

Re: Somebody help! – start up issues and hard drive partitions!

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Source:

<http://www.tech-archive.net/Archive/WinXP/microsoft.public.windowsxp.hardware/2006-12/msg00686.html>

- *From:* Brent Jones <BrentJones@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx>
 - *Date:* Mon, 11 Dec 2006 17:30:00 -0800
-

Anna,

A dude named Gerry helped me in another forum category. He found out why my notebook came with FAT32 formatting... I will put his two posts below. If you follow the link in the second one, it explains on page 14 that the Acer System Recovery requires the FAT32 file system. Thanks for all your helpful advice!

Read on:

Brent

I have discovered that the partition structure is a feature of Acer Aspire laptops.
This is a report using HD Tune from another laptop.

Partition : 1
Drive letter :
Label :
Capacity : 4996 MB
Usage : 0.00%
Type : unknown (12h)
Bootable : No

Partition : 2
Drive letter : C:\
Label : ACER
Capacity : 54486 MB
Usage : 32.68%
Type : FAT32
Bootable : Yes

Partition : 3
Drive letter : D:\
Label : ACERDATA
Capacity : 54988 MB

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Usage : 0.09%
Type : FAT32
Bootable : No

This illustrates and confirms what you already know. Partition 1 must contain an original copy of Windows XP (equivalent to the CD mainly users have) which can be used to do a Repair Install or to do a Clean Install of the operating system should that be necessary. It is not System Restore, a feature of Windows which enables the user to restore the registry and other system files to what they were at the time the Restore Point was created.

Whilst you may not be able to see the Volume Information Folder containing the Restore Points you can gain information on its size in two ways. The default setting is to reserve 12% of the drive or partition for System Restore. In reality this is far too much for today's drives and 700 mb is enough. Right click your My Computer icon on the Desktop and select System Restore. Place the cursor on your C drive select Settings but this time find the slider and drag it to the left until it reads 700 mb and exit. When you get to the Settings screen click on Apply and OK and exit.

You can also see how large restore points are because they invariably fragment and appear in the Report in Disk Defragmenter after you select analyse and before you start defragmenting.

I have not so far discovered why Acer decided to do what they have done but they obviously have a reason. Until you do discover what that is I recommend that you do not remove the partitions or convert to NTFS.

The cluster size with FAT32 on these partitions will be 32 kb. This makes good use of disk space where the average file size is large. NTFS scores well where it is small as the cluster size is only 4 kb.

Description of the FAT32 File System in Windows XP
<http://support.microsoft.com/kb/310525/en-us>

Limitations of the FAT32 File System in Windows XP
<http://support.microsoft.com/kb/314463/en-us>

It is quite easy to work with two partitions. This Article on Partition Planning will help with ideas. It is a little dated as things have moved on since it was originally written but a lot of it is still relevant. The point being

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you have to keep the operating system in C but many other folders /
files
can just as easily go in the other partition.
<http://aumha.org/a/parts.htm>

—

Hope this helps.

Gerry
~~~~~  
FCA  
Stourport, England

Enquire, plan and execute  
~~~~~

Brent

Reason for FAT32 now discovered.

See page 14
<https://www.synapsenow.com/synapse/data/7117/documents/Acer%20eRecovery%20Management.pdf>

—

Hope this helps.

Gerry
~~~~~  
FCA  
Stourport, England

Enquire, plan and execute  
~~~~~

"Anna" wrote:

Re: Somebody help! – start up issues and hard drive partitions!

"Brent Jones"

<BrentJones@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx>

wrote in message

news:61F065F9-E048-4A79-8935-BCC9D62D31C8@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

1.
Occasionally
when I
power on
my
notebook
(usually
when it is
plugged
into
a power
supply or
when
attempting
to bring it
out of
Standby
Mode)
it
gives
me an error
message
indicating
that due to
an improper
shutdown, I
need
to
set my
system date
and time
accordingly
before
starting up
my
system.
These
messages
occur with
no pattern,
and I have
never shut
down my
system
improperly

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since I
purchased
it. This is
very
annoying
because I
have
owned
this system
for less than
a month,
and that
type of error
message
should
not
be
happening,
yet it occurs
every
couple of
days. I
bought an
Acer
Aspire
5100
Notebook
on
November
15th, 2006.

2. I do not
like how
my alleged
120 GB
hard drive
has been
partitioned
into
a C: and D:
drive,
splitting the
available
hard drive
space in
two.
From
what
I can tell,
the D: drive
is

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seemingly
useless,
with only a
few files
on
it
consuming
9 MB. I
would like
someone to
walk me
through
how to
safely
remove
the D: drive
and have
one
consistent
drive (C:) to
contain all
system
and
user files... I
do not want
to lose any
data in the
process
though!

3. I have
heard that
my
notebook
came with a
FAT32
system
structure.
I
am
not sure
what that
means, but
there is
another type
that begins
with
an
"N"
that is
apparently

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better and
when I
upgrade to
Vista, will
run
Vista
much
smoother.
Does
anyone
know what I
am talking
about? Is it
worth
changing
the
structure?
What will
the benefits
be? Will I
lose any
data in the
process?

Thank you
very much
for your
assistance!

"Anna" wrote:

Brent:
In addition to the
comments/suggestions
you've already received...

1. What you're experiencing
re those error messages
could possibly
signify a
serious problem with your
new Acer notebook. Maybe
not, but were I
you, I
would definitely get in
contact with Acer to thrash
this out
especially

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since the unit is still under warranty.

2. That small D: partition may be some sort of recovery/restore/housekeeping partition created by Acer, although the fact that it's only 9 MB would be unusual. There's no explanation in your documentation re that partition?

Anyway, for all practical purposes your HDD is utilizing all the disk space of its 120 GB or so capacity is it not? In any event, do not tamper with that D: partition unless you get a clear explanation of its function from Acer or your documentation.

3. It's nearly inconceivable that your system would be FAT32 formatted and not NTFS assuming this is a new unit which you purchased from Acer. Are you absolutely sure about this?

In any event I really think it would be wise for you to get in touch with Acer a/s/a/p.
Anna

Brent Jones" <BrentJones@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx>
wrote in message

Re: Somebody help! – start up issues and hard drive partitions!

news:6DFB9F80-C41C-45DE-916C-A0625E876961@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx>

Hi Anna,

I will be getting touch with Acer shortly.
Thanks!

Anna, all 120 GB is accounted for between
the C:, D:, and a third
partition
used for system restoration. I probably
should have mentioned that the
first
time. D: drive seems totally useless.

I am certain it is FAT 32... I thought it was
bizarre myself, but I
looked
it up in other online forums and it was a
common complaint for this
unit
among new buyers.

Brent

"Anna" wrote:

Brent:

I think your getting in touch with Acer is the wisest course at
this
point.

But just out of curiosity...

When you say you're sure your HDD has been formatted
FAT32. Are you
simply
relying on the information from the "online forums" or does
the system
actually show this in Disk Management under the "File
System" heading for
your C: drive?
Anna

"Brent Jones" <BrentJones@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx> wrote in message
news:60B7EE89-D46D-40F3-B3B2-AAF47C383825@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

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It actually says that in Disk Management – I just wasn't aware that it was a negative thing until reading the forums online.

Brent:

It is true that as much as a FAT32 file system is ordinarily undesirable (as compared with the NTFS file system) when using the XP operating system, what I would be more concerned with were I you at this point is why a supposedly brand-new laptop that you presumably purchased from Acer came so equipped. Except under very unusual circumstances where the user, for one reason or another, required the vendor to install a FAT32 file system on a new PC, that just isn't done. When you contact Acer I would look into this very carefully.

Anna