

## Re: Swapping HDs in Computer that Have the Same Windows Partition Setups

*Source:*

<http://www.tech-archive.net/Archive/WinXP/microsoft.public.windowsxp.general/2004-12/2864.html>

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*From:* John Butler (*onclejon\_at\_uselesnospam.com*)

*Date:* 12/04/04

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Sam,

You CAN have two disks with identical installations if you set the configuration carefully and use appropriate software to make the copy installation. I use such a setup for creating daily backups for very quick recovery of individual files and folders or quick recovery from a current unrecoverable Windows crash.

[ This is in addition to and not a substitute for full system images on an external hard drive which can be stored off-site for disaster recovery.]

I use CasperXP to copy the master drive [ C:, disk 0] to the slave drive [D:, disk 1]. In the event of a total crash I can switch the boot order in the bios from 0,1 to 1,0 check out any problems then copy the slave back to the master and reboot again in 0,1 sequence.

There are some caveats.

The copy must be fully up to date, there must not have been any installations on the original since the copy was made.

There must not be any utility operations scheduled on the original (E.G. defrag, NAV liveupdate) at a later time than the copy was made. This method deals with objection mentioned by Alex in an earlier post

NB you must use a specialist utility to make the clone, you cannot copy over from Windows or make a second installation of Windows. To be sure that you have got the setup correct after the first copy, print out the boot.ini file you will find in the root of C: and the root of D:. They must be identical. I could go into more detail about the syntax for boot.ini but I think this is not the place.

When you return to the restored Master disk if you may find that Norton Antivirus reports that it's license is expired. This is solved by running Live Update

John

"Alex Nichol" <alexn.mvpdts@ntlworld.delete.com> wrote in message

news:urf3r0dqddeobm7bsn94jsvpditaijuoo1@4ax.com...

> *Sam wrote:*

>

>>

>>*Would the above work with having two HDs with the same windows XP Pro and*

>>*applicable software? Would the computer BIOS be confused by seeing the*

>>*change of two different HDs that have almost the same system programs?*

>>*Any*

>>*thoughts, suggestions, and help would be very much appreciated, Sam.*

>

> *That would work; provided you remember that the second drive would need*

> *the MBR code added to it. But the copy made on the second drive would*

> *need its boot.ini file amended so it was referring to the correct*

> *(absolute) location of the drive, in the disk(n)rdisk(m)partition(x)*

> *bit, or it will complacently complete the boot – from the \*first\* drive.*

> *And then the registry's HKEY\_LOCAL\_MACHINE\System\Mounted Devices would*

> *need to have the DOSDevices lines cleared out and allowed to rebuild*

>

> *I think you might find it confusing yourself having both systems*

> *visible. What I would (and do – though I have both partitions on the*

> *primary physical disk) is use an external Boot Manager to boot either*

> *system and hide the other. Boot Magic, which you may have got along*

> *with your ex-Partition Magic software would do it. I actually use*

> *BootIT NG, from <http://www.BootitNG.com> (\$35 shareware – 30 day full*

> *functional trial) – which also does all my Partition management.*

> *That one has the benefit that you can not merely hide the partition you*

> *are not using, but also adjust the order in which the partitions appear*

> *(being on the same disk) so that both see themselves as partition(1) on*

> *booting and hence those other possible confusions do not arise*

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> *Alex Nichol MS MVP (Windows Technologies)*

> *Bournemouth, U.K. Alexn@myvs.D8E8L.org (remove the D8 bit)*