

Mandrake 9.1 problem install: dma error bad crc, and pcimod missing on X config

Source: <http://linux.derkeiler.com/Newsgroups/comp.os.linux.setup/2003-09/0561.html>

From: Andrew Scott (andrew_d_scott_uk_at_yahoo.co.uk)

Date: 09/13/03

Date: 13 Sep 2003 14:08:28 -0700

Apologies for necessary vagueness below, but I dont have all the information to hand.

My system:

An i686 with 128MB RAM and a Fujitsu HDD organised into:

hda1: old RH 5.2 installation on ext2 (7 GB)

hda2: swap

hda3: a win98 installation (5 GB)

I have an ATAPI type DVD-ROM combo drive which I made bootable in BIOS. The PC is basically a horrendous mish-mash of bits and pieces some of which date back to 4 years ago; I replaced the motherboard & CPU about a year ago, but the HDD is original, and don't even ask where the monitor came from.

I have decided to install Mandrake 9.1 Power Pack over the top of the RH 5.2 system; I had been running this up until about 3 years ago and although fsck had reported some occasional problems I never had show-stopping errors. The reason for this was to introduce a 'family desktop' Linux system for a target for migration from win98 which had become increasingly flaky of late.

While I am no novice Linux sysadm/user having had experience dating back to the glory days of the MCC distro in 1992 I don't necessarily know all the ins and outs.

The install of Mandrake 9.1 went without a hitch seemingly until the X configurator page well into post-install [the summary section], although there had been a couple of apparent problems with sub-sections of one of the packages which scrolled off before I had a chance to check it. The X configurator had IDed my graphics card as something like an ATI Mach 64 AGP card, when it was IDed by win98 as an ATI Rage Pro Turbo AGP, which incidentally I couldn't find in the list anywhere. The very next thing that happened on clicking 'next' was that the entire machine locked out and froze solid, requiring a hard reset. Not a happy experience.

I booted back into 'linux' and got nowhere, the boot just hung early in the process, displaying the Mandrake 9.1 splash, a blinking cursor, and nothing else. Thinking the installation was incomplete, I booted back on the install CD and opted for an upgrade. All appeared fine, except that the X configurator refused to self-test ok, reporting an error about 'pcimod failing to load'. Eventually I chose to boot into text mode [runlevel 3].

Booting back into 'linux' seemed to go fine apart from some errors as reported below. However I then could not log in at the console: each time I entered the userid the prompt was redisplayed. After 3 attempts init reported that [something] had spawned too quick and would be disabled for 5 minutes. This happened over all virtual consoles.

I then booted into 'failsafe' and investigated. To my horror, 'df' core dumped! – though other 'basic' commands seemed to work fine.

>From the rescue disk, I found that df worked again. I checked under /var/log for dmesg, syslog and XFree86.log and found:

1. something called 'pcimod' and some other module had not been found and hence the X configurator could not even load!
2. there were several errors of the type 'dma error – bad crc' in syslog, not only during boot but also during run time, while I was trying to log in as above.
3. postfix was not loaded due to repeated segmentation violations.

Now the question is: what can I do to repair my installation, or should I simply reinstall from scratch and hope for the best? Would a similar thing happen again?

Unfortunately replacing the HDD is simply out of the question; there are valuable data on the win98 partition; we have no means of backup, and no resources to buy another HDD.

Any help vastly appreciated!

Thankyou,

Andrew Scott