advisor

Problems

Do you need help?

CD does not play, Web site does not figure on search engines, hard disk has crashed… these and other problems solved

Nightmare on April 26

My hard disk crashed when installing Star Office 5.0 from the CHIP CD (April 1999). The installation progress bar went as high as '360%' and then my disk ran out of space. I used Disk Cleanup to free some space and uninstalled a few programs and deleted temporary files. When I rebooted, the computer hung and there was no activity for about 15 minutes. It then asked for the correct system disk. I used a bootable diskette and the computer booted perfectly. However, when I removed the diskette and tried to boot again, the computer gave the same errors. The hard disk was set up correctly in the CMOS.

My engineer tried to repair the drive using Norton Disk Doctor, but this worsened the condition. Now the computer does not even ask for a boot diskette. It verifies the memory, recognises the CD-ROM drive and stops all activity.

This happened on April 26 and my friend says that a virus probably caused this. What do I do now?
Atreya Nitin
Noida

Your friend is right. Variants of the Win.CIH virus activate on the 26th of every month, and this April too, many computers were affected. This virus first infects the hard disk—removes all partitions and erases the data. It then corrupts and erases data from the BIOS.

Many programs that allow you to recover data are available on the Internet. You can try to recover your hard disk data by downloading a software called Tiramesu from w w w.zdnet.com. But it is also possible that your engineer may have rendered the recovery of the data impossible.

Remember that in an event of a hard disk crash, it is best to leave the computer alone. Do not even boot until you have all resources at hand. Get all the possible recovery utilities and exercise extreme caution while deciding on any one. This may be your last chance at recovering data.

If the boot-up does not ask you for a boot device, it is possible that the BIOS, too, is slowly getting corrupted. At such a time, you can either 'flash' your BIOS or replace it. Even if you fail to recover data from the hard disk, you can recreate your partitions and continue using it. Just remember to install a good anti virus package as soon as you finish installing the Operating System.
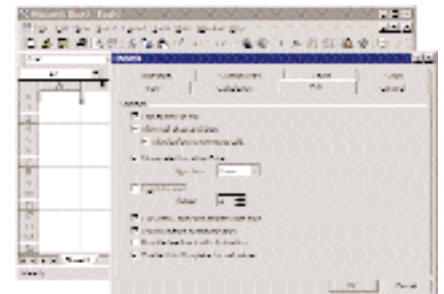
Forced Decimals in Excel

When I type any number, say 1234, in Microsoft Excel, it automatically changes to 12.34. I tried selecting the cells and changing its properties from Format > Cells, but that did not help. How can I remedy this?

How can I copy a .fot file to another computer? If I manually provide its reference in the System.ini, then it is accepted as a font, otherwise it is not installed.
Timothy Rhakho
Nagaland

To turn off the feature where a decimal place is automatically assigned to a number, start Excel and go to Tools > Options > Edit and disable the Fixed Decimal box.

Modify the Edit Properties in Excel to avoid automatic formatting

The .fot files are by nature not installed. They are system fonts and should be on every Windows OS. Most fonts for Windows today are designed as TrueType Fonts. You will have to manually edit the system.ini file to install the .fot fonts.

Online, but not On Line

I put up my Web site on Geocities, using correct metatags for content and keywords, but it still does not appear in search results on any of the search engines. Why?

When I insert an audio CD into my CD-ROM drive, the CD Player starts to play, even the indicator shows that it is playing, but I cannot hear any music. However, I can play songs on WinAmp and hear them too.
Rohan Desai
Bangalore

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Problems

Problem Chart

I want to create the following output in Microsoft Excel [Fig. 1] but when I enter the following figures, [Fig. 2], I do not get the right output.

How can I get the desired output using Excel or any other software?
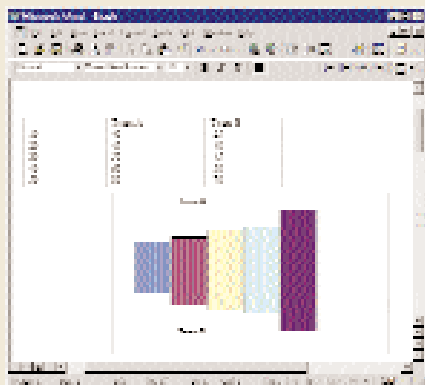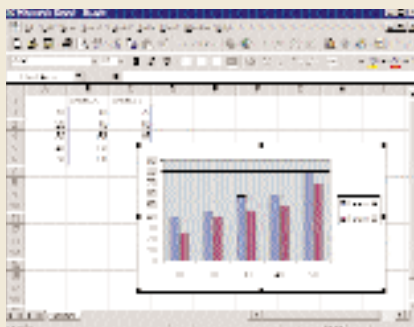
Sai Shankar

