

Re: Server Locks Up at Exactly 4% into a Disk Synchronization

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 - *Date:* 16 Oct 2006 07:40:29 -0700
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It ended up being hardware. I convinced the host to swap the server out, and the new server worked perfectly.

deane.barker@xxxxxxxxxx wrote:

I've tried a few more times with PerfMon running in the background. One constant:

At the 4% point, Avg. Disk Queue Length spikes and crashes three or four times suddenly. This is after being consistently maxed out on the display (which makes sense, give how disk-intensive a sync is).

Right after this, the two other counters -- Processor Time and Available Memory -- flat-line. They disappear completely from the display (I don't know if they're gone, or just so low they don't register.)

About 10 seconds after this, the machine freezes. I can replicate this behavior every time.

Deane

deane.barker@xxxxxxxxxx wrote:

Yesterday, I took possession of a brand new dedicated server from my hosting company: Windows Server 2003, with two 80GB physical disks.

I converted both disks to dynamic, deleted the existing volume on the second physical disk, and added it as a mirror to the first. It started to resync.

At 4% completion, my Remote Desktop session just went away -- lost its connection. The machine stopped pinging. I thought this was odd, but I had it remotely rebooted and started over.

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It happened again, at about the same point in the disk synchronization process.

I had the hosting company set up a remote KVM, and I could watch it the third time. It was exactly like it seemed -- the machine just froze at 4% completion. Mouse pointer froze, Start Menu was half open at the time, nothing was responding, etc.

The fourth time, just to be sure, I ran PerfMon in the background so I had something very dynamic to watch, and, sure enough, the counters are frozen in time, just as disc synchronizaton got to 4%.

Each time, a reboot brings it back fine, but since the synchronization got interrupted, it's as if nothing happened.

The Event Viewer has no smoking gun in it. Between the five times this happened, there's no consistent error or warning that points to a problem. Considering how fast the machine dies when I watch it in the KVM, I don't think it has time to write anything to the log anyway.

Just to see if anything was wrong with the second physical drive, I formatted it. It formatted fine.

I ran chkdsk (both "in place" and scheduled right after reboot) on both drives. No problems.

Since I'm a glutton for punishment, I tried to sync the disks a fifth time. Same problem -- still at exactly 4% completion.

I went back to the hosting company and told them I thought there was a problem with the second drive. Their response:

"I investigated the issue and found no problems with ether drive. The issue appears to be with the software you are using. Unfortunately mirroring drives is out side the scope of our support."

Now, I've set up three or four Windows Server machines with mirrored drives, and I've never had a problem with it. And this smells very much like a hardware problem.

Anyone have any thoughts?

Deane