

Re: Use of FAT32 with WXP

Source: <http://coding.derkeiler.com/Archive/Assembler/comp.lang.asm.x86/2008-07/msg00069.html>

- *From:* "Jerome H. Fine" <spamtrap@xxxxxxxxxx>
 - *Date:* Tue, 15 Jul 2008 22:41:30 -0400
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>Jim Carlock wrote:

I believe Win2K and XP both partition AND format a disk as FAT32 before converting it to NTFS (during ANY Microsoft install?). For some reason that rings a bell with me but I don't know if that's something left over from NT4 installs or if it still applies to all Microsoft OS.

The following link presents some rather interesting info:

<http://support.microsoft.com/kb/314463>

"You cannot format a volume larger than 32 gigabytes (GB) in size using the FAT32 file system during the Windows XP installation process. Windows XP can mount and support FAT32 volumes larger than 32 GB (subject to the other limits), but you cannot create a FAT32 volume larger than 32 GB by using the Format tool during Setup. If you need to format a volume that is larger than 32 GB, use the NTFS file system to format it. Another option is to start from a Microsoft Windows 98 or Microsoft Windows Millennium Edition (Me) Startup disk and use the Format tool included on the disk."

Microsoft also provides an OEM formatting utility with most Windows versions, maybe located in the following folder on the Windows XP CD:

`\SUPPORT\TOOLS\DEPLOY.CAB`

It contains an `offormat.com` file and some other files that could be of use. NOTE that `format` holds a `.com` extension. So this may explain some of the 32KB issues, as if the `format.com/offormat.com` file uses 16-bit "signed integers" for the cluster/sector size.

Jerome Fine replies:

I am confused about the use of a FAT32 file system under WXP. Your first paragraph suggests that even if the user starts with FAT32, WXP ends up converting to NTFS. Can you please confirm?

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Also, can anyone please confirm that they have or are running a FAT32 file system under WXP?

As I stated, since I have a very large HDD (320 GB) and will probably use less than 4 GB for the C: drive, so having a huge cluster size is not a problem.

I will read over the links after I send this post.

Sincerely yours,

Jerome Fine

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