

Tricky ones

Written by Kees Looij

Thursday, 15 April 2010 09:36 - Last Updated Thursday, 07 February 2013 10:40

Some of the more interesting problems we have found have taken a while to find solutions to. More often than not, the best answer seems to be 're-install windows'. But that is sometimes not an option. Clients may not have their installation disks or cannot afford to have all that work done. So here are some of the more interesting jobs that have come our way and we have found answers to (thanks mostly to the internet)!!

Problem:

Initially, laptop came in that could not be started because of an apparent hardware issue. We looked at it and found that the registry had become corrupt. Checked the laptop and there were no backups, checkpoint or anything to restore to. Managed to backup the important data and were looking at restoring to factory default when we discovered there was no recovery partition (or rather, there was but had been emptied). We found a backup of the registry and restored that. We were able to boot the laptop and login in, but once we restarted, the laptop kept on restarting with the message 'configuring updates stage 3 of 3 0%' coming up before restarting yet again. It seems that Microsoft has provided some updates that Windows Vista got a bit confused about. Tried many things but the only solution seemed to be to restore the registry every time. Also tried to load updates through the internet and updates through USB, but neither worked.

Solution:

Our patience and the clients' money was running out when we stumbled on a site that mentioned deleting a pending.xml and cleanup.xml file. I did a search and found them in the C:\windows\winsxs directory. We renamed the pending.xml file, restarted the laptop and were finally not greeted with the configuring updates. Ran the gauntlet and decided to load updates through the internet...and still working! So looks like we have a working system again.

Problem:

A PC would not recognise the keyboard attached to it. The mouse would work fine. When starting and going into the BIOS, the keyboard would work fine, but as soon as windows would

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start and the logon screen was presented, the keyboard would cease to function. Various USB and PS2 keyboards were tried, all without success. Figuring it would have to be a software issue as it would work in the BIOS, scouring the internet found another obscure reference to a registry edit which could possibly fix the issue.

Solution:

Find some way to edit the registry (I used Ultimate boot CD which allows me to access the local PC registry. Locate the following registry key:

HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINESYSTEMCurrentControlSetControlClass{4D36E96B-E325-11CE-BF C1-08002BE10318}.

There should be only one entry in the Value Name : "Upperfilters" and the "Value Data" should be "kbdclass". If there are any other entries, delete them until only kbdclass is left. Close regedit and reboot the PC. The keyboard should now work again.

Problem:

Acer machines now have hidden partitions that contain the original install data so you can restore the PC or laptop to the factory default installation. Unfortunately they do not give you the option to boot into this when you start the PC or laptop.

Solution:

When starting the PC or laptop, hold down the Alt and F10 button. This should start the Acer eRecovery and allow you to restore to the factory default.

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Problem:

A Toshiba laptop would go through the BIOS but stop working after that. oing into safe mode would start loading the device drivers but then stop at a certain one.

Solution:

Check the C:WindowsSystem32Drivers directory for any driver file 0K in size. Delete them. Then try to restart it.

Problem:

Disappearing icons on Windows vista on a laptop

Solution:

Problem was a windows update changed the power option to Quiet Office, which caused the icons to vansih. Changing the power option back to entertainment fixed it.

Problem:

PC could not run any executables. User had changed all exe files to be linked to a program so any executable it tried to start would be started through another program.

Solution:

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Can be fixed by changing the following registry setting (works for vista and Win7):

[HKEY_CURRENT_USERSoftwareMicrosoftWindowsCurrentVersionExplorerFileExts.exeUserChoice]

If you cannot modify the registry because of this problem, you can download it from [here](#) and try to run it to add to the registry instead.

Problem:

PC was not starting and coming up with the dreaded Windows could not start because the following file is missing or corrupt "WINDOWS/SYSTEM32/CONFIG/SYSTEM". Not only that but my windows boot disk was causing the blue screen of death

Solution:

If you can get onto the recovery console do that, otherwise, remove the disk and hook onto the disk via USB with a working PC. backup the sytem, software, sam, default and security files located in the c:windowssystem32config directory. Then copy the same files from the c:windowsrepair folder and place them in the c:windowssystem32config directory. Restart the broken PC, you should be able to start it but a lot of programs won't work. Now enable the ability to access the c:system volume information folder by giving yourself rights to it. Find an RPx folder that was created before the problems you are having. Copy the _REGISTRY_USER_DEFAULT, >_REGISTRY_MACHINE_SECURITY, _REGISTRY_MACHINE_SOFTWARE, >_REGISTRY_MACHINE_SYSTEM and _REGISTRY_MACHINE_SAM and rename them default, security, software, system and sam. Go back to recovery console or remove drive and access from another pc. Copy the renamed files to c:windowssystem32config and restart the pc. You should now have a working pc. These two links from Microsoft will give you more details on how to do it <http://support.microsoft.com/kb/307545> and <http://support.microsoft.com/kb/309531>

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Problem:

Compaq laptop keyboard would allow you to login to windows Vista but would stop working once windows had started up.

Solution:

Remove battery and power from the laptop, press and hold the power button for at least a full minute, then insert the battery and power and restart the laptop. Doing this apparently does a hard reset on the laptop. I have done it myself and it does seem to work. It seems that dodgy batteries are to blame for this problem.

Problem:

Outlook 2003 prevent images in the sent items from being displayed.

Solution:

There is a registry key HKEY_CURRENT_USERSoftwareMicrosoftOffice9.0OutlookSecurity. It contains a key called "OutlookSecureTempFolder ". Delete this key to enable the images to be viewed.