

# Moving XP around – and back to it's original hardware

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*Source:*

[http://www.tech-archive.net/Archive/WinXP/microsoft.public.windowsxp.setup\\_deployment/2006-06/msg00032.htm](http://www.tech-archive.net/Archive/WinXP/microsoft.public.windowsxp.setup_deployment/2006-06/msg00032.htm)

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We are a small company who make real time control systems. Part of the system is a real time operating system on non pc hardware, but we also supply pc's as an integral part of the system. Without them, the control system is useless. The hardware usually gets shipped to the customer well before we have finished working on the software. There is nothing we can do to get round this.

The pc's all have removable drives. All our pc's have identical hardware. We go to great lengths to ensure this. We do not buy the "flavour of the month" from a local shop. We build them ourselves and use long life components such as motherboards, etc.

When we used Win2K, we used to keep the drives, and put them in another pc. The hardware was identical, so we could continue working. When it was time to commission the control system (sometimes months from the shipping date) our engineer would take the discs with him, put them back in the original hardware and carry on as usual. Everything worked.

Now with XP, we can't do this. I have created images (they are all different) for our pc's, and used sysprep to create a base image. This image is used to create a new pc, and gets a valid key during installation. We buy XP from an authorized MS distributor. Now, if we move the discs to another supposedly identical pc, XP will detect the hardware change (see here for an interesting paper on this

<http://www.licenturion.com/xp/fully-licensed-wpa.txt>) and then we have 3 days to re-activate. Of course, this will happen again once we take the discs out and reunite them with their original hardware.

Now I don't want to keep phoning MS and explaining what we are doing. I'm sure that after a while, they would get very suspicious. However I do want to keep the flexibility of what we do now, whilst not breaking any EULA's. Does anyone know if using a Volume License would help? We could do this. I know that these installations do not require activation, but what about a hardware change? Do they still complain about this? The only thing about a volume license is that we would wish to transfer the ownership to the final customer. We don't want to keep this. Can I do this? Or is this a question for some other forum or newsgroup? As an aside, what about XP Embedded? I can't see that an XP image for a set top box would need activating! Anyway, sorry for the long post, but any ideas are welcome.

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