

Re: Any tweaks to speed up games under XP?

Source:

<http://www.tech-archive.net/Archive/WinXP/microsoft.public.windowsxp.games/2004-03/0459.html>

From: pjp (*pjp_is_located_at__at__hotmail__com*)

Date: 03/13/04

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Hi Jimmy,

Had already read about the "hardware profiles" tricks and have sort of gone down that road before as I've run dual-monitor setup since 98 and it's been part and parcel of various work-arounds, especially as video card drivers changed "features" (or bugs, depends on how you look at it :) over the years.

I think what I'll have to do is see what's causing the 3-10% cyclic "hit" on the cpu. Figure I should be able to find it by stopping/starting services one at a time while watching task manager's meter. Large desktop with lots of window space helps here :)

So you know I'm far from a novice. I've been professionally programming since DOS 2 and started Windows programming under Windows 2!!!. No problem writing directly to the API's here without all the new oops bs, e.g. VB etc. For most of that time I was also the "tech guy" in house. For last few years, I've been semi-retired but still keep my hands in it (so to speak) still writing software etc.

(http://www.wingmanteam.com/latest_software/gadgets.htm, JoyIDs is mine going directly into device driver interfaces, Logitech liked it enough to host it). I say all this so you have some "confidence" I understand implications and usually practice "safety first" regarding backups, restoring things etc. etc.

'I usually know what I don't know.' That make any sense to you :)

I've already found out in a prior attempt at an XP install that System Restore can't be counted on. I mistakenly installed a sound card driver that screwed up system so bad, couldn't get to any Desktop, normal or safe mode. Booting with XP cd and trying all the various things didn't help. Finally used a 98SE startup floppy (so had no restrictions on what I could do) and manually deleted the sound card driver file in order to get system back (next boot restored it's default driver). That convinced me I want nothing to do with NTFS, especially given dual-booting pc as stand-alone tools don't seem to exist..This is also a disappointment as so much of the security seems to require NTFS partition and that appears idiotic to me at this

point, argh!!!!

I have resisted XP for so long because I felt it offered nothing for me, still do so far. At the least, I was hoping it'd be a lot more friendly about how to setup and restrict individual users. Instead, I find it's all centered around "Groups" and I can't seem to create any additional groups and dictate their specific set of restrictions. Seems basically everyone has to be either Admin, User or the Guest (I know there are others, my wife is actually a Power User)! I've found no way to indicate "for this user ONLY enforce 'this' restriction".

However, can't avoid the fact that time moves on and friends etc. in local area keep calling asking for help (Blaster was fun :). Therefore, I like to know what's "going on" under the hood and find myself continually frustrated by MS's resistance to lack of details (ps, I never charge to help considering it same as helping someone with a flat on side of road). As I had a video card driver go south under 98SE and was rebuilding it anyways, I figured once I had it all "settled down" in it's normal config, I bit the bullet and did the dual-boot. I'm still undecided under which OS my major apps will be installed under (e.g. Office, Photoshop, Autocad, Delphi, C++Builder etc.) but suspect I'll use XP for that. It does look though, as if I should continue using 98SE for both games and all my "ripping needs" and most of my burning needs, e.g. DVD to DivX, MP3's at better than 96Kps, creating a usable working copy of BF1942 :) etc. and at least am sure no DRM system or such nonsense starts limiting what I can do (e.g. I don't trust MS to tell us that such bs is included in "something else").

In any case, if I find what's hitting the cpu so much I'll post.

"Jimmy S." <Private> wrote in message
news:ePp0rfSCEHA.596@TK2MSFTNGP12.phx.gbl...