Hapur

Fig 1: Desired Output

Fig 2: Graph in Excel

You will not be able to get the output you want using Microsoft Excel, as it does not allow much flexibility while customising charts. However, you will require negative values for the field to be displayed on the negative axes. For this, you can either multiply all the values by -1 or use the following macro.

```
Sub FillNegative()
ActiveCell.Offset(0,1).Range( A1 ).Sel
ect
   ActiveCell.FormulaR1C1 =  =RC[-
1]*-1
   ActiveCell.Select
   Selection.Copy
       Do While ActiveCell.Offset(0, -
             1).Value       <> 0
   ActiveSheet.Paste
   ActiveCell.Offset(1, 0).Select
   Loop
   End Sub
```

This macro, when run, will fill negative values in the column next to the selected cell starting from that cell downwards till it finds a blank cell. You can either cut and paste the column on to the original, or use the new column for your chart.

Alternatively, you can copy the desired columns into Microsoft Word, where you can also create a chart. Once you have created the chart, right-click and ungroup it. Now move the

For your Web page to appear on various search engines, you have to register your site with them. Look up details on the search engine.
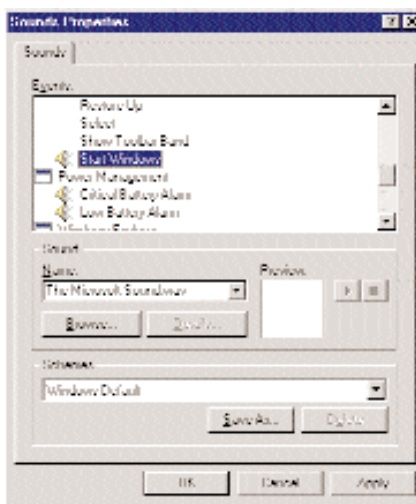
Regarding the problem with the audio CD: the soundcard uses a separate channel for playing each device it supports (Wave, MIDI, audio CDs, etc). Make sure that the Volume Control for the CD is not set to 'Mute'. If it is not, you will have to open the cabinet and check if the audio cable from the drive to the soundcard is connected properly. Remember to remove static charge from your body before you open the cabinet. Refer to the soundcard's manual for the correct connections of the cable. (*Also look up '60 minutes to music' CHIP April 1998*)

Music Mania

How can I play a music file every time Windows starts?

S Prabhakar

Erode

You can set a .W AV file to play when Windows starts by putting it under Con-trol Panel > Sounds in the Start W indows option. For playing any other file, create a l   i   n   k to it in the Startup folder under the

Start Windows with a bang!

Start menu.

A Broken Window

I have been using Windows 98 for the past ten months. But of late, rebooting the computer brings up the Windows start-up screen and then displays this error message on a blue background: "An internal overflow has caused this session to halt. Change the STACKS setting in Config.sys and try again."

Previously there was no Stacks setting in Config.sys so I tried the value 'Stacks=9, 256' but that did not help. The same error had

occurred earlier, but was corrected by Scandisk. This time even Scandisk does not help. Reinstalling Windows did not help either.

Saurabh Sharma

Jabalpur

Try removing the Stacks setting from Config.sys. If you are using Stacker, discontinue using it. If Config.sys does not load Extended Memory Managers, add the command lines either by typing them or by using MemMaker or a similar tool. This should solve the problem, even though most Windows problems are never rectified by reinstalling the Operating System. This is because Windows does not overwrite most files, especially system files. For this, you would have to entirely remove and then reinstall Windows.

Need More Memory

Whenever I run a DOS application on my Pentium 120 MHz system with 16 MB RAM, I get error messages such as 'Help Memory Full' or 'Not Enough Memory'. They do not run under Windows either. The following lines are present in Config.sys file:

```
Devicehigh=C:\Windows\Himem.sys
Devicehigh=C:\Windows\Emm386.e
xe noems
```

```
DOS=UMB
DOS=High
Files=80
Device=C:\sbcd\drv\sbide.sys
/d:mscd001 /P:1e8,11 /v
```

The Autoexec.bat has these lines:

REM – By Windows Setup – C:\Windows\Command\Mscdex.exe /D:Mscd001 /V /M:8

Reinstalling Windows does not help and there are no TSRs (Terminate and Stay Resident) running. Also, the Mscdex driver does not install. Please help.
Ram Shyam
Mavelikara

Change the `noems` parameter of `emm386.exe` to RAM and change the `Device=` to `Devicehigh=` in the `Config.sys`. Remove the limitation on `Files=`. This may allow the programs to run. Also try loading DOS without loading DriveSpace. If they still refuse to run, you need to upgrade the RAM. The Mscdex driver does not load because the command line has been remarked by Windows setup. Remove the remark from the `Autoexec.bat` file.

