


# Windows NT Online Support News (WOSN)

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# Editorials

## WOSN is here!

**Welcome** to **Windows NT Online Support News (WOSN)** 2nd issue here! As you could see, we are very new and still improving our contents issue by issue. Everything is edited by myself and I got no paid so I cannot guarantee to deliver every issue on time <sigh and grin>.

As an overview, WOSN is published electronically every Monday and free of charge. We concentrate on Microsoft Windows NT and related fields like NT news, products, new files announcement etc... We also accept comments and editorials articles (hints, hints!).

If anyone interests to help edit this publication or feel have nothing better to do <g>, please feel free to contact me. I hope you enjoy WOSN and happy Windowing or even happy Windows NTing...whichever suits you better <g>.

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# Microsoft Windows NT Computer Industry News Flash

## Win NT Is Microsoft's Gilded Cage for Buyers

On the surface, Windows NT promises the standard software platform of DOS and the hardware platform-independence of Unix. Those promises, however, are illusions. Microsoft's NT will give buyers a taste of hardware freedom, but only from within a cage.

The Windows NT promise goes like this: NT will run on both Intel and other types of CPUs; versions for Digital's Alpha and MIPS' chips are already in the works. NT applications will run on any NT system. Buyers will consequently be able to pick the hardware platform they like best.

One simple fact makes this promise false: Different types of CPUs run different executables. Even if the operating system is the same, the same bit patterns will execute differently - if at all - on two different types of systems.

Not wanting to take anyone to task unfairly, we called David Thacher, Group Product Manager of Windows NT, to get Microsoft's version of the straight skinny.

According to Thacher, current Windows 16-bit applications will run as is on all NT platforms. Systems using CPUs other than Intel x86 chips will, however, use emulation software to run those programs. As happens any time you use emulation software, applications will run slower than they would if they were running as native programs. The hope is that underlying processors will be fast enough to make the emulations tolerable.

Sound familiar? It should, because it's nothing new. The same technique is the basis of all the DOS-under-Unix programs.

Thacher quite fairly noted, however, that the real promise of Windows NT will come only with the arrival of the next generation of 32-bit Windows applications. Those applications will run directly on each NT platform without emulation.

Actually, those applications will run on any NT platform as long as the application vendor first recompiles them for that NT platform.

Doesn't this sound familiar, too? It should. This is exactly the promise of Unix. Ah, but recompiling an NT application on a new type of system, unlike recompiling a Unix program, will be a simple, hassle-free process, said Thacher.

He may be right, but we'll believe it when we see it. We grant a key point of Thacher's - that Microsoft has total control of NT while many vendors produce versions of Unix - but we're still leery of the recompilation process.

Even if Thacher is right and recompiling NT programs is a snap, the need for that

process will still cause problems for buyers. Consider the situation of a buyer who is using application X on an Intel-based NT system and wants to move to an Alpha workstation. If X's vendor has already recompiled X for Alpha, no problem. If not, the buyer's only option is to petition the vendor to port X to Alpha. The buyer can't do the port, because vendors are not about to give their source code to users.

The cost of entry to the NT market for new processors will also be high. The maker of the latest hot new CPU will not only have to get Microsoft to help it to port NT to that CPU, but it will also have to get all the NT application vendors to recompile their products for its CPU. This requirement may be fine for big players like Digital, but it will keep out the little guys, or at least Microsoft control their destiny.

Software licensing policies will have to change radically also, or buyers will not be able to move between platforms economically. To move from a so-called P5 running NT to an Alpha, you'll have to buy new copies of all your applications for the Alpha system or the application vendors will have to develop trade-in policies.

We're not denying that Windows NT has a lot of promise, and we're not saying you shouldn't buy it. You should, however, know the cage you've entered before its door slams shut behind you.

## **San Francisco Downsizing Expo - Windows NT shines on Sequent machines!**

At the Downsizing Expo in San Francisco, Sequent and Microsoft showed NT running on a Sequent Symmetry 2000 systems and one of them is configured 16 486/50MHz processors. While the Sequent minicomputers use Intel Corp. processors, they are not DOS-compatible computer. They use a proprietary bus architecture and require a new set of drivers, a new method of loading and a new "hardware abstraction layer" to allow NT to run on the machines. Microsoft has demonstrated NT running on a multiprocessing machine from MCR, but with Sequent machines add more credibility to the forthcoming operating system.