> *Hi pjp,*

>

> *I echo Chris's caution. You should upgrade to a P4 instead of tweaking.*

> *You found one good trick already though, (run high) here's some more...*

>

> **USE THE FOLLOWING INFO AT YOUR OWN RISK!**

>

> *I don't really want to provide a tweaking guide, however it's*

> *clear that there's a demand, so I'll share some tricks I've used*

> *as long as you promise to set a restore point right now. Is that*

> *a fair deal? ;-) Here's how to use Windows XP System Restore:*

>

> <http://www.microsoft.com/windowsxp/pro/using/howto/gethelp/systemrestore.asp>

>

>

> *I use these methods only for special games such as grudge matches.*

>

> *A: Setup Hardware Profile for Gaming*

> *Control Panel / System*

> *Hardware Tab / Hardware Profiles button*

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- > *Copy Profile 1 and rename it Gaming Profile*
- > *Leave Profile 1 at the top of the list*
- > *Set to Select the first profile in 5 seconds*
- >
- > *B: Disable Services for Gaming.*
- > *Control Panel / Administrative Tools / Services*
- > *For each service listed below do the following:*
- > *Right Click / Properties / Log On Tab*
- > *Click on Gaming Profile / click Disable Button*
- > *Click Apply but Do NOT disable for Profile 1*
- >
- > *List of Services: Alerter / Automatic Updates / Computer Browser*
- > *Cryptographic Services (Will cause "Logo" Errors when installing SP1 or DX9)*
- > *Fast User Switching Compatibility / Help and Support / Messenger*
- > *Print Spooler / Remote Registry / Secondary Logon (Run as... will not function)*
- > *System Restore Service / Task Scheduler / Terminal Services / Themes*
- > *Upload Manager / VMWare Authorization Service (These services only appear if*
- > *you use VM Ware) / VMWare DHCP Service " " / VMWare NAT Service " "*
- > *Windows Image Acquisition (I won't be scanning while playing) / Windows Time.*
- >
- > ** You cannot expect to install games and use windows everyday with the above*
- > *services disabled. Those are just safe services to disable *WHILE* you're in*
- > *a game. After the games are over, reboot and use the original Profile 1 again.*
- >
- > *C: Disable Page File*
- > *Since I have 512 MB Ram I find it faster to use RAM than to page to the HD.*
- > *Control Panel / System / Advanced / Performance Settings / Advanced Tab*
- > *Virtual Memory Change / Select each drive / click No Paging file and*
- > *click SET. ****If you do not click Set it will not accept your change.*
- >
- > ** Once you're finished your games turn back on the System Managed page file!*
- >
- > *D: Use XP's Firewall Instead of 3rd Party Firewalls*
- > *We've already disabled your firewall (Norton's, Zone Alarm, etc.) by disabling*
- > *Startup programs in step D. Check your services using the method in step A to*
- > *see if the firewall or antivirus program has services you should disable, i.e. Zone*

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> Alarm installs a True Vector service you can disable for the Gaming Profile.

>

> E: Improve Framerates by Lowering Game Eyecandy and Sound

> I found that by setting my resolution in Halo to 800x600, and lowering the

> visual effects, I was able to improve my framerate from 24 to 52 FPS! :-)

> This is more improvement than any of the other tweaks provided.

> Sound is something that you don't need. Only keep sound settings that will

> help keep you alive, for example to hear a tank rumbling near you.

Music and

> the sound effects made when you fire your weapons are expensive ear candy.

>

> F: Set Performance Options for Best Performance

> Control Panel / System / Advanced / Settings / Visual Effects

> Adjust for best performance (remember to change it back after your games).

>

> G: Disable Startup Programs

> Start / Run / type msconfig / Startup Tab / Click Disable all button.

> You will be prompted to restart, when it restarts you'll have 5 seconds to pick

> Gaming Profile or it will default to Profile 1 instead.

>

> WARNING – DO NOT CLICK THE SERVICES / DISABLE ALL BUTTON!

> *Never touch the Services Tab in msconfig! It allows you to disable ALL services

> for ALL profiles with the click of one button and Windows won't startup again!!!

>

> Okay, so now I've shared some of the tweaks I've used on my own system. I

> hope this information will be helpful, and if used properly help you pwn your opps!

