

# Re: Disk Scanning & Defragmentation

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*Source:*

<http://www.tech-archive.net/Archive/WinXP/microsoft.public.windowsxp.general/2008-08/msg05083.html>

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- *From:* "Gary S. Terhune" <none>
  - *Date:* Sat, 30 Aug 2008 16:29:59 -0700
- 

Just a lot of steel and hydraulics.

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Gary S. Terhune  
MS-MVP Shell/User  
<http://grystmill.com>

"Twayne" <nobody@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx> wrote in message  
<news:%23wxgWavCJHA.3432@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx>

I liked working in a lab for a couple of years. City water testing and agricultural testing were the daily grind, but we also had a regular contract pulling apart 6' lengths of #18 2.25" dia. rebar. 2' between the jaws, dial-gauges all over the place until it suddenly stretched a foot. Getting all the gauges off and then finishing the job. That was one honkin' machine, <g>. When it broke, it shook the neighborhood harder than slamming freight trains in the yard across the street. Took 425,000 to 450,000 total pounds, IIRC.

Ouch! That took a couple of decent sized machines! Sounds like fun the first couple of times at least.

Cheers,

"Twayne" <nobody@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx> wrote in message  
<news:%23wqVs2iCJHA.3392@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx>

Nah, perish the thought of my trying to say anything doesn't play a role in ... whatever. It's all connected of course and as soon as you try to say always or never, the gremlins and Murphys will come

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scrambling in from every orifice and totally negate any recent well intentioned allegations<g>.  
As you say, it's all generalizations unless we're lucky enough to work in a lab that specializes in such things or at least have access to some of their records, many of which are questionable at best anyway. Actually, if you've ever disassembled any hard drives carefully enough, it's amazing the heads manage to live as long as they do, buried in amongst the flying platters and all with what appears at least to me, to be very flimsy physical structures. At least the magnets are a blast to play with<g>!

I agree with everything you said; no arguement at all in any way. I think my reaction was more to the point that the discussion seemed to be assuming that there was only that one single failure mechanism that meant anything and I wanted to point out that it wasn't going to go anywhere useful;

As for mr unknown, or ms, whatever it may be, some just feel a need to grasp for their lack of power in the relatively safe ether of the 'net. There's quite a mix of ego, personality and covert power plays on the groups but they're mostly harmless beings<g>.

Cheers,

Twayne

Thanks for the elucidation, but it seems to me that you're just describing the ways in which disks wear out. Are you claiming that the amount of use, specifically the amount of head movement, does not play any role in causing at least some of those issues to arise, subsequently leading to failure? Speaking,

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here, of disks that aren't essentially DOA? Ones that have been in use for some time? I would imagine that bearing failure or seals gone bad would lead to the highest proportion of failures, failures that could derive from simply idling for five years or whatever, but other types of failure surely derive from actual use, as opposed to spinning idly, do they not?

Of course I was making a generalization, as was everyone else in the thread except Unknown, who has a developed a hobby that consists of seeing if he can catch me in an error. He is often in error and I feel it's my responsibility to correct those errors, which had caused him to develop resentment, etc.

"Twayne"

<nobody@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx> wrote in message

[news:%23HjZELfCJHA.2060@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx](mailto:news:%23HjZELfCJHA.2060@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx)

There's a balance to be struck. Of course a heavily fragmented disk will endure more wear, but overuse of defrag will do the same. And of course fewer disks wear out due to excessive defragging. It's more the opposite. The vast majority of

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them are of  
the  
first type --  
not enough  
defragging,  
rather than  
too much.  
But  
that doesn't  
make my  
statement  
ridiculous.  
It's a true  
statement.

In reality there are so many  
other variables involved in  
these  
scenarios that  
generalizations can be made  
but that's about all. I  
seriously doubt the two  
camps here actually cover  
the reality of  
disk failure. One would be  
hard pressed to even get  
empirical  
evidence of either case. In  
my experience the reasons  
for disk  
failures have ranged from  
worn out bearings to dust  
(broken seals)  
to a platter's head failure to  
head misalignments due to  
rough  
handling, to ... you name it.  
Then that takes you into  
areas such  
as whether it's best to leave  
the disk spinning or shut it  
down  
during periods of non-use,  
etc. etc. etc.. I've never seen  
one that  
indicated the problem was  
attributed to excessive head  
movement of  
any kind where the head just  
wasn't able to move;

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something you can easily hear in nearly 100% of the drives ever made. Not trying to do an ego boost for myself here; just trying to indicate that it's sort of a moot point about defrag or not from a mechanical viewpoint. As long as the hermetic seal remains intact, there should be little to wear out except for grease moving out of its intended place and not getting used, which IME has always been what crashes disks early in their lives. Somewhere I have a white paper on this from some lab but I can't find it now of course!

Cheers,

Twayne

"Unknown"  
<unknown@xxxxxxxxxxx>  
wrote in  
message  
[news:EqBtk.19431\\$I5.568@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx](mailto:news:EqBtk.19431$I5.568@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx)

That  
is  
an  
absolutely  
ridiculous  
statement.  
Granted,  
disks  
wear  
out.  
However,  
as

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a  
product,  
they  
have  
a  
life  
expectancy.  
If  
a  
disk  
fails  
chances  
are  
it  
won't  
be  
because  
of  
defragging.  
Did  
it  
ever  
occur  
to  
you  
that  
there  
could  
be  
MORE  
wear  
if  
it  
is  
NOT  
defragged?  
"Gary  
S.  
Terhune"  
<none>  
wrote  
in  
message  
[news:uTcPTxJCJHA.1184@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx](mailto:news:uTcPTxJCJHA.1184@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx)

The  
joke  
doesn't  
apply.  
Unnecessary  
defragging

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will  
simply  
wear  
the  
disk  
out  
faster  
for  
no  
good  
reason.

--

Gary  
S.  
Terhune  
MS-MVP  
Shell/User  
<http://grystmill.com>

"HeyBub"  
<heybub@xxxxxxxx>  
wrote  
in  
message  
<news:OcpUStJCJHA.2476@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx>

Penorama  
wrote:

I've  
been  
told  
during  
Windows  
98  
days  
that  
it's  
good  
to  
run  
Scandisk  
and  
Defragmentation  
regularly  
to  
keep  
the  
computer  
spick

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and  
span.  
Does  
it  
still  
apply  
to  
these  
days  
of  
Windows  
XP  
and  
Vista?  
As  
a  
matter  
of  
fact  
I  
carry  
out  
these  
maintenance  
measures  
every  
week,  
but  
would  
like  
to  
know  
their  
relevance  
in  
the  
present  
day  
software  
environment.

[Joke  
shortened]

Doctor  
is  
leaning  
over  
a

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fallen  
actor  
on  
the  
stage  
of  
a  
Yiddish  
theater  
around  
the  
turn  
of  
the  
last  
century.

From  
the  
back  
of  
the  
balcony,  
a  
Yiddisha–mama  
voice  
cries  
out:  
"Give  
him  
an  
enema!"

The  
doctor  
stands  
and  
shouts  
back:  
"Madam,  
the  
actor  
is  
dead!"

Same  
voice  
from  
the  
balcony,  
a

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bit  
more  
sheepishly:  
"So,  
it  
can't  
hurt."