

Re: linux-next: Tree for June 13: IO APIC breakage on HP nx6325

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 - *Date:* Wed, 2 Jul 2008 02:48:11 +0100 (BST)
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On Mon, 30 Jun 2008, Rafael J. Wysocki wrote:

Well, there are lots of pieces of hardware that are not up to the specifications, more or less, and I don't think that's a good enough reason for us to refuse to support them. The same applies to BIOSes IMO.

Refusing to support broken hardware would provide some incentive to manufacturers to improve it, because people would rather not buy unsupported pieces of junk. I realise that may be impractical though --- we would get the blame anyway, because "it runs the other OS just fine."

I think we may legitimately request something in return for our effort though, for example at least minimal support from hardware manufacturers. It is not that we would waste a lot of their time, because in general anything we do not filter out must be really tough.

Of course, the `_default_` should be to follow the spec, but if that doesn't work on given hardware/BIOS combination and we know what to do to handle it, we should just handle it instead of asking users to fix their BIOSes.

I think we should insist on getting issues reported back to the manufacturer. We may implement workarounds independently and leave it up to the users whether they want to do a BIOS upgrade or not.

I have seen enough failed BIOS upgrades to be very cautious about such things. Certainly, I wouldn't have seriously asked anyone to upgrade the BIOS in a notebook, because if that had failed, the user would have end up with a piece of electronic junk.

That's a valid point, although making the point of quality yet clearer --- being critical enough, I would expect it to have been thoroughly tested by the manufacturer. Also solutions like protected Flash areas have been

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available for many years now, which means a machine should be operative enough for recovery to be doable if an upgrade fails. So perhaps the very first thing to do after a new purchase should be doing a BIOS update, so that you can claim your warranty if something goes wrong.

Technically upgrading a laptop should be safer as bearing an on-board UPS they are protected from power failures, which may be problematic for some users of other equipment.

Maciej

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