

Re: Microlite RecoverEdge on IBM xSeries 345, floppy

Source: <http://unix.derkeiler.com/Newsgroups/comp.unix.sco.misc/2005-02/0029.html>

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Roger Cornelius wrote:

> *Microlite Edge 2.1 on IBM xSeries 345 server and Openserver 5.0.7 with
> MP3 and UP3.*

>

> *Beginning, I believe, with the install of UP3 and/or MP3, RecoverEdge is
> no longer able to create boot images on 1.44mb floppies or CD because
> there isn't enough room. I am able to successfully build RE media using
> 1.68mb floppies but when I attempt to boot the machine from the first
> floppy, it prints the letter 'E' continuously across the screen. This
> occurs when booting from either of the two IBM xSeries 345 servers we
> have available. However, I am able to boot from the same floppies on
> either of two IBM clone boxes I've tried them on. I have tried remaking
> the RE media using different floppies but with the same result. The IBM
> servers are able to boot from other floppies, the OpenServer install
> floppy, e.g..*

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> *Microlite has not seen this before.*

>

> *I'm wondering if this could be related to the issue recently discussed
> here:*

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<http://groups-beta.google.com/group/comp.unix.sco.misc/msg/7269008a0c494d5e&as_umsgid=20041218135048.G>

I doubt it. MP3 _fixed_ the problem mentioned in that discussion. The nature of that problem was that the BIOS would refuse to even attempt to boot the floppy (believing it to be a non-bootable diskette). The infinite 'E' sequence indicates that the BIOS _has_ booted the floppy. Those 'E's come from the OSR5 floppy boot code; each one means "I tried to read a sector and got some sort of error". There's not enough room in the code to print anything more useful.

> *Or, if not, is there some reason the floppy is able to write 1.68mb
> format but not read it.*

That might be it.

> *For the record, I have edge 2.1 running on a Dell server at home using
> the same OSR507 configuration and have no problem creating and booting
> from 1.68mb floppies.*

Use a whole-disk copy program on one of those machines to make an "exact" duplicate of one of the problem disks. Not *_too_* exact; you don't want the kind of copy program used by crackers to copy copy-protected games, but the kind that expects the media formats to be normal. Like ancient DOS "diskcopy": a same-format, sector-to-sector copier.

Floppies are weird and wonderful beasts. Sector formats can vary considerably and still be "within spec". A copier will probably write new sectors with its own preferred inter-sector gaps. Those might be more to the liking of the 345's floppy drive.

It's also possible that the machine just can't boot 21-sector floppies. The BIOS could be checking for a "valid" sector number and rejecting anything above 18 sectors/track.

>Bela<