

Re: Silicon Image SATA controller problems

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I have an ASUS P4S8X with a similar SATA controller. I too was baffled, for a while. Then I realized that you can set of a RAID array with only one disk. I know that sounds weird, but it was the key to getting XP to install.

Specifically, before you try to install XP, run through the usual POST (power on testing), sometimes called BIOS testing, although it is more than that. Somewhere in the middle of the POST there should be a brief message about hitting some key or key combination to configure the RAID. Mine talks about a "Fastrack Contoller". Do that.

Now, here is the tricky part. You do not want the default setup, which probably would try to merge two disks into one bigger/faster disk. You also do not the other obvious option to mirror one disk onto another for additional security. Instead, you want an option that is probably called custom setup. Once you get into that part of the RAID setup, make a RAID "array" containing only the one SATA drive. This may be called something like a 1+0 array.

At this point you could install XP, remembering to hit F6 and load the ASUS SATA drivers from a floppy. You can not use a CD, only a floppy. Thank Microsoft for that "feature" of the XP installer. I found that I needd o copy the whole SATA driver section of the CD to the floppy. Copying just the drivers was not enough. I specifically needed a file called OEMSETUP.TXT.

However, to test the RAID you can do something far simpler than installing XP. Try to partition and format the SATA drive using the Seagate-provided disk tools called SeaTools. If SeaTools can see the SATA drive, then you have the RAID-of-one constructed properly. As a further test, you could format one partition as FAT32, then reboot and run plain old DOS from a floppy. You should be able to see all FAT32 partitions, but not NTFS partitions. You should be able to copy files to/from the floppy and FAT32 partitions.

Best of luck.

Once you get the SATA drive running, you will be pleased with the speed compared to standard IDE drives. This is even more obvious if you get a second internal SATA drive. Unlike ATA/100 drives, which use a common controller (i.e., master & slave on same controller), SATA drives have individual controllers. So, when copying from one SATA/150 drive to another the speed is the full rated 150; on a pair of ATA/100 drives the speed is about 50, since the two drives split the controller's time.

"HJ" <jlhudg23@yahoo.com> wrote in message

news:C9DE030B-4570-4C8A-B748-DE10734DADF7@microsoft.com...

> *Mobo: ASUS A7N8X Deluxe, rev. 2.0; BIOS: 1007 (latest update)*

> *Hard Drive: Seagate ST380013AS (SATA, 80 GB)*

> *OS: WinXP Pro (fresh install on single hard drive, listed above)*

> *SATA Controller: Silicon Image 3112*

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> *Problem: I did the F6 during setup, OS installed fine, everything seems to work, but... Under Device Manager, SCSI/RAID Controllers, I've got the yellow question mark by a generic RAID Controller listing (doesn't identify as the Silicon Image); I know that since I've got only 1 hard drive, I can't set up a RAID array of any sort (and don't want to at this time). However, on the Control Panel, there is a listing for Silicon Image ATA Controllers; the Properties there on the Device Info tab show [controller Sil 3112 Revision 2, PCI Bus 1, Device 11, IRQ 18 (0x12)]; on the Flash BIOS tab [nothing; everything shows as "unknown"].*

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> *I have tried several times to first of all "confirm" the driver/controller installation (mobo documentation gives the "check under SCSI/RAID Controller Properties in Device Manager" route—see above, it just shows generic RAID Controller with the yellow question mark), and to do a reinstall (via the "update driver" route). Also, an updated driver for this continually shows up under "Driver Updates" on Windows Update. All to no avail. In fact, EVERY TIME I've installed/reinstalled/updated this driver, the PC freezes during WinXP boot (it clears POST on the mobo). I can't find ANY mention of SATA in the mobo BIOS, but the board supposedly natively supports SATA (thus the Silicon Image controller on-board). The machine runs fine without this, but somehow I have the feeling I'm being "cheated" by this not working the way it would appear it's supposed to.*

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> *Any ideas? Thanks in advance...*