

The Databus

Newsletter of the Dayton Microcomputer Association®
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December 2011

Happy
New
Year!



THE TRUSTEES of the Dayton Microcomputer Association take the opportunity to wish all our members a happy New Year. May it be the most prosperous one you've *ever* had!

Contents:

Why Partition Your Hard Drive? ... 3

Book Review: *Degunking Windows 7* ... 6

NOTE: Minutes of the Board of Trustees' meetings for November and December will appear in next month's DATABUS. The Editor apologizes for the delay.



The Dayton Microcomputer Association, Inc.

Post Office Box 4005
Dayton, Ohio 45401



ESTABLISHED IN 1976, DMA is a group of Dayton–area professionals and hobbyists in the field of computing and information technology. General membership meetings are usually on the last Tuesday of each month. DMA has a number of Special Interest Groups (SIGs) in areas ranging from digital photography and genealogy to the Linux operating system. Each SIG meets according to its own schedule. DMA is a member of APCUG and ASC. (Click on any of the logos — including our own — to go to that organization’s Home Page.)

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THE DATABUS welcomes compliments, complaints, suggestions, and especially articles. We can accept articles in ASCII, or as attachments in Microsoft Word or Works, Open Office Writer, Word Perfect, or even WordStar! No PDF files, please. Send e–mails to:
Editor@DMA.org

All articles are subject to editing for spelling, grammar, usage, and space. Always retain a copy of your work, as THE DATABUS cannot be responsible for loss. When articles are of roughly equal quality, those by paid–up DMA members receive preference.

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Why Partition Your Hard Drive?

By GENE BARLOW

User Group Relations

Copyrighted, December 2011

WHILE I'M SURE THAT MOST OF YOU have heard of partitions on your hard drive, you may not be totally aware of what they are, or why you would want to use them. A partition is simply a portion of your hard drive that has been specially prepared with a File System so that it can store your program and data files on the drive. Each partition you create on your hard drive is given a drive letter to make it easier to find and retrieve the files later. You can have a single partition on a hard drive or there can be many partitions on the drive. Most users have a single c: partition on their hard drive and perhaps one or two other hidden partitions put there by the computer manufacturer.

Adding additional partitions to your hard drive is very easy to do with the right tools. The purpose of this article is to suggest several reasons why you may want to add additional partitions to your hard drive and to introduce you to a software tool that will make doing this very easy.

Protecting your Important Data Files

The number one reason that your hard drive crashes is because the Windows operating system becomes corrupt and brings down your entire c: partition. Viruses also attack your c: drive. When this happens, other files in your c: partition may be lost. However, files in other partitions on your hard drive will probably be untouched by the crash.

For this reason alone, the c: partition is the most risky partition on your hard drive and the one most likely to crash. If you set up other partitions on your hard drive and keep your important data and photo files in these other partitions and not in the c: partition, these files will probably be safe when your c: drive crashes.

Organize your Hard Drive with Partitions

Computers today come with very large main hard drives — a terabyte or more. To leave such a large hard drive with only one c: partition does not make much sense. If

your hard drive is very large, you should divide it up into three or four smaller partitions and then store different types of files in different partitions.

I suggest you use your c: partition just for the Windows operating system and all application programs installed on your computer. Then you should have another partition just for your important data files, for example your spreadsheets, written documents, financial records, your genealogy database, and other important data. Finally, I would suggest a separate Photo partition to contain all of your digital photographs, your video clips, and your scanned pictures. By organizing your large hard drive this way, your computer will be much easier to use.

Gain Flexibility in Doing Backups

Finally, having more than one partition on your hard drive can give you added flexibility in doing backups of your main hard drive. Today, doing full partition backups is vastly superior to the old individual file backup approach. Partition backups handle entire partitions including Windows and your application programs as well as your important data files. So running a good partition backup utility like Acronis True Image Home 2012 is the best way to do backups today.

If you carefully separate your files into different partitions, you could then back up the different partitions on a different schedule. For example, I would back up my Program Partition (c:) only once or twice a month. However, my important Data Partition, I would back up daily, or at least every 2 or 3 days. I would only back up my Photo Partition when I have actively saved new photos to it. So, having separate partitions for these types of files lets you back them up on a schedule that is important to each type of file.

Partitioning Made Easy with Acronis Disk Director

Acronis offers an excellent utility, Acronis Disk Director 11 Home, which makes partitioning your hard drive easy for anyone to do. We offer this excellent product for just \$25, which is half the normal retail price. In addition, I provide my customers with a step by step *Starter Guide* that makes setting up extra partitions on your computer a simple task. If you do run into questions or problems while using this product, you can send me an e-mail, and I will help you with answers and problem resolution to get you going again quickly.