Linux loader
I had partitioned my hard disk into two. I installed Windows 95 on one and Linux on the other. When I uninstalled Linux, I used the command 'Fdisk /mbr' to remove LILO. LILO was removed, but Windows now refuses to boot into Normal Mode. I can run it in safe mode, though.
Mayank Joshi
Mumbai

Where did you run Fdisk from? From the hard disk or from a bootable diskette? You should have created a Windows Startup disk before installing Linux and used this to remove LILO. You can try using a Startup disk from another Windows 95 machine.

If that does not help, try this option. Delete and recreate the Extended DOS partition. After formatting it boot into Windows Safe Mode. Open a DOS Window and at the root of the fresh drive (D:), type `xcopy c:\*.* /e /c /h /r`. This will copy your entire Windows installation on to the extended partition. Next, boot from a bootable disk that has `Fdisk.exe` and `Format.com` on it. Run Fdisk and set the Extended Partition as the Active Partition. Your operating system will now boot from here. You can stop here, but it is better to complete the procedure. Format the Primary DOS partition (should now be D:; You can run it before Fdisk for safety) and boot into Windows. Copy the files back to the Primary Partition and set this as the Active Partition. Your system should be back to normal now.

Memory block
On my Celeron 266 MHz system (64 MB SDRAM and 2.1 GB hard disk on Windows 98), upon booting into DOS, the DriveSpace driver gets loaded and takes up 107 K in the memory. Due to this many programs and games do not run. I have to boot via the 'Step by step confirmation' method to prevent it. I do not use DriveSpace and my drives are not compressed. How do I get rid of the driver?
Ashish Kumar
Noida

The simplest way is to delete the `drvspace.bin` and `dblspace.bin` files from the root of the hard disk. Since you do not have any compressed drives and do not use the utility, this will not harm your computer in any way, it will only improve performance.

Or you could look under the `C: > Program Files> Plus! > System` folder for a file called `Nocomp.exe`. Running this file will create a Windows Startup Disk that

`Prevent unnecessary programs from eating up your memory`

will not load the compression drivers.

War of the slaves
I have a Pentium 100 MHz system with 16 MB RAM, and two hard disks of 2.1 GB and 630 MB capacities. The Primary Master (2.1 GB) contains Windows and the Primary Slave (630 MB) is free. I want to install Unix on this hard disk and I need to make it the Primary Master. Will this corrupt the Windows Registry or file system? Can I partition the free hard disk for Unix and DOS and have Windows installed on the 2.1 GB disk but boot from this one?
Rahul Soni
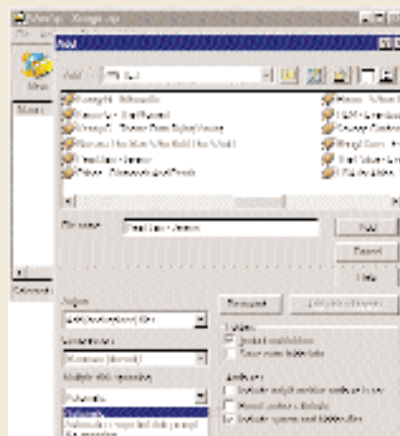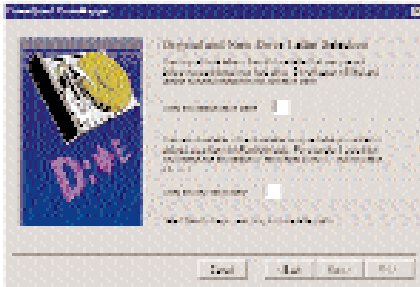
PROBLEM OF THE MONTH

Large MP3 files on floppies
How can I copy huge MP3 files on to my floppy? Even after zipping the song files, the size remains about 2.5 MB, which again is too much. I have heard about a file splitter that allows you to split a file and copy it on to several floppies. I was unable to find it on the Net. Please help.
Satish Pandya
Via e-mail

This program already exists on your desktop. Most new zipping utilities allow you to span multiple disks. WinZip has this option (called spanning) in the `Add` dialog box. Click on the `Multiple Disk Spanning` drop-down list for options.

This will be enabled only if a removable medium such as floppy is entered as the target drive. Leave it as

`A 2.5 MB file on floppy!`

`Automatic`. If you still want splitters, you can use `split.exe` or `asplit.exe` (you can also find this on the CHIP CD, June 1998).

advisor

Problems

Patna

You have two options.

The first one requires you to swap your drives. This will not corrupt Windows in any way until you try to boot into it. By default you will not boot into Windows. You can install Unix on the 630 MB hard disk.

