

# Re: Sysinstall's fdisk/disklabel should be improved

*Source:* <http://unix.derkeiler.com/Mailing-Lists/FreeBSD/current/2003-10/1498.html>

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**From:** Terry Lambert ([tlambert2\\_at\\_mindspring.com](mailto:tlambert2_at_mindspring.com))

**Date:** 10/30/03

Date: Thu, 30 Oct 2003 03:13:57 -0800

To: Ulrich Spoerlein <[q@uni.de](mailto:q@uni.de)>

Ulrich Spoerlein wrote:

> *On Tue, 28.10.2003 at 23:29:03 -0800, David O'Brien wrote:*  
> > *It is NOT useless. Why do you think it is? Perhaps you don't realize*  
> > *that some BIOS's wont boot from a hard disk that isn't partitioned to*  
> > *agree with the specifications of the PeeCee. If you want to treat your*  
> > *PC as a Sun, don't -- buy a Sun, FreeBSD runs on that too.*  
>  
> *What exactly do you mean by "PC Specification"? I'm not trying to make a*  
> *"dangerously dedicated" disk. I just don't need a spare 63 sectors for*  
> *DOS-compatibility. And leaving the first 63 sectors untouched is a*  
> *DOS-ism, not a PC-ism.*

Ironically, the best reference for FDISK-style layout of partition tables, use of the fields in the FDISK partition table structure, and general reference on checksums, 0xAA55, and the rest that I have ever found is the PReP specification, chapter 6.

That's Power PC Reference Platform Specification, in case you were wondering; it's a Motorola document intended for use on Motorola hardware.

Some DEC (Compaq? Hewlett-Compaqard?) Alpha firmware has the same requirement that PReP has in this regard.

So do most OSs that run on x86 hardware, even when they are run on non-x86 hardware (Solaris, et. al.).

I agree that the code could be cleaned up, but the layout on the disk is pretty intentional.

-- Terry

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