Under Microsoft current plan, NT will come in shrink-wrapped form supporting x86, R4000 and Alpha computers with single or multiple processors, said Dwayne Walker, director of marketing for NT at Microsoft in Redmond, Wash. However, that package will not support more than a certain unspecified number of processors. The version for Sequent will likely cost more than the under-\$500 price Microsoft has set for NT.

"When you start talking about a four-processor 486 or 586, you're talking about a high-end minicomputer or mainframe," Walker said. "For the high end of multiprocessing, we'll probably have a different packaging and price model."

## **The Windows NT Shareware Contest**

Move your Windows 3.x or other Shareware\* application to Windows NT and win some fantastic prizes. Even if you're not a winner, you'll receive your choice of Microsoft Beethoven, Microsoft Money, or Microsoft Bookshelf for Windows, just for entering!

Sponsored by Microsoft, CompuServe, Jolt Cola, NEC, and Nanao, in conjunction with the Association of Shareware Professionals, the contest provides the opportunity to have

your 32 bit Shareware application previewed by thousands at this year's Fall Comdex in Las Vegas. Don't miss out on having it included in the Windows NT Shareware catalog, which will be distributed at the show, November 16-20.

Your application will be judged by some of the computer industry's leading enthusiasts: Diego Aranda, author of monthly Internet Shareware reviews, Steve Gibson, InfoWorld columnist and publisher of SpinRite, Fred Langa, Editorial Director, Windows magazine, Brian Livingston, InfoWorld columnist and author of Windows 3 Secrets, and Jerry Pournelle, Senior Editor, Byte Magazine.

There will be grand prize winners and runners up in each of five categories: Utilities, Games, Tools, Business applications, and Widgets (miscellaneous). So fill out the contest entry form, and send it in with your native Windows NT application by October 15th.

To get an entry form and find out what you'll receive if you're a winner, on CompuServe GO WINNT and download NTCTST.ZIP from library #4, on the Internet send mail to shareinf@microsoft.com, or fax to (206)936-7329, attention David Feinleib, Bldg 4.

\* Shareware: Applications classified under any of the following terms will be accepted. Retail programs, i.e., programs that are sold in stores and via other traditional sales channels, will not be accepted.

Shareware - copyrighted or patented programs sold on a "try before you buy" basis.

FreeWare - copyrighted or patented programs which do not require compensation for use in most cases.

Public Domain - free from copyrights or patents; open to use by the public without compensation.

# Microsoft Windows NT Tips & Techniques

## Installing NT with OS/2 Boot Manager

NT can indeed be installed on the same system with DOS, OS/2 1.3 and OS/2 2.0 using OS/2's Boot Manager to choose what system starts up. If you'd like to do that also, read on. I can save you about 30 hours of groping in the dark.

At the same time, let me also admit that I'm not specifying the "only" way to make things work, merely the only way I know about. If things go wrong in the install, it's easy to find yourself staring at a message telling you something like "DosPathToArcPath reported the following error...", but not so easy to figure out what to do next. Lots of things seem to interact and it wouldn't surprise me if there might be lots of "one-off" variations on the rules I'm about to give that could work also. The point is, I didn't try every combination -- with roughly an hour per attempt, it just felt like I had.

Point #1: Use the graphical install.

There are two basic strategies for installing NT. One is the so-called graphical install and the second is a manual method involving copying the NT distribution tree onto your hard disk, editing the registry.ini file and then going thru what's referred to as the triple boot sequence where the system is rebooted three times as it builds all its security structures, etc.

Don't use the manual method unless you positively cannot get the graphical install to work. Really. The manual method does not give you any way to set up printers, networks or any automatic way of trimming out drivers and other fluff you don't need. Since NT is already a big system with a big appetite for RAM, the last thing you need is a bunch of drivers that don't even go with your hardware being loaded into precious non-pageable memory!

