

Re: OS is Terminal – Parallel Install?

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http://www.tech-archive.net/Archive/WinXP/microsoft.public.windowsxp.help_and_support/2007-08/msg01535.htm

- *From:* "Patrick Keenan" <test@xxxxxxx>
 - *Date:* Sat, 18 Aug 2007 19:30:39 -0400
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"bob" <bob@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx> wrote in message
<news:6082D2F2-F7DA-40EC-8CB4-85843B62E184@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx>

My OS is down, has been corrupted, and is not recoverable, according to Dell tech support. They recommend a fresh install but my data is not backed up and I cannot lose it.

My question is, is a parallel install a viable option? Or is it too risky for someone who is not technically advanced?

Thanks,
Bob

I would suggest that you not do the parallel install, though it can work – yes, there is some risk. If the data has value, there are *much* better and safer options.

The absolutely safest way to do this is to get another hard disk, remove yours and set it aside, install XP to the new drive, and then attach the old drive and copy your data. This maintains the original copy of your data. You can get a bare 250 gig hard disk for around CDN\$75, and they are easy to install.

The next safest thing to do is to remove the drive, attach it to another XP system with enough space, and copy the data, then do a clean install to your old drive. This removes the original copy of the data.

Either of these approaches significantly reduce the chance of data loss.

A USB2 drive case, perhaps around \$20, will let you attach the drive to another system very quickly, without modifying the other system. If your system is a laptop, there is a 2.5" version available, which uses a special cable (included).

You do need to know if your hard disk is IDE or SATA. IDE drives use a

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wide cable (80– conductor, 40–pin), SATA use a narrow cable for data. The cases needed is different. Just about any computer shop carries these cases now.

This page lists a number of them, for reference:

<http://www.canadacomputers.com/index.php?do=ShowProdList&cmd=pl&id=516>

If you're unsure what data to include, or where it is, and have to get your system back up quickly – you can give yourself about two weeks by using the Acronis TrueImage demo.

www.acronis.com

This is about 100 meg. Download and install it on the other system, reboot, then attach your drive via the USB2 case. Delete the one or two largest files in the root folder, pagefile.sys and hiberfil.sys. Empty the recycle bin. Then, create the image of your disk. This usually takes under an hour, and contains everything on the drive.

When the image is done, mount the image and browse through it to verify that your data is there and openable.

Regardless of what approach you take, and including the parallel install, you may very well need to Take Ownership of the user account folders. You'll know that you have to do this when you get the "Access Denied" message. It's easy to get past this.

<http://support.microsoft.com/kb/308421>

If you don't have access to another system, or there are any problems and the data is of value, remove your system's hard disk and set it aside. Get another hard disk – a 250 gig desktop drive can be under CDN\$75. Laptop drives are more expensive, with faster drives costing more. Reinstall XP to the new drive. When done, you can reattach your old drive and work with some leisure at copying or recovering the data, which is a different task. Unfortunately, this won't work if your system didn't come with recovery CDs.

HTH
–pk

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