To order Acronis Disk Director 11 Home from me, go to:

<http://www.ugr.com/DiskDirector.html>

and click on the appropriate "Buy Now" button. You can order a download copy or we can mail you a CD with the software on it. (There is a \$5 shipping fee if you order the CD.) When checking out of the shopping cart, enter in the special order code of UGNL1211. In a short time frame, you will have your hard drive partitioned and ready to use your computer better.

If you have questions about this article or the Disk Director product, send an email to

support@ugr.com

and I will try to help you with your questions.

This is one of a series of technical articles that I distribute to those that have subscribed to this newsletter. You can subscribe at

Continued on the next page.

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Watch for them and learn more about your computer and its hard drive. If you do not want to receive these newsletters, simply reply and ask to have your name removed from the list and I will do so immediately. User group newsletter editors may print this article in their monthly newsletter as long as the article is printed in its entirety and not cut or edited.

[EDITOR'S NOTE: Partitioning your hard drive tricks your Operating System into thinking that there is more than one hard drive mounted on your machine. As Mr. Barlow correctly observes, partitioning your hard drive has numerous advantages. However, it's important to remember that there is still only one *physical* drive. If that drive "crashes," in other words, if the read/write head*, which normally floats a fraction of an inch above the disk, makes contact with the disk surface, the usual result is that the *entire* disk is ruined, regardless of partitioning. We're not writing here about a partition's being corrupted by a bad sector or by viruses, but an actual physical crash.

* Think of the arm holding the needle (or stylus) on an old-fashioned phonograph record player. If the needle/stylus breaks, the arm falls on top of the vinyl record disk, resulting in loss of data. LP records rotated at 33½ revolutions per minute. Even much older records, dating to the 1920s, rotated at 78 RPM. So if you have good reflexes and pick up the arm quickly, you may end with no more than a bad scratch, and little loss of data. But a computer's disk drive is hermetically sealed and rotates at 10,000 RPM! You frequently have little more than a pile of metal shavings left after a physical crash.]



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Degunking Windows 7 — A Review

By GEORGE HARDING, Treasurer, Tucson Computer Society, AZ

October 2011 issue, *eJournal*

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JOLI BALLEW is an author (36 books!), trainer, and Web site manager who has written for the McGraw–Hill *How to Do Everything* series. *Degunking Windows 7* is 273 pages long, including an extensive Index of 19 pages. The theme is how easily to clean up your PC and speed it up. The process does not involve any special tools. All you need is already contained in Windows 7. If you are running XP, Vista, or 2000, many of the tools you need are available in those programs as well. A few are only in Windows 7.

The author has developed a 12–step process for degunking your computer. Here it is:

1. Get rid of files and programs you don't need.
2. Organize the remaining files and folders.
3. Clean up your desktop, Start menu, and Task Bar.
4. Optimize your hard drive and limit the programs that run in the background.
5. Clean up and secure Internet Explorer and consider alternate web browsers.
6. Reduce e–mail spam, back up and organize e–mail.
7. Install Windows updates and reconfigure anti–virus, anti–malware, and anti–adware programs.
8. Clean up your network and create a homegroup.
9. Fix problems with media, including duplicate files, files that won't play, and files that are taking up hard drive space unnecessarily.
10. Optimize synching with cell phones, music players, iPads, iPhones, netbooks, and laptops.
11. Get rid of errors for hardware, the operating system, and third–party programs.
12. Create a working, reliable, and foolproof backup system.

Ms. Ballew realizes that not everyone can afford the time or is interested in doing every one of the steps. To address that she has developed 10–minute, 30–minute, one–hour and half–day programs. These capture the most significant actions that will give the most benefit for the time allotted.

The first step is probably the most difficult and time–consuming, because you pretty much have to look at a lot of the document, picture, and media files to determine what can be trashed and what must be saved. If you click on the Change My View button (in Documents or any folder) and select Details, simply click on the Date header to sort by date and see the oldest files. These may be the most likely ones to delete.

If you press the Delete key or right–click and select Delete, the file will be moved from its current location to the Recycle Bin. This is just a different location on your hard drive,

which you can empty from time to time. To delete a file permanently, hold down Shift while you delete. [EDITOR'S NOTE: The Operating System automatically deletes files permanently from the Recycle Bin after a certain time.]

Getting rid of unused and unwanted programs can easily be done through Control Panel/Programs. Here, you can uninstall those programs you no longer need and those you didn't know you had. While you're there, note on the left side of the frame the option to turn off Windows components. Here, you can turn off or on various Windows components.

