

Re: Write disk image to multiple drives

Source: <http://linux.derkeiler.com/Newsgroups/comp.os.linux.misc/2006-03/msg00025.html>

- *From:* "Phil" <phillip.paradis@xxxxxxxxxx>
 - *Date:* 28 Feb 2006 22:46:34 -0800
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Grant wrote:

On 28 Feb 2006 18:49:28 -0800, "Phil" <phillip.paradis@xxxxxxxxxx> wrote:

unfortunately the images aren't simply gzip'd; they're in a format used

Yes but the final image *is* available in non compressed form, use a written CF unit as master.

That works as well. Though an additional benefit of using Frisbee is that it only writes allocated sectors to the card; the filesystem uses only about half of the available space on the card, so the time savings there are significant. (Especially since CF isn't all that fast at writing.) Also, the eventual end-users of the system aren't that bright; they might stick an blank in the source slot...

If those USB channels are not independent, you may not see much of a win in running things in parallel, USB is serial comms, you're hoping to fill one CF's busy time writing to others over serial communications?

Our primary writer station is using 16 writers; 8 per bank. Each bank is connected to a separate root hub on the host system. Each bank consists of 8 writers, a 7 port hub and a 4 port hub. 6 writers are connected to the 7 port hub along with the 4 port hub; the remaining two writers are connected to the 4 port. I just finished assembling the system the other day and haven't had a chance to test it with 16 cards, but the prototype system (4 writers on a single hub) showed little difference between writing a single card and writing 4 cards; USB2 is much faster than the maximum write speed of the cards. I suspect writing 8 cards on one channel will be a bit slower, but still much faster than writing them sequentially.

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An update: I figured out how to get hald to stop automounting the cards if they've been previously formatted (also breaks automouting of CDs, floppies and memory sticks, but it's a dedicated machine and I don't much care...I found a sample .fdi file in the docs folder that disables mounting of hotplugged block devices) and hacked the script to filter partition devices. (partition block devices are subfolders of their parent device in sysfs; they don't have their own folder in /sys/block. Adding the following in my loop works.

```
[ -d /sys/block/$device ] || continue
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Of course, if anyone knows a cleaner solution (e.g. preventing udev from creating the symlinks to the partition nodes in the first place and/or stopping the kernel from reading the partition table and generating hotplug events for the partitions) I'm all ears.

Cheers,

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Phil

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