

Re: XP Validation Problem after Hdwe Change??

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<http://www.tech-archive.net/Archive/WinXP/microsoft.public.windowsxp.general/2007-08/msg04762.html>

- *From:* "Ken Blake" <kblake@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx>
 - *Date:* Tue, 21 Aug 2007 09:17:56 -0700
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news:1187709407.679561.270090@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

OK, I'm a rookie. I've had my Windows XP system for 5 years (on a Dell Dimension). All was well until yesterday — the motherboard fried. Big Question: if I replace the motherboard, will I have a problem with XP validation? I've changed some hardware items on the Dell over the past 5 years, but haven't had an XP validation warning yet.

Perhaps the motherboard swap may be the last straw. Does Microsoft usually play fair in this kind of situation? Will I likely have to buy a new XP OS??

Normally, a Repair installation, and then reactivation, is all you need to do. It's a rare occurrence, but occasionally the differences between the two motherboards are severe enough that a repair installation doesn't work, and a complete clean installation is required.

But your computer is a Dell, then your copy of Windows came with it, and that makes it an OEM copy. It *may* be BIOS-locked to the motherboard, and that copy won't install at all, let alone validate.

Even if it's not BIOS locked, there's a potential licensing issue to be aware of. It's a can of worms, as far as I'm concerned. The OEM EULA states that the license is valid only for the original computer it's installed on, and it may never be moved to another.

The problem is that the Microsoft OEM EULA does not precisely define exactly

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what constitutes the "computer." Some people claim that the motherboard constitutes the computer. However logical that might seem, the EULA does not state that, and the EULA is the document that defines the rights of both parties to the agreement.

Some of those people point to a web site for System Builders, where Microsoft defines the computer as the motherboard. However it's not what it says on some web site that defines the customer's rights, it's the EULA; besides, that web site is not even available to the general public. I'm not a lawyer, but my guess is that if it ever came to a court case and someone cited that web site, he'd be laughed out of court.

So, can you replace a motherboard, consider the result the same computer, and reuse your OEM copy of Windows? Regardless of what I think, you think, or anyone else thinks, or even what a court might rule if it came to that, the real issue is whether Microsoft will permit you to reactivate if you do. Unfortunately the answer is again not clear-cut, and we have heard here from people who have had both experiences—some were reactivated and others were not. If they refuse to reactivate you and you take them to court, you might win, but who of us would be willing to undergo that trouble and expense to find out?

So the answer, with an OEM version, is that there is no real answer.

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Please reply to the newsgroup

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