

Bad XP problem

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This has to do with a lost admin password in XP. The PC won't boot, it locks before even running GUI. There are a lot of important files in a private folder, stuff the guy would pay money to recover. Without the admin PW we can't repair the OS with the XP CD, and we were the ones who put it in. It's possible that the SAM files are corrupt.

I wasn't that confident that anything would work, but I've tried installing a fresh boot HD and loading it fresh with XP, cloning the drive and then letting XP install over itself, but loading from either it won't give me access to the protected files for the owner's account. We know the PW for that account, but the admin, when you go into safe mode, well I PW protected that as well. (few people know you can do that)

I've read that the NTFS doesn't help either, and when I go to access that directory it gives a MB beep. Doesn't sound promising.

Could I possibly copy the SAM files to the clone, which boots ? Then I could maybe use the original login. Another possibility would be a registry merge. Do you think any of this might work, or am I just fucked ?

FYI, the PC is : P4 2600HT on an Asus MB with 512MB and 2 80GB Maxtors, a Plextor DVD burner and a region/authentication free DVDROM, authentic ATI Radeon 7500 (64MB) w/TV tuner and vid and SVID outputs. The Asus has onboard netcard and Ali sound. Once it's up and running I'm adding a Firewire card, which is one of the few things other than RAID which this MB lacks. Even so, there's about \$1000 tied up in this box, about a year ago. It might be worth saving. :)

Thanks in advance for any help.

JURB