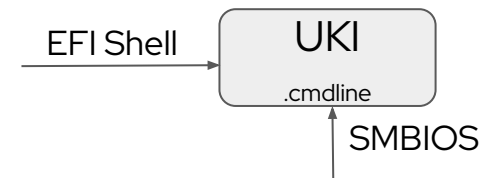


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- ▶ As a result, EFI Shell parameters are completely ignored in CVMs
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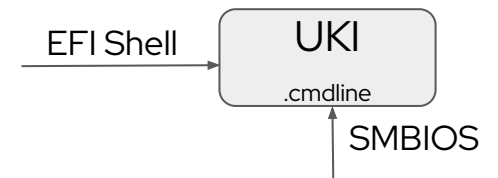


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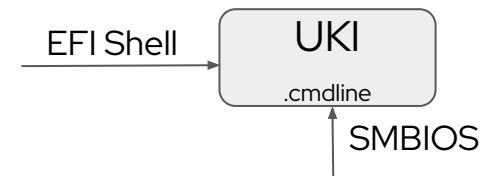
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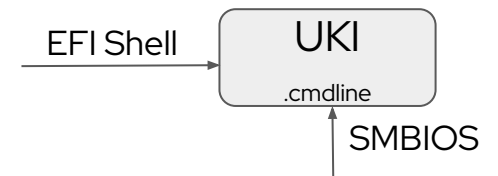
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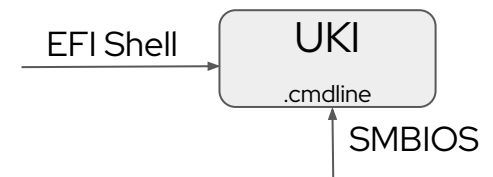
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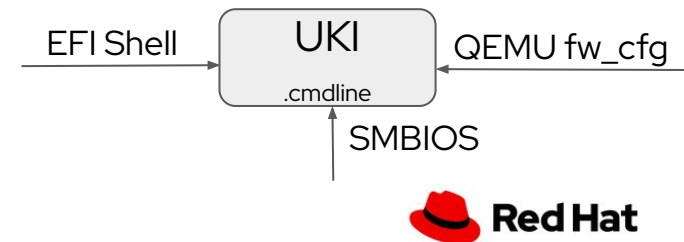
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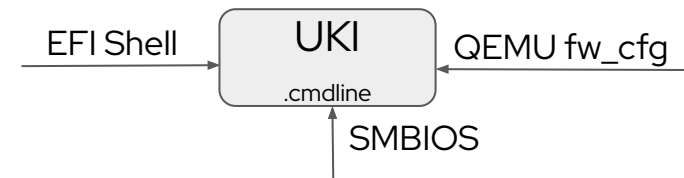
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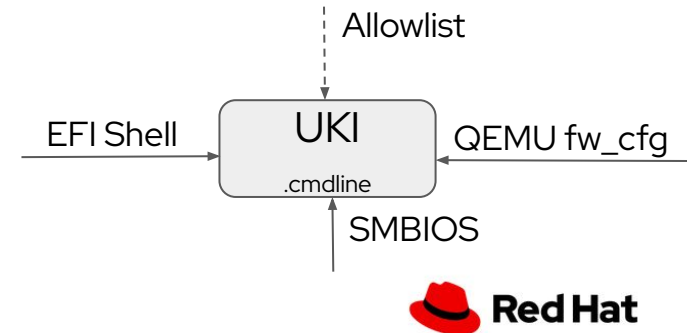


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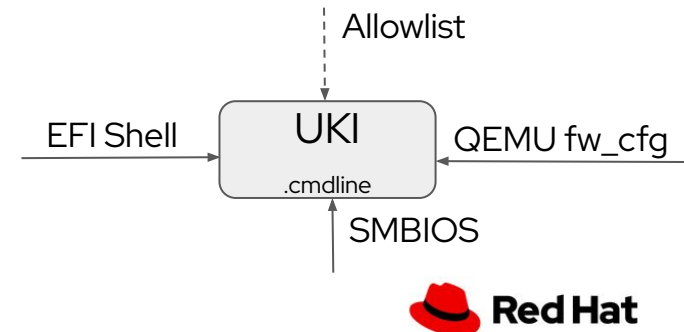


