

Repeated Boot Config Corruption in XP Pro

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I have now re-installed (clean) WinXP pro 5 times in past 45 days (only got round to activating 2x).

The problem is that the PC will corrupt and then either the restore program works (partially) or the system will not boot either in Safe Mode or any other mode (at which time I re-install).

Config as follows: Asus Asrock P4S61, Intel Celeron 2.4 (retail version), 512DDR PC2700 Kingston, Sony 5x DVD and WD 10g HD, ATI Radeon 9200SE 128ddr WinXP Pro.

The application is my son's PC which because he uses the PC for gaming is using our S Video TV as the primary monitor. WinXP desktop settings altered to improve visibility.

I believe that the heart of the problem is MS's digital fingerprinting in XP Pro. The system is installed normally, all Win updates and sec patches applied before installing any software.

Because the item is hooked to a TV and that TV may be switched to another video input, the TV is occasionally not "on" as far as XP is concerned when it boots. It is clear that when XP tries to boot and does not detect any monitor that the corruption in the boot sector happens. Today's corruption was the main windows/system32/config/system file (3+mb). WinXP tells me that I could use the "repair" feature, but although I am a pretty advanced PC person, I can't figure out how to do it unless I use either the FIXMB or FIXBOOT, but am unsure which to use.

What I need to know is how to "turn off" XP's monitor detect at boot so it won't corrupt if my son accidentally turns on the computer with the Video Mode on the wrong AV

input. I know that MS is aware of this problem since some of the promo material on their new "Media Center" version of XP (for TVs) discuss dealing with these kinds of common AV problems (including power on and desktop management).

If because of the digital fingerprinting, I can't turn off the monitor detect (the effect of this would be that XP would boot completely without detecting a monitor at all – which is the default mode for 98SE, Me and 2K) without corrupting the boot file and config, then some suggestions on how to do a fast "repair" so that I don't need to reinstall everything, everytime.

Right now, I could go back to stable Win98SE for his system since it works fine, but then some of the newer games won't play. This whole process has been very frustrating, and if I ask MS, I am sure they will tell me it's either someone else's fault or I should consider upgrading to their new "Media Center" version (which of course does not support Smart Display because it is a variant of Home not Pro).

Any assistance / advice (besides downgrading to 98SE and simply using "System Restore") would be greatly appreciated. Unfortunately using System Restore is not an option, because only roughly half the time does the boot file corruption involve a lessor file that allows the unit to get to a "safe mode" level of boot – the rest of the time you are dead in the water with only "repair" (which I don't know enough about) or re-installations as options.

My son is getting frustrated with having to re-install XP every week, and he already knows far too much than a 6 and-a-half year old should have to know about PCs.

Thx – Dave Lonico

(frustrated after paying for XP Pro on the assumption it was a great improvement on stability).