

FireWire install problem (& long saga)

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I'm frustrated. I installed a new FireWire card in my PC; and I'm getting nothing. That's right, nothing. It isn't even detected, much less loading the correct drivers. Here's the whole sad saga from the beginning. If you want to skip down to the end, you won't miss much pertinent info; mostly this is just venting.

Not being financially well endowed, I opted for a low price Sony analog HandyCam a couple years ago. At that time, digital was well beyond my means; and video editing wasn't even on my radar screen. Not long after however, I began to see the advantages and fun of working with desktop video. Having an analog camcorder, I needed a conversion tool, and I picked up a Dazzle DVC100. Analog in; digital out. Should have been great. Wasn't. The problem was, the drivers for the device seemed to be compatible with every operating system but mine, Windows 98SE.

I tried everything, downloaded the latest drivers, contacted tech support, everything. No way, so I just abandoned the whole thing for a while, until my processor fortuitously self destructed. As long as I'm replacing the motherboard et al (Celeron 2.1), I may as well upgrade the OS too, I figure, and I bought Windows XP Home for installation on the rebuilt system. Lo and behold, the Dazzle now worked; and I managed a few nice projects before it stopped working. I don't know why. I can't figure out why; and of course, the DVC100 is no longer manufactured and Dazzle is now Pinnacle and there is no tech support anymore.

I went through all of the usual steps. Uninstalling the device and drivers, downloading and installing the latest drivers, etc. Still nothing. The device appears to be functioning in the Device Manager; but neither Windows Movie Maker or MovieStar5 seem to be seeing the video signal correctly (neither composite nor S-video). It was especially frustrating because it almost works and actually did work at one time. After more time on this problem than any sane person would expend, I decided to chuck it all and go digital.

Skip to here for the real question:

So, while waiting for the arrival of my new MiniDV camcorder (still on a budget), I bought the FireWire card (Adaptec AFW-4300). I put it in an available PCI slot and booted up the PC, delightfully expecting the plug & play to do its thing. Nothing different happened; the PC booted up normally. No "new hardware detected"; no "installing the drivers for your new hardware", nothing. It was as if the card wasn't there. Checked the Device Manager looking for the IEEE Bus Controller; nothing there. Tried "install new hardware" from the Control Panel. Selected the IEEE 1394 Bus Controller device. Windows cannot locate drivers for this device. I'm screwed.

For the next hour, I tried a few things that got me no closer to a resolution; but if I list them all, maybe it will help you deduce where my problem lies:

1. As recommended in the Adaptec installation guide I went to the Microsoft site to locate the latest drivers. I couldn't find anything under "downloads" and precious little in the knowledge base.
2. I powered down, removed the card, and moved it to a different slot. I had initially installed the card in a slot occupied by a modem card. The modem is no longer used (I'm DSL now), so I figured this was as good a time as any to yank it. Not only was it not used, however, I had previously disabled it in the Device Manager because it was conflicting with a video card installation. Apparently by disabling the modem, it freed up an IRQ (COM1/COM3) and allowed detection of the video card. (That's another long story and beyond my knowledge, but one thing at a time. If this is relevant in any way & you want more details, just ask.) So it occurred to me that this particular PCI slot might be inoperative because of disabling the modem, and I tried a different slot for the FireWire card. It didn't make any difference.
3. I tried looking for tech support and/or drivers on the Adaptec site. No help there. It just tells me that XP should have the drivers embedded. Thanks a lot. OTOH, it does mention five files that should be present for XP to install the 1394 drivers; but three of these files are not present on my PC:
c:\windows\system32\drivers\1394bus.sys
c:\windows\system32\drivers\enum1394.sys
c:\windows\system32\drivers\ohci1394.sys
I do have the XP disk; but I have not yet tried finding the drivers there (ran out of time last night).
4. In Device Manager, there is an "Unknown Device" listed under the USB devices. This may or may not be the FireWire card. I yanked out some of the USB cables (the known offenders – remote hub & card reader) to see if that device disappeared, but it remained. I have not yet tried removing all of the USB devices; but I suspect that the unknown device might be the FireWire card being erroneously detected.

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Given the history of problems with device detection and driver installation with this PC, I probably don't have just "normal" problems; but there seems to me to be two issues at work here. First, why doesn't the PC detect the new hardware? And second, where are my IEEE 1394 drivers?

Thanks for any help,
Joe F.