

WinXP Pro Not Booting === Challenging Problem for Experts – Cant use Recovery Console or Repair, Install Loops + Encrypted Data to retrieve

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WinXP Pro Not Booting – Challenging Problem for Experts – Cant use Recovery Console or Repair, Install Loops + Encrypted Data to retrieve

*****Issue*****

Laptop wouldnt boot due to a registry issue/corruption – Was able to go into windows and login, but no shell (start menu, desktop, icons etc)

Safe Mode, Last Know Good and all other users profiles didnt work either – same issue as above.

I do not have a ASR Boot Disk, but do have a System State backup on my drive.

*****Fixs Tried*****

1. Recovery Console

Tried using Recovery Console from WinXP CD, ie. Boot from XP CD

Refer

<http://support.microsoft.com/default.aspx?scid=kb:EN-US:307545>

How to Recover from a Corrupted Registry That Prevents Windows XP from Starting.

(The procedure described in this article uses Recovery Console and System Restore)

This worked until I got to the Admin password prompt. It then failed as there is a bug with Recovery Console and some machines where XP was OEM installed. So its not possible to run Recovery Console.

<http://support.microsoft.com/default.aspx?scid=kb:EN-US:308402> – 'The Password Is Not Valid' Error Message Appears When You Log On to Recovery

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Console in WinXP

2. Repair from XP CD

I next tried a repair from CD per MS KB article.

<http://support.microsoft.com/default.aspx?scid=kb;EN-US:315341> – How to Perform an In-Place Upgrade (Reinstallation) of Windows XP

This started to work but then after installing drivers and adding CD Key it restarted the PC (reading about 32 minutes remaining). It restarts the install from scratch again (....."restarting Setup.....")

And It goes round and round in this loop. Probably due to the auto restart on device install failure or perhaps because of the corrupt registry.

*****Current Status*****

Starting PC now restarts the WinXP install as it never finished last time, ie. it DOESNT go to a Win Startup Adv Start Up menu now.

So I'm kind off half way into an install that wont complete. Its possible to boot with XP CD and go to Recovery Console and/or XP Install. But neither work.

I could do a new install maybe but this may not work either and may???? result in me not being able to access user profiles and data that is ENCRYPTED using WinXP EFS – I do not have the key saved anywhere to disk etc.

I am really desperate on what to do with this due ro my 8GB's of encrypted data, can anyone please help?

I have contacted MS and the OEM and they are no help, expect to try a parallel install of Windows which will I'm sure will lose all my encrypted data, or at leas never allow me to access it again.

I think I need an NTFS Dos type app so that I can follow a [semi] normal procedure for system restore per KB article on using the recovery console.

*****Can anyone provide any light please:*****

1. What options do I have?
2. Can I save my data anyway? esp. given that its encrypted?
3. Is using some sort of NTFS DOS type app going to be enough for me to restore some standard registry setting settings to boot?

4 If I do this will it boot given that I am now half way through a new install that wont finish?

5. Is it possible to force the install to complete, disable the flag somewhere that is making it reboot?

6. Will the restore options,ie. converting back to an original registry work given that I seem to be half way through an install? If I do this it may not boot anyway?

I'd really appreciate any help that people can give me, feel free to email group or myself direct. Im sure that others must have had this problem. Basically if it had not been for the MS BUG with Recovery Console and OEM version of XP I would have had it fixed in 30 minutes.

Regards
Paul

ps. For more on the repair options I have tried you can check out this excellent resource with screen shots:
http://www.webtree.ca/windowsxp/repair_xp.htm

Also I think reinstalling will also cause some data loss according to:
<http://support.microsoft.com/default.aspx?scid=kb;EN-US;312369> –You May Lose Data or Program Settings After Reinstalling, Repairing, or Upgrading Windows XP