

Re: Keyboard Question

Source:

<http://www.tech-archive.net/Archive/WinXP/microsoft.public.windowsxp.hardware/2008-09/msg00247.html>

- *From:* Paul <nospam@xxxxxxxxxxx>
 - *Date:* Mon, 08 Sep 2008 19:45:59 -0400
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exec@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx wrote:

Hi,

We have 1 PC with 2 cloned monitors. The monitors are in separate offices, about 30 feet apart. What we need to do is to be able to have each monitor have its own keyboard & mouse to control the screen. We are running XP.

My questions are:

- 1) Can you do things with Windows configuration, or some type of inexpensive software or hardware.
- 2) Since the monitors are cloned, I assume that what happens on one happens on the other.
- 3) If we wanted 2 separate monitors on the same PC, what is involved in that?

If I could get some help, it would really be appreciated.

Thanks!

Jetway used to make a "dual user" PC. The idea here, is two users are logged into the same computer, each has their own keyboard, mouse, and monitor. The video card has two video connectors, and one "channel" is given to each user. I'm not sure Jetway does these boxes any more or not. I cannot find mention of "twin" on their site now.

<http://www.engadget.com/2004/04/17/jetways-dual-user-pc/>
http://www.jetway.com.tw/jw/news_show.asp?newsid=64

You are more likely to operate an ordinary PC in "clone mode", with the two monitors displaying the same content. A video card with two connectors can be placed in clone mode, but the monitors

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should ideally be the same with respect to native resolution.

A 30 foot run of video cable, could degrade VGA signal quality, so 1920x1200 resolution might be pretty fuzzy. Similarly, DVI or HDMI have some cable limits, and you can search for reports on what cables worked there, and at what resolution choices.

Monitor1 -----|___ video card
Monitor2 -----|

You can run a USB extension to the other office, and a USB hub placed there, for a USB keyboard and mouse. Keyboard and mouse input from either keyboard and mouse should work. The only thing that might not work, is the remote office worker may not be able to change the BIOS settings. It could be that only the local USB keyboard can fix BIOS settings.

To extend a USB connection, there are active cables like this. You can use no more than 5 of these, plus a length of USB cable off the last one. So 5*5 meters plus 5 meters, for a total of 30 meters. When buying these products, read the reviews carefully – some active repeater cables don't seem to work right when cascaded, which is the whole reason for their existence! What an active cable consists of, is 5 meters of wire, plus a "1 port hub". So there is a chip inside the blob at the end of the cable, and it is following normal USB protocol and functions as a USB hub. That is how it is regenerating the signal, and also why the cable is limited to 5 meters per stretch.

<http://www.newegg.com/Product/ProductReview.aspx?Item=N82E16812224004>

With your stated objective of 30 feet, I would use

Computer ----- 2*active_cable-----self_powered_hub ----- keyboard
<----30 feet--> ----- mouse
----- other_usb_dev
----- other_usb_dev

By a self powered USB hub, I'm referring to one that comes with its own power adapter. The power adapter can provide power to high power local USB devices. You can see such an adapter bundled with this USB hub. Otherwise, if power for USB devices comes down the 30 feet of cable, the power quality could be pretty poor.

<http://c1.neweggimages.com/NeweggImage/productimage/17-364-017-03.jpg>
<http://c1.neweggimages.com/NeweggImage/productimage/17-364-017-06.jpg>

The "clone mode solution" described above, is suitable for

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one user to run from room to room, and have the ability to do work from either location (same document still open on screen for edits etc). Only the Jetway solution supports *two* users, in a more independent mode of operation, running from the same computer box. I have not read of any accounts of other companies offering the Jetway "twin" concept.

Paul

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