

Re: Dynamic to basic disk?

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- *From:* DWalker <none@xxxxxxx>
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"Shenan Stanley" <newshelper@xxxxxxx> wrote in <news:eOnKJhbIIHA.5860@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx>:

Software RAID) is a horrible performance idea and I wouldn't trust my data with one either. I equate it with the driver overlay applications – if something goes wrong – it will go horribly wrong.

It is just for backup – a little scary to me would be using any software RAID. I would never recommend a software RAID unless there was just no alternative (and as there is – inexpensive hardware RAID...)

This is all purely side-bar stuff, but...

What is it you are hoping to do with a software-based mirror RAID?

If it is data protection from yourself/the more-likely software issues (virus, trojans, worms, malware, slip of the human fingers, etc) --> unless you have a time delay on the mirroring, that's going to fail miserably. If it is from hardware failure – it may very well have you going in short order – but in my experience, if it is software based, it's almost as long as it would have been if you had instead followed good backup rituals and restored from those. *grin* Hardware based mirroring – you'll be back up pretty quickly – but I still recommend a good backup scheme as opposed to the mirroring. Software RAID of ANY kind just does not compare with hardware RAID in performance, ease of use or reliability.

I realize it may seem like a bad investment – but a simple RAID card will do things for you well worth the money. Also, backups are better protection against the most common failures than a MIRROR RAID will be. The only situation that MIRROR RAIDs win is a hardware failure on

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the first disk(s) – then you can bring up the other set relatively painlessly. In my experience – during that time, something software-wise will be lost in the meantime. Those MTBFs are just huge with hard disk drives. ;-)

Well, it was set up that way for disk crashes. We have had some disk crashes, and the software RAID saved us. (We also have online nightly backups to other disks, and offline nightly backups to tape.)

The server is only used to store some user files, and we have not NOTICED any performance problems at all using Windows 2000 server's built-in software mirroring. (Although "regenerating a mirror set" does take a while on a 200 GB partition.)

Using the NOW-inexpensive hardware RAID is certainly a good idea, but hardware RAID was expensive when we put this server together 5–7 years ago.

The boot disk was generously sized at 4 GB years ago when Windows 2000 first came out, back when the mentality was that anything over cylinder 1024 or whatever might not be bootable, with fresh memories of the Windows NT 4 days when there were other limits that you might or might not see depending on your setup. Even though those limits didn't apply to us any more, I thought 4GB would be huge for a boot partition. (And it was, at the time.) Nowadays, I often make 20 GB boot partitions.

(I'm not a fan of chopping up a large disk into many smaller partitions; I figure that organizing data in folders is fine, and you don't have to guess which "partition" will need to grow more than any other in the future.)

Now that 500 GB SATA disks are \$110, we don't worry so much about how to partition things.

But thanks for the comments; I agree about inexpensive hardware RAID that is now available.

David Walker

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