>

> --

> Cheers, Windows XP MVP Shell / User

> Jimmy S. <http://mvp.support.microsoft.com>

>

> Game FAQs: [http://support.microsoft.com/default.aspx?scid=FH;\[LN\];gms](http://support.microsoft.com/default.aspx?scid=FH;[LN];gms)

> Visit my Zone.com / Gaming Helpsite: <http://nibblesnbits.tk> or Call / Contact

> MS Support at: <http://support.microsoft.com/default.aspx?scid=sz;en-us;top>

> My advice is donated "AS IS" without warranty; nor do I confer any rights.

>

>

> "Chris H." <winxpnews@hotmail.com> wrote in message news:eZBPqzRCEHA.3348@TK2MSFTNGP11.phx.gbl...

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> / *Have you tried, instead of "tweaking" what you might think is necessary*
in
> / *Services, to run the default? Indexing, for instance, when turned off*
will
> / *actually stop some games in their tracks. It is there for a purpose,*
and
> / *that is to make things run smoother and faster. There are a couple web*
> / *sites and a PC magazine article which make recommendations to "speed up"*
XP
> / *for gaming, but they don't tell the consequences – like turning off*
> / *Cryptographic Services.*
> / --
> / *Chris H.*
> / *Microsoft Windows MVP*
> / *Associate Expert*
> / *Expert Zone – www.microsoft.com/windowsxp/expertzone*
> /
> / *"pjp" <pjp_is_located_at_@_hotmail_._com> wrote in message*
> / *news:u3fQ0uRCEHA.3024@tk2msftngp13.phx.gbl...*
> / > *XP Pro with integrated sp1 plus all criticals from Update site*
applied.
> / > *Latest VIA 4-in-1;s applied as first install after OS up and going.*
> / > *DirectX9.0b, passes all DXDiag tests and there's "No Problem ..." all*
> / > *around.*
> / >
> / > *Tyan Trinity 400 S1854 motherboard*
> / > *PIII at 733Mz (to spec)*
> / > *512 megs ram running at 133mz fsb (to spec)*
> / > *Radeon 64 DDR VIVO (7200)*
> / > *Xpert98 (2nd display multi-monitor)*
> / > *two wd hd's, 15 & 40 gigs with plenty free space on each*
> / > *Creative SB-PCI128 sound card*
> / >
> / > *2 Logitech Rumblepads*
> / > *2 Logitech wheels (MOMO Force & Racing)*
> / >
> / > *Mustek flatbed scanner "Twain", (lpt port pass thru model)*
> / > *Creative Webcam (also appears as a Twain scanner)*
> / > *Fuji digital camera as webcam or Mass Storage Device*
> / >
> / > *3 printers, 2 Epson inkjets and an old Canon laser*
> / >
> / > *Logitech mouse*
> / > *Wacom pressure sensitive tablet*
> / >
> / > *Ethernet card connected to four other older 98SE pc's in-house (TCP/IP*
and
> / > *Netbuie as protocols, including XP)*
> / > *USR Robotics 56K external modem*
> / >
> / > *2 self-powered external four port USB hubs for all the USB devices.*

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Does

> / > *provide 500Ma spec to every port simultaneously, e.g. no attached device*

> / > *shows any kind of problem in use..*

> / >

> / > *The hardware seems stable an there was/is specific XP drivers for it all*

> / > *(I*

> / > *was surprised I found scanner driver). The ethernet is up and running with*

> / > *printers and folders being shared as expected from both sides. I even*

> / > *managed to get the Guest account to be able to use a proxy server on one*

> / > *of*

> / > *the other pc's to connect to the net after giving up in frustration at*

> / > *it's*

> / > *refusal to allow use of the dialup modem connection even though it's*

> / > *specified as "shared by all" by the "Admin" account that set it up*

(Users

> / > *are ok and can use it). The only problem hardware wise is, I can't get the*

> / > *back speakers working off the sound card as there appears to be only XP's*

