

Re: Please enter date and time then freeze

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From: John Santos (*JOHN_at_egh.com*)

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On Mon, 17 Nov 2003, Didier Morandi wrote:

> *Soterro wrote:*

>

>> *Hello,*

>>

>> *I have since today this strange behaviour on this Digital PW 600au,
>> VMS 7.2-1.*

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>> *It is a dualboot machine which until this morning ran under Tru64 for
>> a longer while. I rebooted it for VMS (in the same way I always did
>> it) and it asked me for the new date and time, as always. I managed to
>> enter a few digits then the keyboard froze. Not even the caps lock LED
>> was lighting when I pressed it. I reset the machine, at the reboot at
>> the same moment it froze again. Only the keyboard freezes, because the
>> display asks again and again for the date with new lines, and the
>> keyboard does nothing. I halted it, booted in Tru64, no problem. Back
>> into VMS, again freeze. When I pressed halt, all the garbage I typed
>> came on the screen so it's buffered somewhere in between. So I just
>> typed at the prompt continue and this time the date was taken
>> correctly and the boot process went fine (except for the system's
>> mail.mai suddenly missing and not created when the whatever status
>> message was sent).*

>>

>> *Anyone experienced this funny situation? If there's something failing
>> in the machine, what could that be???*

>

> *(as usual)*

> *What did change since the last correct reboot?*

>

> *D.*

Recent customer with an ES40 had similar (but not identical) problems. They only had a graphics console, and if you explicitly set the console to "graphics" and booted, it would ask for the date and time and then hang. If you powered off and back on, the console would revert to "serial", and if they tried to boot without changing it, it would just hang.

Turned out to be a dying battery on the motherboard.

<RANT> Because it kept forgetting the time, and the console kept changing from graphics to serial, I suspected a CMOS battery right away, but we were misled by the non-HP field circus. They said the ES40 doesn't have a battery, the settings are stored in flash memory, which doesn't require power to maintain settings. They swapped the motherboard and it said all the memory was dead. They swapped in another motherboard and got the exact same original symptoms. Eventually they swapped the entire CPU cabinet, then started back-fitting components to the old cab (while the system was running on the new cabinet), to isolate the original problem. Finally they discovered there **was** a battery on the motherboard and it was dead! (They claim it wasn't listed as a field-replaceable part in the maintenance docs, but it turned out to be easy to replace.)

Bottom line: Original battery was dead.

1st replacement motherboard was badly broken.

2nd replacement motherboard had a dead battery.

So if you have any ES40's in southern California, and 3rd-party maintenance, don't let them leave until your sure your system is working! Those dead motherboards have probably been recycled into their spares kits.

</RANT>

Check the CMOS battery.

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