

Re: [OT] Any XP experts around?

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Roy Battell <news@vutrax666.co.uk> wrote:

>Terry,

>

>Sound like a real cry for help.

>You can't change the letter designation for the current Windows

>drive so you have a bit of a gotcha.

>

>Sounds to me like something has messed about with your boot.ini

>on Disk 1 (Primary Master if IDE) that determines which system

>is booted. It specifies the disk (counting from 0 rather than 1

>just to help the confusion), and the partition (counting from 1).

>

>So a typical simple system boot.ini looks like (copied from

>wifes machine):-

>

>[boot loader]

>timeout=30

>default=multi(0)disk(0)rdisk(0)partition(1)\WINDOWS

>[operating systems]

>multi(0)disk(0)rdisk(0)partition(1)\WINDOWS="Microsoft ...

> ... Windows XP Home Edition" /fastdetect /NoExecute=OptIn

>

>... <newline> ... means one long line

>

>The bit in "Micro ... edition" is just title of the menu entry.

>

>I suggest you do the following:-

>

>>From the Microsoft Knowledge base get and print Article ID : Q305595

> How To Create a Boot Disk for an NTFS or FAT Partition in Windows XP

>

>Make a boot disk (or more) and make sure it works.

>(Make more than one and you can use it for boot testing)

>

>Now you can safely play about with boot.ini in the first

>windows partition (disk 1 Partition 1 in the management listing):-

>

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>>From a CMD shell (XPs excuse for a DOS Window) type
> attrib -h -s -r X:\boot.ini
>to make the file editable. Replace X: with whatever drive letter
>is the current drive letter for the first partition.
>
>You can now edit X:\boot.ini with NOTEPAD or any plain
>text editor and change the disk and partition numbers
>as required, and try them out. You can also build a menu
>to try out more than one per edit.
>As an example mine looks like this:–
>
>[boot loader]
>timeout=10
>default=multi(0)disk(0)rdisk(0)partition(3)\WINDOWS
>[operating systems]
>multi(0)disk(0)rdisk(0)partition(3)\WINDOWS="Microsoft Windows
> ... XP Professional" /fastdetect /NoExecute=OptIn
>C:\HDA1HDB7.LIN="Linux Fedora Core 2 32 Bit (Boot hda1 for hdb7)"
>multi(0)disk(0)rdisk(0)partition(1)\WINDOWS="Emergency XP Pro Prt 1"
>multi(0)disk(0)rdisk(0)partition(2)\WINDOWS="Emergency XP Pro Prt 2"
>multi(0)disk(0)rdisk(0)partition(3)\WINDOWS="Emergency XP Pro Prt 3"
>multi(0)disk(0)rdisk(2)partition(2)\WINDOWS="Microsoft Windows
> .... XP Professional (11JUL04)" /fastdetect
>C:\CMDCONS\BOOTSECT.DAT="Microsoft Windows Recovery Console" /cmdcons
>
>My first windows partition is No 3 because 1 and 2 are Linux
>boot partitions – such are the delights of dual system CAD
>software development.
>
>Hope this is of some help – I've tried to be accurate but sods
>law rules the universe.
```

Thanks Roy, that's very helpful. More than anything, I reckon I need someone to tag along while I work this out! If you reckon we're boring the socks off everyone else, we can take it to email?

In fact, I've been working on similar lines late last night and this morning. XP actually makes it fairly easy to edit boot.ini, without the chore of changing attributes, as follows: System Properties>Advanced>Startup and Recovery>Settings>System startup>Edit. That brings boot.ini up in Notepad, and you can save changes. Here's what mine looks like right now (I've separated the lines for clarity):

```
[boot loader]

timeout=5

default=multi(0)disk(0)rdisk(0)partition(1)\WINDOWS
[operating systems]
```

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```
multi(0)disk(0)rdisk(0)partition(1)\WINDOWS="XP Home Edition"  
/fastdetect /NoExecute=OptIn
```

```
multi(0)disk(0)rdisk(1)partition(1)\WINDOWS="XP Home Edition (#2)"  
/fastdetect /NoExecute=OptIn
```

```
C:\CMDCONS\BOOTSECT.DAT="Recovery Console C" /cmdcons
```

That incorporates a few tentative changes I made. Apart from cosmetics like cutting out 'Microsoft Windows', there was earlier this line:
multi(0)disk(0)rdisk(1)partition(2)\WINDOWS="Microsoft Windows XP Home Edition (#1)" /fastdetect

As you see, that pointed to my D (data) partition, so I think I just zapped it. I may also

Anyway, things have progressed a little further this morning, and I now feel tantalisingly close to sorting this and doing something more interesting <g>. A post I had (from Eric) in comp.sys.ibm.pc.hardware.storage said: "The current OS partition always shows up as Boot. Active means bootable. The active part that booted shows up as System, and other ones as Active."

>From that, it may be that I'm already there! I can only hope...

But, as already mentioned I find it very counter-intuitive. And I can't quite square Eric's statement with the up-thread definition here by Dave. So can you bear with me while I try to sort it please?

I've booted to XP Home Edition, the 'first' of my 2 multi-boot options (using the boot.ini above). This is what my system looks like right now according to XP Disk Management:

<http://www.terrypin.dial.pipex.com/Misc/Sep12-XP.gif>

>From that, can you tell definitively what partition I am 'running in'?

BTW, both Drive Image 2002 and Partition Manager 7.0 just show both C and E as 'Active', no distinction.

My interpretation before that post above was that I am 'in' E, instead of C where I want to be. That was based on seeing that 'Active' annotation XP shows against E. But it now seems I was mistaken, and I'm 'in' C after all, yes? No?

Why do I care? That got raised earlier, and it's a fair question, giving that everything is working fine, shortcuts OK, etc. The answer is that it's because I want to be back in exactly the same state I've

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been in for the last 2 years. C was exclusively my system and boot partition. No E involved at all. E was just sitting patiently on my 2nd HD until some emergency (or experiment) prompted me to boot to it instead. So, as I didn't normally use the files on F either, only my 1st HD would actually be being accessed. The 2nd HD (XP calls it Disk 1 to confuse me) would just be spinning passively for most of the time. That's a mental picture with which I'm comfortable!

So, bottom line: can you tell me if I'm already back in the required state of grace, or whether I still need to do something clever/complex/risky?

--

Terry Pinnell
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