Clone Windows XP boot partition

Hardware setup

This short howto guide was setup to handle 2 hdd configured as mirrored drives through built-in nVidia 590 SLI chipset. Since the nVidia drivers are not included in Windows XP SP2 setup CD, there are special steps necessary to get a multi-boot environment going.

Requirements

- Windows XP SP2
- Boot-US 2.1.6
- nLite / nLite Windows XP SP2 boot disk with necessary drivers
- Acronis TrueImage 9.0

Initial install

The easiest way for the initial install is to use the BIOS' IDE emulation for the SATA drive and install the basic operating system on a separate harddisk not part of a raid set. Except the basic Windows XP, install an imaging software. I use TrueImage 9.0, but I would expect that any other imaging software would do, as long as it is possible to backup and restore the actual system partition.

1. Install Windows XP SP2
2. Install Acronis TrueImage 9.0
3. Backup the system partition just created on the single hdd with TrueImage
4. Restore to the 2 mirrored hdd with TrueImage
5. Disconnect the single hdd

It might be possible to install Windows on 1 of the mirrored hdd before setting up the mirror raid, and then mirroring from the running system partition, but I haven't tried this approach.

Initial clone

1. disable Boot-US if it was installed before, then reboot
2. Backup and then delete registry key HKLM/SYSTEM/MountedDevices. This is necessary to have XP reassign the devices information when booting from the cloned system partition for the first time.
3. Backup the system partition on the mirror with TrueImage
4. Restore the registry key by executing the backup file created in 2.
5. Create a new partition on the mirror
6. Restore the system partition on the mirror's second partition with TrueImage
7. Install Boot-US with “true hide” option for the 2 system partitions
8. Reboot into the newly created system partition
9. modify C:\boot.ini to reflect the correct partition information
10. reboot into your nLite Windows XP SP2 CD which contains the drivers to the nVidia chipset (to

access the raid)
11. select to install XP on the system partition which is currently active (not hidden by Boot-US)
12. DO NOT install XP, but abort installation on the screen asking for formatting the file system. This step is necessary to install a genuine MBR, as Boot-US' partition information was corrupted through the cloning.
13. reboot again into the active partition
14. re-install Boot-US with “true hide” option

Clone on existing XP partition

In the following steps, XP-source means the XP install you want to clone, XP-dest means the XP install you want to overwrite with the clone.

1. Boot-US must be installed to differentiate between the 2 XP installs.
2. Boot into XP-source
3. backup XP-source and delete registry key HKLM/SYSTEM/MountedDevices. This is necessary to have XP reassign the devices information when booting from the cloned system partition for the first time.
4. Backup XP-source with TrueImage
5. Restore the registry key by executing the backup file created in 2.
6. Reboot into XP-dest
7. Restore XP-dest with the image from XP-source. The restore will require a reboot.
8. After finishing the restore, reboot into XP-dest, which now contains the XP-source clone
9. modify C:\boot.ini to reflect the correct partition information
10. reboot into your nLite Windows XP SP2 CD which contains the drivers to the nVidia chipset (to access the raid)
11. select to install XP on the system partition which is currently active (not hidden by Boot-US)
12. DO NOT install XP, but abort installation on the screen asking for formatting the file system. This step is necessary to install a genuine MBR, as Boot-US' partition information was corrupted through the cloning.
13. reboot again into the active partition
14. re-install Boot-US with “true hide” option

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