But also, don't use the manual method because the result seems to be unreliable. I understand and appreciate that the manual method is more or less what the developers at MS are using on their own machines, so clearly there must be a way to make it work. But on my machine, I consistently found that although the installation seemed to go okay and the system seemed to come up correctly, it was in fact broken. E.g., opening the command window and typing

```
set | more
```

would hang the window. Based on other experiments, it appeared that critical sections were broken -- as if I had gotten 1/2 a system built with one variation on the critical section structure and 1/2 built another way. Everything seemed to work except for critical sections. Unfortunately, critical sections are, well, sort of critical.

Point #2. Put NT in the first physical partition.

Actually, the release notes tell you this; they're not kidding. My first attempts were

to do as little repartitioning as possible. And why not? The automatic install for NT that came with PDK2 didn't mind that the first two physical partitions on my system were the OS/2 Boot Manager and DOS.

The install that comes with the July SDK is more fussy. Trust me: if you have Boot Manager at the start of the drive, or another (hidden) C: partition ahead of the one you're trying to install into, it will not work. You can waste a lot of time or you can just accept that fact and move on.

Point #3. Don't try to install with the OS/2 Boot Manager on there at all.

I found that if Boot Manager is on the drive, even at the end of the physical volume, install hangs with no warning during the scan it makes of your drives and you have to reach for the BRS.

The trick to getting NT to work with Boot Manager is to put BM on there *after* you've already got a successful install done.

Point #4. Don't try to install NT and OS/2 into the same partition.

This was really strange I wasted a lot of time installing OS/2 1.3 into a C: partition, installing NT on top of it and then putting Boot Manager back onto the drive. I couldn't make it work. For some reason, you get the initial greeting from NT's Portable Bootloader, but it does not give its usual menu for selecting NT vs. whatever was previously on that partition. It just tries to load NT and then fails. Removing BM made it work again, but of course that defeated the purpose.

If you want to use BM, you can put NT and DOS into the same primary partition (installing DOS, then NT) but not NT and OS/2 1.3.

Point #5. Don't try formatting the partition with the NT install program.

It does something wierd. My experience was that even when I specified a FAT format, the partition was not readable at all from OS/2 and even DOS 5 had problems with it, reporting a garbled partition size.

Format the partition first with DOS or OS/2 if you want it readable by anything other than NT.

Point #6. Don't try to put NT or even its pagefile onto anything but C:.

Subtle point here: NT always, always, always has to be installed on C: but you do get options during the install (if you ask for the custom install) to place all the files that go with it (including the pagefile) on other drives. If you want to use Boot Manager, don't do that. What happens is that when you try putting BM on the drive after NT is already installed, all the drive letters (as seen by the NT Portable Bootloader) will get scrambled



again and Bootloader will complain it can't find ntkrnl.

When you're setting up that initial partition for NT, be sure to make it large enough (say 50 M or so) to hold all of NT + the pagefile. After you have \*everything\* (all the other operating systems and BM) installed, you can move the pagefile by using regedit. But getting started, everything must be on C:.

Point #7. Don't try installing if you have more than one C: partition.

The OS/2 2.0 FDISK program lets you create multiple primary C: partitions on the same drive, making just one visible at a time. Don't do that until after NT is already installed.

Point #8. Don't try installing if you have any FAT or unformatted partitions that come after any HPFS partitions.

This had me in circles for hours. As long as I was repartitioning like crazy for NT anyway, I decided to do some other cleanup and get rid of several smaller partitions on which I'd had various beta versions of OS/2 2.0. All of them were at the end of the extended partition on my 3rd drive. So I collapsed them into one logical partition but left it unformatted.

What happened was I'd go all the way thru the entire install process setting up printers, etc. -- I mean, we're talking about an hour to get right to the bitter end of the install -- and then it'd give me a "non-critical error" claiming that "External library procedure DosPathToArcPath reported the following error: Error reading object directory." You get a choice of whether to continue or simply admit right then and there that you're hosed. Trust me: you're hosed. What happens is that when you try to reboot NT, you'll get to the logon screen and it won't recognize your id or password. It's a secure system -- very secure.

I don't know why, but it did occur to me that the problem might be because that partition was unformatted so I booted up the OS/2 install disk and tried formatting. But it's difficult to get OS/2 to do an HPFS format from the install disk, so I did a FAT format. That produced that same DosPathToArcPath error.