One last thing to do to clean things up is to run Disk Cleanup. In the Start menu Search window, type "cleanup" and click on Free up Disk Space.

When the analysis is done, you see a list of types of files and the amount of space that would be freed up by deletion. Check or uncheck as appropriate and click OK.

You can organize your files by creating folders inside the major system categories. For example, to organize your client letters, create folders in the My Documents folder for each client and save files in each for your clients. Likewise, for pictures, classify your photos by creating a folder for each trip or subject. You'll be able to find the pics you need much more easily this way.

Lastly, defragment your hard drive to reorder and reconnect the files you've moved and deleted. Right click your drive in Windows Explorer, choose Properties, then

Continued on the next page.

Dayton Microcomputer Association Events for September 2011 For additions or corrections, contact Dave Lundy						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 6:30pm Genealogy SIG	2 7:00pm Dayton Diode EBA	3 3:00-5:00pm Classic Computers
4	5 DMA Board of Trustees postponed due to holiday Labor Day	6 6:30pm Dayton Diode 7:00pm Amateur Radio SIG on Internet Amateur notices	7	8	9 9:00am-9:00pm Ohio LinuxFest OELM Linux Expo Hack-a-Thon MacCon , BASIC Penguins' Tails	10 6:30am-6:30pm Ohio LinuxFest
11 Ohio LinuxFest LFF Testing	12 7:00pm DMA Board of Trustees "Special Date"	13	14 7:00pm Dayton Dynamic Languages Users Group	15 7:00pm Linux SIG	16	17 3:00-5:00pm Classic Computers
18	19 7:00pm Apple Dayton SIG	20 7:00pm Software Development SIG	21	22	23 Autumnal Equinox	24
25	26	27 7:00pm DMA Main mtg	28 5:30pm 23rd Annual Fall Joint MVC.S. Advanced Persistent Threats by Bill Kolligian	29	30	



Click anywhere on the DMA Calendar (above) to go to the Calendar of Events on the main DMA Web site.

Tools. Click Analyze to see if defragmenting would be advantageous. You can also adjust the scheduled defragmentation that's currently set up.

You should clean up your Desktop by deleting any icons and shortcuts you don't use. You can put a shortcut on the Desktop for Computer or Network by browsing to that folder and right-clicking. Choose Send To/Desktop to create a shortcut.

You can customize your Start menu by right-clicking the Start icon and choosing Properties, then click on Customize. I like the Recent Items choice because it avoids having to launch an application first, then open the document I want to continue with. You can also pin items to the Start Menu or Task Bar by right-clicking and selecting Pin to Start Menu or Pin to Task Menu.

The author points out several things you can do to optimize your hard drive: convert to NTFS (assuming you're still on FAT), run Check Disk (under Properties of your drive), run Performance tests, and run Disk Cleanup.

One of the most powerful enhancements is in Performance in Control Panel. Here you can adjust visual effects, control indexing, and change system settings.

There's a chapter on IE8, including how to turn on Compatibility View, remove toolbars and add-ins, and explore privacy and security settings.

Chapter 8 deals with e-mail, how to organize it, filter it, and how best to deal with spam. It also shows you how to back-up e-mail lists.

Chapter 9 deals with the important subjects of security, Windows Update and the use of firewalls and other security packages.

The balance of the chapters deal with less crucial subjects. They may be of interest to some users, but probably not all.

I found this book to be useful. I tried out many of the ideas both to see how they worked and to see the improvement that might result.

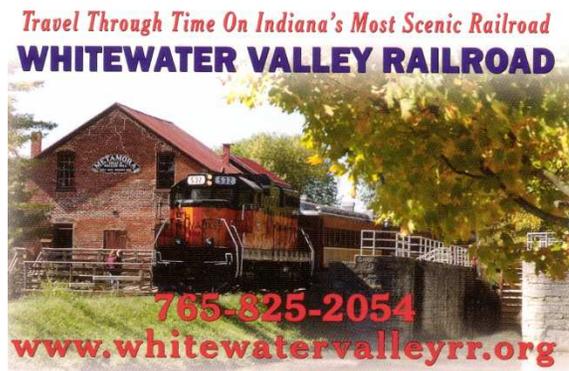
Joli Ballew, *Degunking Windows 7*. McGraw-Hill Osborne Media, 2011.

<http://www.mhprofessional.com/category/?cat=2834>

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* A family or associate membership is an additional membership for a member of your immediate family or someone else who is living in the member's household. If this is a family or associate membership, give name of regular member:

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