

### Disc Management

Before the turn of the century, our computers had hard discs capacities not exceeding 10Gigabytes. Then suddenly with a bigger more sophisticated Operating System (OS) and better package programs, the need for storage space increased drastically.

After a very short time, discs became bigger and faster. Technology advancement was so rapid that it was difficult to keep up with. Computers became faster and thus the storage requirements increased. This speed advancement also meant that the programmers got their codes scripted and encoded faster, meaning they could now churn out more Virus, Trojans and Worms then in the olden days. This then brought about the need for antivirus and other methods of keeping your data safe.

Considering all this data was being saved in the hard discs, disc management became something all users had to know, but then again most of the computer users are just users who believe that their computer shops can handle a great deal of technical knowledge, only to despair later because most of the computer shops are just product resellers rather than solution sellers.

### From the Beginning

When you are buying a desktop PC, these days the disc sizes depend on what you want. The smallest discs available in the market are around 80Gigabytes and the largest at around half a Terabyte. This means lots of space and yet it doesn't take very long to fill it all up. Programs, work, movies and other audio files tend to take up a major part of our spaces. With laptops the smallest these days is about 40Gb and the largest is about 240Gb. Usually the branded desktop comes preinstalled with the OS unless it's a clone which means that the computer shop will have formatted and loaded an OS for you. This would usually mean that the hard disc will be the singular piece of the full capacity unless you specify otherwise with the computer shop, the branded ones will always come as one piece.

This becomes a problem when you need to format your machine due to maybe a virus problem or an OS related problem because now you are looking for something to save all your data and then format the system otherwise you loose all that you have wasted precious time on. CDs are plausible but they only manage to hold about 650-700Mb of data, DVDs are efficient space wise but the cost per Mb is almost the same. External hard discs are another option but somehow all these problems arise Saturday after 2.30pm and that means you are restless the whole weekend, and come Monday you begin looking for an external disc which isn't all that cheap.

Now comes the interesting part. When you are getting a clone, always ask the computer company to split the hard disc into 2 portions. So now you'll have a C drive and a D drive. This way you can save all your documents in your D drive and only have the program files and OS in your C drive. It's a nifty trick really because when you need to format your C drive, you can do it with the ease that all your documents are in the D drive and you aren't losing anything. With a branded machine or a laptop the story changes a little. There are packet programs out there that can split the disc even after it has an OS system in it. The most commonly used is Partition Magic®. This program is very effective in splitting discs without messing with the software already available in it. It is also easy to use; there is no need for a professional to run it on the system.

Now you have two discs on your system and you have split them according to the ratio which is most commonly used by professionals, 30-70. this means that your C drive is big enough to accept any program that you are going to send its way, and even other extras like fonts. Your documents folder can be targeted to be moved to your D drive and hence there is no problem about saving your documents when you format your C drive, all you need to save is maybe your emails if you are using outlook. This is also very easy because you can move the whole "outlook.pst" to your D drive before you format your C drive. Remember though, your desktop is saved on your C drive and hence it is always advisable to have almost nothing on your desktop that is important and also the less the clutter on your desktop the faster the rendering of your monitor and hence a faster machine automatically.

## **Another Thing**

Lets say you decide that the OS you have is not what you want to have, or just that you have read this article sometimes very soon around before and after buying a laptop or a PC. You are thinking what are the other options I have? What you can do is use Partition Magic® as prior explained, but you want to do a drastic change and learn how formatting works. The first thing you need to ask yourself is if you have a branded PC? And whether the CD that has accompanied it or the laptop you have is user friendly?

Actually these days the companies know this and give you OS CDs that have that option. What you do is create a partition prior to installing the OS and then use the companies CD (usually it comes with the computer) to reload the OS. In this way you will have your partition and also the original companies OS with the code that they have on the system.

## **When in Doubt**

Consult a professional ... !

**Advertising Space**

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