

Re: Problem: How to resize FreeBSD "partitions" on a live system?

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Source: <http://unix.derkeiler.com/Newsgroups/comp.unix.bsd.freebsd.misc/2006-06/msg00439.html>

- *From:* jpd <read_the_sig@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx>
 - *Date:* 16 Jun 2006 20:56:07 GMT
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Begin <1150422511.937242.238610@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx>
On 2006-06-16, KimmoA <kimmoa@xxxxxxxxxx> wrote:
[context missing]

It seems that your preferred suggestion is actually to make a symlink to a /usr location. While I can see that it could work, doesn't that take away the entire point of dividing the system from the beginning?

No, not at all. I agree that it can easily convolute the system into incomprehensibility, but letting that happen, or not, is up to you. Think carefully about what both really do. If you do you should be able to work out the details of the answer.

Also, isn't it bad practice to change the default location?

Defaults themselves are best left alone. If you don't feel comfortable changing settings from their defaults, then by all means, leave them as they are. But if you have a need to change them, then you have the possibility. And that certainly is much better than needing to and not having the possibility.

It is good practice to justify your actions with reason and to document the whole setup so that forgetting how you'd done it is less of a risk.

I am myself still more than a little confused over "Unix" directory structure to begin with, but it seems that they have been thought through and have a very good reason for being that way. Or am I wrong?

Compare, for example, the FreeBSD ports collection and the NetBSD take on the same idea, pkgsrc: The former installs in /usr/local by default, whereas the latter religiously uses /usr/pkgsrc, leaving /usr/local for

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local additions.

There is usually at least some reason why layouts are the way they are, but what the reason is or was, exactly, differs greatly and may even be lost in time. ``Unix" is, after all, 30+ years old already.

The main point is that you do have the tools to be extremely flexible about what you do with your disk space including way down the road. Whether what you do with that is wise is in the eye of the beholder. You can ask for advice, but there is no single right answer, hence my referral to the archive of this group for more discussion.

Yes, I am a perfectionist. I can't stand unclean systems and can actually lose sleep over that kind of thing, even if everything works perfectly fine and nobody will ever know about it (but me, that is).

Writing site documentation with concise records of the what and where it differs from the defaults and why, can perhaps alleviate that loss of sleep. With proper host documentation, even if you do something ``unclean", which you inevitably will simply because you have not worked out how to do it properly yet, you or others won't lose as much time over finding out how it all was setup N months down the road.

In the past, when I have asked something similar, I have basically got replies such as "that's why you can easily change it later" (referring to re-arranging space for the partitions). It doesn't seem to be that easy at all...

Not if you believe it has to be done through re-partitioning. But if you have unallocated space (set aside earlier, adding another disk, etc.), you can allocate it, put a filesystem on it, and drop it in the tree wherever necessary. Even if you have to move some data to the new mountpoint, you don't have to take full backups, redo all the filesystems, and restore from backups.

In Windows, I remember using some commercial third-party GUI tool ("Partition Magic"?) that could easily re-arrange them.

But do note that, as you say, it is a *third party* offering. Windows itself offers no provisions like unix does, at all. Even its take on symlinks is shaky and only works half the time. Not to mention that micros~1 filesystem technology is... lagging behind the competition[1],

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and has for years. From the start, even, as Bill points out.

I must admit that I expected there to be some kind of program bundled with FreeBSD that could change the "slices" freely, only requiring a reboot to take action... Apparently, that is not the case.

But do note that the tools you have (*working* softlinks, freedom to mount in more space almost wherever you want, fairly centralised configuration, various bundled backup/restore tools, not to mention vinum and --if you like to live dangerously-- growfs) do give you a tremendous amount of flexibility already. Just not bundled in a gui.

Hmm... I'm leaning towards letting everything be at / + swap, because I take backups only of my own files, reinstalling the system in case of an emergency... It's the philosophy and performance parts that worry me...

Then you haven't paid attention. I did mention, as did others, that dump/restore works best on a filesystem basis, and that is just one reason why you'd want to separate the system and your own data.

[1] To people who now point out that NTFS is ``OK'', or whatever, I can only say: Maybe in theory, I've never seen it work well in practice, certainly not without third party tools. Especially recovering from booting--preventing errors leaves much to be desired.

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