What finally clued me in was booting DOS and using its FDISK to look at my partitions. Although DOS seemed to work okay with that partition arrangement, I noticed FDISK claiming I had two G: partitions, one an HPFS partition which it could not read and the second, that FAT partition. Going back to the OS/2 install disk and simply deleting the partition (leaving it as free space) worked.

Bottom line: if you have lots of partitions, be sure that any FAT or unformatted partitions come before any HPFS partitions. Otherwise the install will not work.

Summary: Here's what to do.

1. Repartition as necessary to create a 50M+ primary C: partition for NT (or DOS + NT) at

the very start of your boot drive.

2. Be sure Boot Manager is nowhere on your system, that there are no other primary partitions on that boot drive and that there are no FAT or unformatted partitions that come after any HPFS partitions anywhere on your system. We're talking plain vanilla here. Very important.

3. Format the C: partition with DOS 5 and then install DOS.

4. Install NT using the graphical install, putting \*everything\* on C:.

5. Boot the OS/2 2.0 install disk and ESC to get to the prompt, from which you can use FDISK to create partitions for OS/2 1.3, 2.0 and Boot Manager.

6. Install 1.3 and 2.0 in the usual manner.

What you'll get:

When you're all done, you'll have a system that'll have Boot Manager come up with a menu for choosing NT, 1.3 or 2.0. If you choose NT, you'll then get the NT Portable Bootloader, giving you a choice between DOS and NT. (Actually the choice will be between NT and the "previous" OS; you can fix the message by editing the boot.ini file.)

# New Programs For Windows NT

## New Programs This Week!

**Following is a list of this week's new programs available on Windows NT Online Support (WOS) at 415-572-9661, also available for File Request (FREQ).**

NTCTST.ZIP 3968 08-26-92 -

Description: Windows NT Shareware Contest for COMDEX including entry form Information on the Windows NT Shareware Contest for COMDEX Information on Windows Shareware Contest for COMDEX including entry form.

NTNOS2.TXT 10823 08-28-92 -

Description: Information on setting up the OS/2 Boot Manager such that it will work with Windows NT Note: This is posting is for informational purposes only and does not imply an official Microsoft endorsement of this procedure.

FD1800.ZIP 14795 08-24-92 -

Description: Device driver for the Future Domain TMC-1660, 1680 MCS-600,700 Adapters. You will need to modify the registry or reinstall using DOS2NT to add this driver. Installation instructions are in the FDOMAIN.TXT file included in the .ZIP.

WDLAN.ZIP 17847 08-24-92 -

Description: This is the device driver for the SMC/WD 8003 and 8013 Net Cards. Instructions for installation are in the WDLAN.TXT file in the ZIP file.

AGREP.ZIP 118859 08-27-92 -

Description: Grep-Like utility for Windows/NT. Not as quick as NT's FINDSTR, but has more functionality.

CHEMTB.ZIP 132537 08-25-92 -

Description: Test program for CURSES. \*DISCLAIMER: This is not supported. Use at your own risk!\*

CURSES.ZIP 120201 08-25-92 -

Curses is a UNIX library that lets you position the cursor, write text with attributes, use virtual windows, etc., for character based applications. \*DISCLAIMER: THIS IS UNSUPPORTED. USE AT YOUR OWN RISK! \*

GDC.ZIP 28025 08-25-92 -

Description: Sample Test program for CURSES. \*DISCLAIMER: This is unsupported. Use at your own risk! \*

LOCALE.ZIP 57875 08-26-92 -

Description: Sample using GetLocaleInfoW() API. In the July PDC release only LANG\_ENGLISH, SUBLANG\_ENGLISH\_US information is enabled. Other language, sublanguage pairs return no information. This file includes source code and EXE built for X86.

NTCTRL.ZIP 18432 08-28-92 -

Description: Vertical spin, 3-D Groupbox and 3-D static controls for the Windows NT Dialog Editor. Freeware.

NT\_7.LZH 28129 08-30-92 -

Description: comp.os.ms-windows.programmer.win32 newsgroup (Aug 24-29)

WEEK08.ZIP 207625 08-25-92 -

Description: Messages from Week 8 of the WINNT forum on CompuServe.