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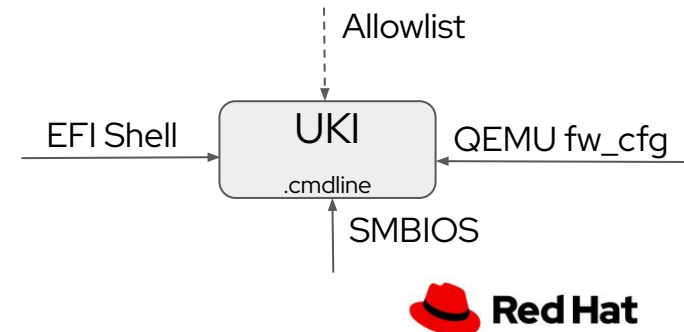
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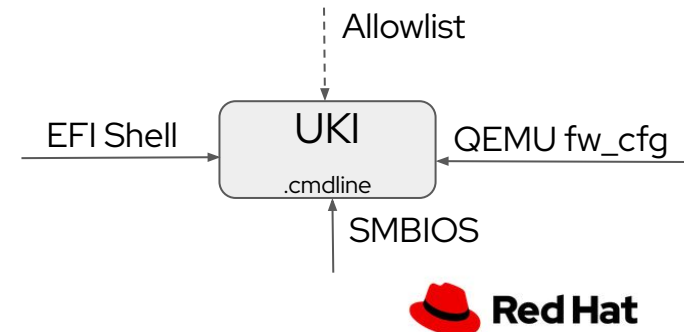
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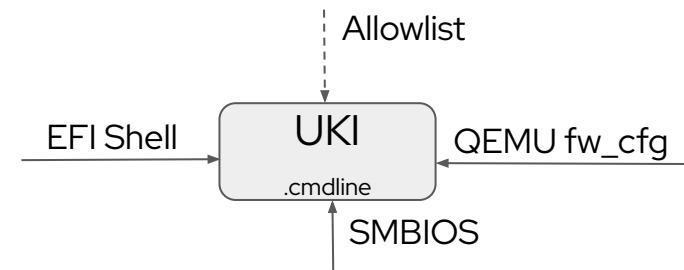
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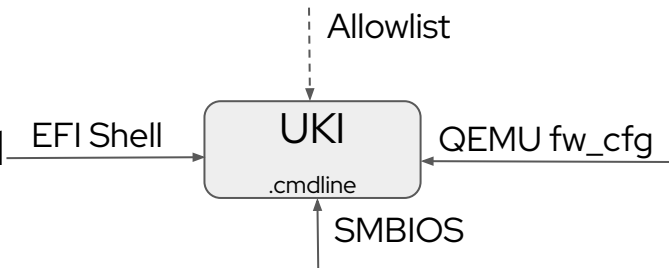
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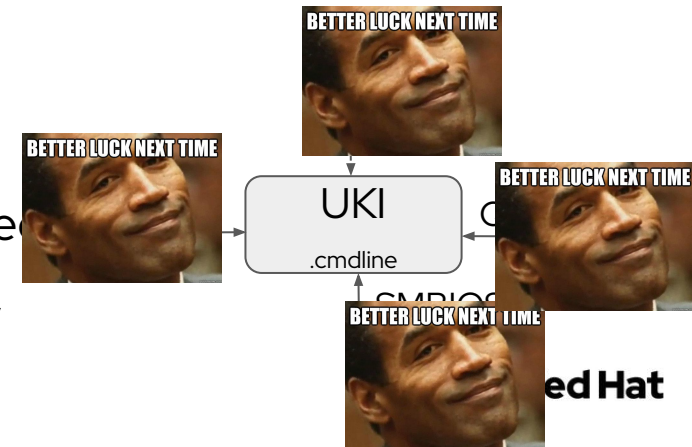
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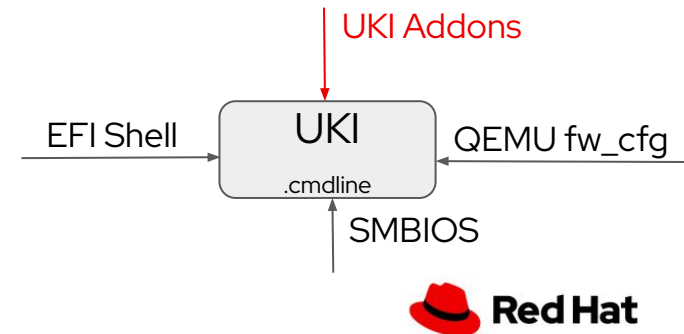


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- ▶ This proposal was rejected by the systemd upstream community
- ▶ <https://github.com/systemd/systemd/issues/24539>

