



Coffee and Computers Newsletter



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I Believe in Ghosts

I finally took my own advice and installed a second hard drive in my computer.

I did this for two reasons. First, my original hard drive has been in my machine for about three years so it could fail anytime. Secondly, my machine's operating system is Windows 98 Second Edition and I want to update to Windows XP. But I have told everyone that upgrading from one Microsoft operating system to another is problematic and could be more trouble than it's worth. My thinking is that if I have a complete copy of my first drive on the second drive, I can always go back and make the second drive the Master drive in case I get in trouble.

I went to Microcenter and purchased a Western Digital 40 gigabyte hard drive. I choose the WD drive because it is made in either Malaysia or Thailand. Also, 40 gigabytes is large enough for me because my first drive is 20 gb and only is using about 4 gb. (I don't let my grandchildren download pictures or MP3 music files.)

Installation was relatively straightforward with only a couple

of exceptions. My machine is a Dell, Pentium III. I opened the case and easily installed the new drive in a holder already in the machine just for this purpose. I used the existing ribbon cable and put the new drive on the center connector that is there for a Slave drive. I set the jumper on the new drive to 'cable select,' meaning that because it was connected to the center connector on the ribbon cable the machine would assign it as a Slave drive.

Incidentally, the machines are made to start (boot) from whichever drive is designated as the Master drive. Other drives become Slave drives.

After installation, the instructions said to reboot the machine using a floppy disk supplied by Western Digital. This would allow me to set up the new drive and format it. This didn't work. I ended up rebooting my machine and clicking F8 until I reached the screen that asked me how I wanted to start the machine. I choose to start the machine in the MS DOS mode, meaning I got a C:> prompt on a black screen.

At this C:> prompt, I typed 'fdisk' which is the DOS program that

sets up the partitions on the drives. I choose the new drive and let the fdisk program run.

Next, I rebooted the machine into the MS DOS prompt again and typed in 'format D:.' This formatted the new drive, the final step in its installation.

After this all was finished, my machine recognized a completely new drive, D:, as a new and empty drive. I now could use this drive for anything.

Incidentally, this changed drive letters on my ZIP, CD and CD writer drives so I had to go back into Windows and change backup information for Quicken and some other programs to E:, the new ZIP designation.

Now, let's ghost.

I wanted the new drive to have a complete copy of the original drive. Thus, I purchased a program called 'Disk Image' developed by Power Quest. This allows either a complete 'image' of one drive to another drive or there is a copy utility called 'Drive Copy' that does almost the same thing.

Norton also makes an imaging program called Ghost but the reviews imply that the Power Quest program is more user friendly and easier to use.

The difference between a disk 'image' and a disk 'copy' is only in the format of the copied data, so

let's not get into it here. Both 'image' and 'copy' produce the same result.

I installed 'Disk Image' on my machine's Master drive (drive C:). Then I followed instructions and, in my case, made a "Copy" of drive C: onto the new drive D:. All worked just as expected and I ended up with a complete copy of C: on D:. To test this, I rebooted my machine into the MS DOS mode again and at the DOS prompt, typed in D: to switch to the new D: drive. Then at the D:> prompt I simply typed in WIN and the machine started in Windows like normal, except this time it was on the new drive.

Everything worked just like it would on the original C: drive.

Now I am ready to install the Windows XP operating system on the C: drive and in case of problems I'll just switch drives and the machine will be back where I started!

I'll let you know how this next experiment works in a later Newsletter.

See you all Friday.

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