To boot from Windows, remove the Primary Master (630 MB) setting from the CMOS and the 2.1 GB drive will then become `C:` (even though it is set as slave). Swap the CMOS settings each time you

Easy control over all partitions

want to swap the operating systems.

The second option is to partition the free disk into a Unix partition and a DOS partition. This, though more tedious initially, will be easier in the long run. For Windows to boot from this hard disk, you will need to reinstall Windows and all other software since you will have to change all drive references from `C:` to `E:`.

Alternatively, you can use Power Quest's DriveMapper (included with Partition Magic) utility to change all the drive references, thus saving you the trouble. Reinstalling Windows will automatically create the required boot files for the Active Partition on the Primary Hard Disk.

Memory blues

I use a utility called Freemem to know how much free memory I have. My computer has 128 MB RAM. I start off with 80 MB free and by the time I am through playing games, surfing the Internet, listening to MP3s etc. I have 30 MB free. Why does this happen? Why doesn't the memory free up automatically when the program is done with?

What should my Windows swap file size be (provided that I want it to be of a fixed size)?

Kapil Thombare

Via e-mail

Windows requires the better part of this used memory for itself. The rest is used by drivers, files and applications. When you close an application, Windows does not release the memory as this can be used again in case the same application is launched again. The memory is released as and when required. This speeds up applications, since the entire application has to be loaded into memory before it can be executed.

A pretty insignificant part of the application has to be re-written to the memory the next time you open it during the same session of Windows.

Depending on what you utilise the PC for, an ideal swap file would be between 200 and 300 MB.
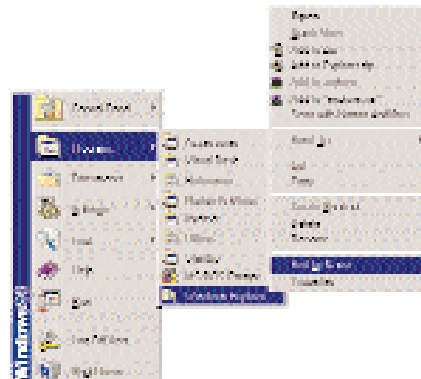
Start menu arrangement

All my folders in the 'Programs' folder under the Start Menu in Windows 98 are arranged randomly. Earlier they used to be arranged in the alphabetical order. Now, any new software I install or any new folder I create in the Start menu is automatically put at the end of the programs group. How can I reorganise them alphabetically?

Amitabh Varma

Via e-mail

The flexibility to arrange items is a feature that was included in Windows with Internet Explorer 4. It is meant to help you to organise your `Start` menu more efficiently. However, if you do not want this, you can install Internet Explorer 5, which, upon right-clicking, allows you to arrange the items in alphabetical order.

Making changes to the registry can bring about a similar effect. Run Regedit

Directly sort the Start Menu items with IE

and navigate to `HKEY_CURRENT_USER> Software>Microsoft>Windows>CurrentVersion>Explorer>MenuOrder>Start Menu>Programs`. Delete all keys under this key, but not the key itself. The next time you start Windows, these keys will be recreated, and the items will be listed in alphabetical order. You will have to repeat this every time you install a software. Or manually drag the software to its correct position.

Cache Bank

I am not sure if my Celeron 300, 32 MB RAM machine has any cache memory. How can I check this? I recently upgraded from Windows 95 to Windows 98. When Windows 98 starts, the following error message is displayed "Cannot run Unicode version of ATL.DLL on Windows 95. Please install correct version". What should I do?

On the taskbar I can see the 'Task Scheduler', 'The Microsoft Network', Time and Volume settings. The first two options were not present in Windows 95. I cannot even disable them. Do these take up memory?

Abhishek

Via e-mail

If you have an Award BIOS, the box that appears after the memory check on booting the PC shows not only the amount of cache you have, but also details about the hard disks and other devices. Make sure the cache settings in the BIOS are enabled for this. Alternatively, you can use a CPU benchmark.

Regarding the DLL, open `Start > Programs > Accessories > System > System Information`. From the `Tools` menu, click on `Version Conflict Manager`. Your DLL should be listed here. Restore the backup.

You can remove `The Microsoft Network` by removing it from Windows Setup. Double-click the Task Scheduler icon to open the program. From the `Advanced` menu, click on `Stop Using Task Scheduler`. This will remove it from the taskbar.

Out of all the programs listed, only the

Do you need help?
Send in your queries and problems to
Do you need help? CHIP, Third floor,
Taj Building, 210 D N Road, Mumbai

Task Scheduler takes up any significant
memory. The memory usage for the rest is
negligible.