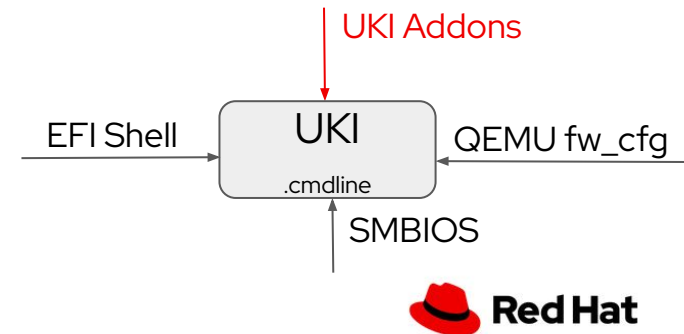


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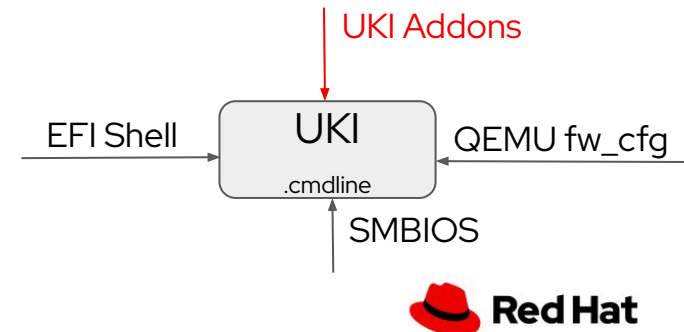
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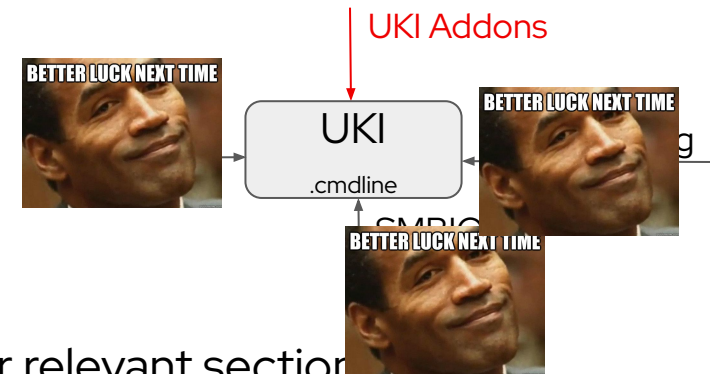
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 - Way simpler and faster than dracut and objcopy
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- ▶ ukify creates a PE file (addon) containing only .cmdline and other relevant sections,
 - It also signs the PE with a provided key



```
/usr/lib/systemd/ukify build --signtool=pesign --secureboot-certificate-name='UKI' --cmdline='MY_CMDLINE'
--output=$BOOT/efi/EFI/Linux/my_addon.addon.efi
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- ▶ Global addons: applied to **all** installed UKIs
 - `$BOOT/efi/loader/addons`
- ▶ UKI-specific addons: applied to the specific UKI
 - Example: 'UKI_devel' installed as `$BOOT/efi/EFI/Linux/devel.efi`
 - → all UKI_devel specific addons are installed in `$BOOT/efi/EFI/linux/devel.efi.extra.d/`

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SBAT (Secure Boot Advanced Targeting)

<https://github.com/rhboot/shim/blob/main/SBAT.md>
<https://github.com/rhboot/shim/blob/main/SBAT.example.md>

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- ▶ Solution 2: add the hash of the addon to some Cloud provider blacklist
- ▶ Solution 3: at attestation time, check if the addon with a specific hash is being measured. If so, reject it.

Problem: an UKI/addon has a security issue

- ▶ Solution 4: SBAT rules
 - Add a .sbat version "component,generation,vendor,pkg,pkg_version,url"
 - Shim checks its own sbat "component,generation" tuple with addon .sbat, if there is a match and shim generation is higher than generation, ignore the addon

UKI addons: workflow

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2. Addon is put in a specific location in the ESP
3. systemd-stub looks for addons, finds them
4. systemd-stub calls shim_verify() on the addon
5. Shim verifies the addon **and checks SBAT component and generation**
6. If validation is successful, systemd-stub reads the addon
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SBAT example 1

Guest SBAT variable:

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sbat, 1  
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Addon .sbat section:

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Open Problem: combining addons

- ▶ What if UKI+addonA is valid, UKI+ addonB, but UKI + addonA + addonB creates security issues
 - Couldn't come up with a concrete example yet
 - Only solution would be to use attestation and see if addonA and addonB are measured, and if so reject the verification

Systemd-sysext initrd addons

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<https://github.com/systemd/mkosi/commit/c42d816>

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- ▶ Guest admins that use guest-side tools like MOK to insert keys in the secureboot db
 - Note: usually not allowed by cloud providers, like Azure
 - Add custom cmdline, debug addons, ...

Available tools

Systemd tools

- ▶ v253: ukify capable of creating UKIs
- ▶ v254: ukify support for UKI addons (`ukify build`)
- ▶ v255: ukify support for UKI/addons inspection (`ukify inspect`)
- ▶ Features still to merge:
 - Enable bootctl to find the addons and display for each UKI the full cmdline (default + all used addons)
- ▶ mkosi: create systemd-syext images

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- ▶ Future releases:
 - kernel-addon: add, update, inspect and remove UKI addons
 - Requires ``ukify inspect``

Future work

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- ▶ Use kernel-addon to install them globally or to a specific UKI
- ▶ Useful when customer has a bug and developer needs to debug UKI

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- ▶ This also implies that the certificate must be measured in PCR7
 - Solution: add dummy addon at first boot, so that the cert is measured

Future work

On prem

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- ▶ Libvirt should do the same as what the cloud provider should offer: possibility to upload a certificate for secureboot
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<https://issues.redhat.com/browse/RHEL-9690>
- ▶ Insert dummy addon for measurements with ``virt-customize --upload``

Questions?

Thank you

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