

Re: Windows unable to boot – 'black' screen

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<http://www.tech-archive.net/Archive/WinXP/microsoft.public.windowsxp.general/2007-09/msg03593.html>

- *From:* "Pegasus \ (MVP)" <I.can@xxxxxxx>
 - *Date:* Tue, 18 Sep 2007 18:23:52 +0200
-

See below.

"Rich" <Rich@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx> wrote in message
<news:D5579550-5576-41FF-A4D9-200743173006@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx>

Thanks, Pegasus, for a prompt response, and I will definitely consider
your
suggestion that this could be a hardware issue.

As for backing up files – well, we have some back-ups (this actually is my
daughter laptop), but none recently (bummer!).

If you have Outlook on your laptop, use it to schedule a
weekly reminder to back up your files, and stick to it!

I'm not familiar with the 'usb case' for the hard disk, but I also will
look
into it, especially if it's not that expensive.

Where I live they cost around \$20.00. Physical installation is a
child's play. Under WinXP, no software installation is needed.

I have another laptop (Thinkpad Z60m), but I doubt that the hard disks are
compatible and whether I could use it for either troubleshooting my
Toshiba
or for the data recovery aspect.

The disks will be compatible but the installed version of
Windows won't be. Don't even try – use the USB case
instead.

I also have an external disk that is USB
attached, but again I don't know if it could be of any use here.

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You can if it is a 2.5" disk but not if it is a 3.5" disk.

Also – when I provided the same description over the phone to the 'Geek Squad', the local computer 'fixer-upper' outfit, they assured me that my problems are NOT hardware related, but probably a virus, and that they definitely could fix it (for about 260 USD).

You previously reported that your screen remains black when you boot the machine from your WinXP installation CD. It is not possible for a virus to do this – if you really booted from the WinXP installation CD and got a black screen then you have a hardware problem.

Before forking out \$260, ask your supplier to examine the PC and give you a quote. This should cost you around \$25.00. If you have a computer-literate friend, ask him to have a look at it first. And remember: Back up your data BEFORE you let anyone play with your laptop. If you rely on other people to do the right thing then there is a good chance that you will lose the lot.

Any additional thoughts?
Thanks again, Rich

"Pegasus (MVP)" wrote:

"Rich" <Rich@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx> wrote in message
news:F77439B7-FADA-43AD-A7CE-06F8D521B747@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

My Toshiba Sattelite A85 laptop with Windows XP Sp2
Home Edition 'out
of
the
blue' started to have problems with booting Windows.
Initially, I was
getting
the following error:

windows\system\vgaocem.fom file is corrupt or missing ... or
something
close,
and the system would just hang.

Sometims with another attempt to reboot the error would
point to a

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different
missing file, but Windows would still not load.

Since my laptop did not come with the full Windows CD but only with the System Restore, I attempted to get by the problem by loading Windows XP Home Edition from a CD that came from Dell with my other desktop pc (at this point I still was able to alter BIOS to boot from the CD drive, ahead of HDD). However, all attempts to restart the system, either in safe mode or at the last good restore point, etc., would also fail in a similar fashion.

I believe that at that point when attempting to load Windows I began to get the following error:

STOP: C0000218 (registry file failure) the registry cannot load the hive (file) systemroot\config\software (at some point I also was getting: Stop: 0x000007E, but I didn't jot the specifics)

I then attempted to get to the Restore Console in order to run some diagnostics. I was stopped, however, by a message requesting the Administrator password and I had no idea what that password was. My several futile attempts of entering every imaginable password I could think of got rejected each time as 'password invalid', including the 'null' password (by just hitting: enter).

After checking the cable connections, resetting the hard drive and

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memory
(as per suggestions in the various posts) things got even worse. Now I cannot even get to the Windows Welcome screen – every time I power up my laptop, I hear the cooling fan and the CD drive both humming for a moment and then everything goes quite and ... nothing! The screen stays 'black' throughout and the keyboard also appears to be locked. I tried this operation with and without the Windows CD – all with the same results. Obviously, at this point I cannot enter any commands, scan for viruses or anything – my laptop is completely dead!

Of course, I would like to recover some of the files and pictures from the hard drive, if at all possible, but at this point I'm so frustrated that I'm willing to give that up as long as I get my operating system up and running.

Dos anyone have any ideas or suggestions?

Thanks, Rich

The progressive nature of your problems suggest a hardware problem. Your best bet is probably to take the machine to a qualified Toshiba repair centre.

There are several methods to retrieve your files. Here are two of them:

a) From your backup medium. It may be too late to mention this but good computing practice requires you to back up all important files regularly to an independent medium.

b) By removing the hard disk and installing it in an external USB case (which costs very little). This would enable you to connect it to another PC and salvage your files.

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With some laptops it is easy to remove the hard disk. With others it is demanding because the keyboard must first be removed. Ask your service centre if necessary.

If your laptop has died then it would be a good idea to use its disk as your backup medium for the next laptop.