

SCSI vs SATA

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After years of using primarily SCSI drives, I finally decided to move on to more modern technology. I had been using Ultra-160 SCSI drives on an Adaptec 19160 controller. Unfortunately, over the past month or so I have had two Seagate SCSI Cheetah drives to go bad on me.

My Intel motherboard has two SATA controllers, so I checked around for some inexpensive SATA drives. Our local Tiger Direct Outlet was offering some Hitachi 40.0 Gigabyte drives for under \$50.00. Just 7200 RPM with an 8-Meg cache. Spec's for the drive had access time at 9.0 mSec and average throughput at 61.0 Megabytes per second.

Decided to test out SATA and re-configure my PC for probably the 100+ time. Imaged all the partitions to a "Tray" IDE drive, for quick cut-over. Replaced 3-SCSI's with two Hitachi 7K250's and replicated the images back to the SATAs.

Overall, I must say I'm impressed. Both SATA drives are delivering an average throughput of 59.3 Megabytes a second. The access time is a bit poor at 16.9 mS (Compared to 8.6 with SCSI). However, at 7200 verses 10,000 & 15,000 RPM the SATA keep up pretty well. The point of this post is just to illustrate how you can get into a mindset that only a certain technology will meet your needs. Will I miss the SCSI access times, probably. What I won't miss is the \$250+ price on a Ultra 160/320 disk. Or for that matter, the acoustic whine of those 10-15K RPM drives. My PC now sounds like it's off, I can only hear the front intake fan. From a thermal standpoint, there isn't much difference. The case temp is staying right at 109 F. One thing that's nice, is the SATA drives report their temp to Everest, where the SCSI drives didn't.

So far I can't really tell much difference in overall performance, a few things "lag" a little bit compared to the SCSI setup. Anyway, thought I'd take a few minutes to post up the results.

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