

usb2 port gets very slow on 2-gig Flash Drive.

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I needed to reload the flash drive on a Zenstone 2-gig mp3 player. I have noticed that when the drive is full, operations all still work, but take much longer than one might expect which probably has something to do with the fat32 file system and size of the FAT table.

I started by doing `rm -r -f music` which is the one and only main directory. That took about 2 hours to complete and then it was time to reload it from the Linux computer.

The Linux computer is a 500-MHZ Pentium running a 2.6.5 kernel and the usb2 port is, by definition 13 Mb so it is slow, about 10-meg Ethernet slow under normal conditions.

What actually happens is much worse. After doing the `rm -r -f`, I started with an empty drive but the tar program started running very slowly. It takes at times, 10 minutes to load one tune that would normally play in 2 or 3 minutes.

Just for fun, I let it plod slowly along and it has been running now for about 36 hours and is 75% complete but what is happening?

If I look at the health of the system, it isn't that bad all be it busy.

`$ uptime`

07:21:58 up 2 days, 23:37, 2 users, load average: 4.00, 4.13, 4.19

It is July 24 and `ps ax -Ostart` shows me that tar has been running a very long time:

```
22986 Tue Jul 22 23:35:01 2008 D pts/13 00:00:40 tar xf /home/martin/musicmain.tar
```

I tried `renic-ing tar` and the usb mass storage daemon which has had no effect, either good or bad.

I do remember once that if there is a time lapse of

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several minutes between the `rm -r -f` command to wipe the FAT table clean and the `tar` command that initial performance is much better so there must be a cleanup routine going on somewhere.

This is also true if you unmount the drive and remount it empty. I seem to remember that it only took a couple of hours to reload the entire drive when I did things that way.

I did a `top` command and I am either missing something or nothing much is wrong:

```
Tasks: 42 total, 2 running, 40 sleeping, 0 stopped, 0 zombie
Cpu(s): 0.3% us, 0.0% sy, 0.0% ni, 0.0% id, 99.7% wa, 0.0% hi, 0.0% si
Mem: 126424k total, 124572k used, 1852k free, 1604k buffers
Swap: 377488k total, 0k used, 377488k free, 102308k cached
```

```
PID USER PR NI VIRT RES SHR S %CPU %MEM TIME+ COMMAND
23560 martin 16 0 2160 1084 1880 R 0.3 0.9 0:00.03 top
1 root 16 0 1492 528 1336 S 0.0 0.4 0:07.26 init
2 root 34 19 0 0 0 S 0.0 0.0 0:12.13 ksoftirqd/0
3 root 5 -10 0 0 0 S 0.0 0.0 0:00.00 events/0
4 root 5 -10 0 0 0 S 0.0 0.0 0:04.02 kblockd/0
10 root 7 -10 0 0 0 S 0.0 0.0 0:00.00 aio/0
9 root 15 0 0 0 0 S 0.0 0.0 0:22.06 kswapd0
11 root 25 0 0 0 0 S 0.0 0.0 0:00.00 jfsIO
```

I plan to let this `tar` command run its natural course to see what happens, but is there anything I can do with the existing system to optimise the performance?

Thanks.

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