

Re: I think my harddrive has died, seeking a second opinion

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I once had a similar problem, except there was no warning sign. My hard drive suddenly started grinding and stopped working. I called Drive Savers, but they said it would cost \$1000 to recover the data. My data wasn't particularly important, so I left it alone.

I was able to get my hard drive to work about five minutes each time I froze it in the freezer. I bought a new hard drive, booted into DOS, and copied files over from my broken hard drive. Then, I froze my HD again and copied over some more data. And I did this until I had enough of my important stuff backed up. With the frozen hard drive, the transfer rate was slow and some files were corrupted, but I was still able to get my most critical files.

What brand is your hard drive? Mine was a Quantum, and I've heard that Quantums are very problematic. My uncle had a Quantum drive that literally melted in his computer (he could smell plastic burning and saw black burn marks).

Malke wrote:

Amazing Jim wrote:

Answers inline, with snippage:

About 6 months ago my PC started making an odd noise, which I decided was the fan, but it turns out it was most likely the harddrive bearings grinding, oops, mistake number 1.

Your hard drive has died. Nothing you do from any software position – Windows 98, Windows XP, whatever – is going to work. It's dead. You should have pulled your data immediately the very first time you heard the noise.

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Because the original HDD is ATA and the new one is SATA I also got a host PCI card, but as I can't get the system to boot I have no way of installing the drivers for the card, and therefore can't install the drive. (Muppet, I didn't think of that)

If you want a SATA drive, you'll need a floppy drive so you can put a floppy in with the SATA drivers during the XP install (F6). If your machine doesn't have a floppy drive, either buy an internal one or an external usb drive. Make sure your BIOS will allow you to see usb devices before an operating system is loaded. Since your machine is only 3 years old, it probably can.

Otherwise, take the SATA drive and the controller card back to where you got them and buy a new IDE drive. Install Windows per usual.

So, the big question firstly is, have I pushed the old drive bearings too far and the unit is useless? Is there any way to recover it's data?

The drive is dead. If you want the data, you'll need to send the drive to a professional data recovery company. You've messed with it so long that even they may have a hard time recovering the data, but if it's crucial then it's worth a try. I prefer Drive Savers, but there are other companies such as Ontrack and Seagate. Those companies' services usually start at around \$500USD and go up from there. Only you can determine the value of your data.

DriveSavers – <http://www.drivesavers.com>

Seagate Data Recovery Services – <https://www.seagatedatarecovery.com/>
<http://www.ontrack.com>

Malke

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MS–MVP Windows Shell/User
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www.elephantboycomputers.com
"Don't Panic"