

Re: cross post: mount partition as folder?

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<http://www.tech-archive.net/Archive/WinXP/microsoft.public.windowsxp.general/2006-06/msg05671.html>

- *From:* "Ken Blake, MVP" <kblake@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx>
 - *Date:* Sat, 17 Jun 2006 08:10:34 -0700
-

Callmark1 wrote:

Yes I know 40G is ridiculously small by today's standards, but I rarely go over 10G used.

No, I don't think there's anything "ridiculous" about it. If it meets your needs, that's fine. The only reason I mentioned the size is that much of the rationale for multiple partitions is based on drives being larger.

I DID use the term "backup" partition-- what I meant was a "scratch area" for temp storage. This extra partition I have found very useful for staging backups before burning to CD and as a place to destroy any sensitive data.

OK, I understand now.

Thanks again for your input.

You're welcome again.

—

Ken Blake – Microsoft MVP Windows: Shell/User
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Re: cross post: mount partition as folder?

"Ken Blake, MVP" wrote:

Callmark1 wrote:

11:59 AM 6/16/2006

Thanks Ken.

You're welcome. Glad to help.

That is exactly what I am deciding before I do the clean install. I have read (including here at times) that keeping Program Files and My Docs on partitions separate from the OS partition is a good idea.

People often advise doing those because they think that if they ever have to do a clean reinstallation, it won't cause the loss of their programs and data. I think that point of view is largely mistaken, and I have two comments to make regarding this:

1. Installed programs (except for an occasional trivial one) have many components and entries referring to them throughout Windows (in the registry and elsewhere). If you reinstall Windows, all of that is lost and the programs need to be reinstalled anyway. For that reason, there is generally no advantage to separating programs from the partition Windows is installed on.
2. Having data in a separate partition so it's not lost if you reinstall Windows would be valuable only to those who have no external backup of their data. Since, in my view, having no external backup of your data would be a foolhardy situation to be in, I don't consider this a good reason for separating data (although there can be a different good reason; see the paragraph below).

I think most people should choose a partitioning scheme that's based on their backup scheme. If your backup scheme is one that backs up your data, but not the operating system, separating the operating system and your data on different partitions facilitates that backup. For those whose backup scheme consists of making an image of everything on the hard drive, there is much less value to separating

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data on its own partition.

However, after having this setup for a year now, I have not found that to be so; it just seems overly complicated. I can see how separate partitions might facilitate a speedier backup if I had large amounts of data but my 40G hard drive is likely to serve my needs indefinitely:

A 40GB drive is very small these days, and with such a small drive, a single partition may well be best for you.

The nature of my work requires that I backup each completed project (about 3 per week at about 100M each) on a CD and send it to the "home office" along with attendant paperwork. I also keep a duplicate copy of each project in a file cabinet at my office. Once the project has reached the age of 6 weeks, there is really no need to keep any detailed info so I can delete it from my hard drive with impunity. In the rare event (only 3% over the last two years) I need to re-open a particular project, it exists on CD in two different files in two different locations so, for me, backup is not a strenuous issue other than making sure I can get working again quickly after a mishap.

That sounds fine for your use, but I'm somewhat confused. You talk here about backing up to CDs, but in your previous message you spoke about a backup partition.

—
Ken Blake – Microsoft MVP Windows: Shell/User
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I think that for this re-install I will set it all up on D: (C: is dedicated) and format a smallish partition just as a staging area for backups.

Thanks again

mark

"Ken Blake, MVP" wrote:

Callmark1 wrote:

Thank you all for your dedication to this site. I have learned so much in the few weeks I have been reading. I started reading because I have been planning a clean re-install-- the basics of which I am fairly familiar with since having installed/upgraded XP for several friends. My target date is this weekend. So I will likely be posting several times until then. My question of the moment is in regards to Larry Gardner's recent reply about partitions:

<snip>

My system is setup this way:

1. C: - Windows XP OS
2. D: - Documents and Settings for all profiles
3. E: - Third-Party/Additionally installed Software (software not part of basic Windows out-of-the-box XP OS)

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4. F: – Backup

<snip>

My current setup is similar (except for a copy of Win98SE on C, thus XP enumeration starts at letter D) but I have apparently set it up in a rather cumbersome fashion.

Yes, I think so. I see no good reason to isolate what you have in C, D, and E in separate partitions.

I sometimes find myself fiddling with partitions instead of working.

My question is this: would it be better to mount partitions to folders, i.e. – E: as the Program Files folder and F: as the Docs & Settings folder, rather than "forcing" 3rd party software to install onto a folder on the E: partition? If so, should one mount before or after installing the bulk of applications (does it even matter?).

If you're planning a clean reinstallation, I would just put all those three into a single C partition.

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Also, as regards to taking system images, if one has mounted partitions as folders, I assume that Norton Ghost would include the contents of a mounted partition as part of the backup since it should read the partition just as if it WAS the folder. Is this assumption correct? Further, in the event of restoring said image, would Ghost automatically "re-mount" the partition to its original configuration? or would it try to stuff it all onto the same partition as the OS?

Regarding taking system images, and your backup strategy, I think what you are doing is better than no backup at all, but just barely. I don't recommend backup to a second partition (or even a second non-removable hard drive) because it leaves you susceptible to simultaneous loss of the original and backup to many of the most common dangers: head crashes and other drive failures, severe power glitches, nearby lightning strikes, virus attacks, even theft of the computer.

In my view, secure backup needs to be on removable media, and not kept in the computer. For really secure backup (needed, for example, if the life of your business depends on your data) you should have multiple generations of backup, and at least one of those generations should be stored off-site.

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My computer isn't used for business, but my personal backup scheme uses two identical removable hard drives, I alternate between the two, and use Acronis True Image to make a complete copy of the primary drive.

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