> / > *built-in support for the card.*

> / >

> / > *This is the one thing I've found really makes a difference for games is,*

> / > *use*

> / > *batch files to start the game so you can elevate it's priority, e.g.*

"cmd

> / > */c*

> / > *start /High LinksLauncher.exe" is noticably faster (as I'd expect).*

> / >

> / > *I feel the basic problem is background "tasks" as Performance under*

> / > *Ctrl-Alt-Del shows cpu bouncing from 2 to 13% continually (but randomly in*

> / > *magnitude). I've tried to determine exactly what all these various*

> / > *services*

> / > *do but when you try to research them it seems like the answer becomes a*

> / > *circular reference and it's never really explained. In particular, it's*

> / > *undetermined what's going on in the background regarding the ethernet.*

> / > *There*

> / > *seems to be a number of various services that might be doing some type of*

> / > *"polling" for shares or something but as they're not really documented*

I

> / > *have no idea what one's I can turn off etc. at no risk to basically*

> / > *mucking*

> / > *up what works now (the Guest account can connect to web using a Proxy*

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> / > *server*
> / > *running on one of the other pc's as it "refused" anything to do with the*
the
> / > *dialup modem connection). Basically, I'm very wary of blindly*
changing
> / > *things under any version of Windows because as often as not*
"un-changing"
> / > *it*
> / > *doesn't bring the system back to what it was (e.g. unknown inadvertant*
> / > consequences).
> / >
> / > *For example, I have no idea what the "Alerter" service REALLY does,*
what
> / > *"other features" absolutely require it to be running in order to*
function
> / > *correctly nor what these "other services" also do. Ask help for "them"*
and
> / > *you get another reference etc. which eventually seems to lead no-where*
> / > usefull.
> / >
> / > *I have turned off the obvious, e.g. disk performance monitoring*
service,
> / > *indexing and the like.*
> / >
> / > *As usually MS's help isn't helpfull, just frustrating.*
> / >
> / > *"Chris Catt" <notknown@ntlworld.com> wrote in message*
> / > *news:uhM4JnPCEHA.712@tk2msftngp13.phx.gbl...*
> / >> *Hi, all depends upon your hardware specs, we really need to know your*
> / >> *hardware specs before we can give you advice. What we need are cpu -*
> / >> *type/speed. motherboard, ram - amount/type, video card. If you have*
any
> / >> *problems finding this out then here*
> / > *<http://www.aida32.hu/aida32-download.php>*
> / >> *is a good tool to use. Suffice to say that XP hardware requirements*
are
> / > *much*
> / >> *higher than those of win98, therefore if you've not much ram, say*
128mbs,
> / > *XP*
> / >> *will really need twice that before you get reasonable game*
performance. I
> / >> *expect Jimmy S will have more to say on this, over to you Jimmy :-)*
> / >> *Chris C*
> / >> *Chris*
> / >> *"pjp" <pjp_is_located_at_@_hotmail_._com> wrote in message*
> / >> *news:OiF0SEHCEHA.2308@tk2msftngp13.phx.gbl...*
> / >>> *Just installed XP Pro as dual-boot with existing 98SE.*
> / >>>
> / >>> *Same game (NFS:U) running from same folder (e.g. just created new*
> / > shortcut

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> / >> > *under XP) is basically unplayable under XP it's running so slow
(slow
> / >> > motion) at 640x480 where—as under 98SE I can run it acceptably at
> / >> > 1024x768.
> / >> > All other settings the same including under Properties DirectX
> / >> > settings.
> / >> > Links 2003 and Flight Sim 2004 seem the same but not so
exaggerated,
> / >> > probably because they're not high speed "action" type games.
> / >> >
> / >> > Is this typical? I'm running same revision drivers for the Radeon,
e.g.
> / >> > Cat
> / >> > 4.3.
> / >> >
> / >> > I'm hoping it's all the crap running in the background so wondering
if
> / >> > there's any site(s) document what all that crap actually does as
MS's
> / > help
> / >> > doesn't even try to explain what they actually "do" in most cases.
> / >> >
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>*