

Dell laptop, external monitor, and RH9 -- PROBLEMS! HELP!

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I have had RH7.3 successfully installed on my Dell C840 for several months, and have used an external monitor when the laptop is in its dock. When using PartiiionMagic on my Win XP partition crashed the hard disk on my Dell C840, I decided to update from RH7.3 to RH9.

I installed RH9 with the laptop undocked and displaying on the internal LCD and, after some monkeying around, got X working correctly.

All my attempts to get X to work on an external monitor, both undocked and docked have been futile. All I get is a messed-up display. A non-X display (ctrl-alt-F1, for example), however, displays correctly on both internal and external monitors.

So I thought, "I'll just reinstall RH9 the way I installed RH7.3, with the laptop docked and the lid closed." Good idea, but it doesn't work. The install process boots and gets to the point where it says it's trying to start the native X server and the screen goes blank. Pressing ctrl-alt-F1 brings up the install screen which says the X server was started successfully. Pressing ctrl-alt-F7 yields a blank screen again.

I went around and around with this, trying different external LCD monitors, trying it with the laptop undocked and the external monitor connected up to the laptop instead of the dock, and on and on, and finally gave up on RH9 and tried installing RH7.3. With RH7.3, the install process is able to start up the X server AND I get a proper X display on the external monitor.

What's wrong? Shouldn't a later version of XFree86 be able to run on hardware that an earlier version handles properly? I do want to run RH9, but always using the smaller laptop display causes problems.

Thanks for any help,

Craig