Windows Does Not Start

SYMPTOMS

When you try to start Microsoft Windows XP in a dual-boot configuration, you may receive the following error message:

Windows XP could not start because the following files were missing or corrupted:

WINDOWSSYSTEM32CONFIGSYSTEM NTLDR MISSING

You can try to repair this file by starting the Windows Setup program from original floppies or boot from CD-ROM. Select 'r' at first screen to repair

CAUSE

This behavior may occur if the following conditions are true:

- You are performing a dual-boot procedure with Microsoft Windows NT 4.0 and Windows XP and you installed Windows NT 4.0 after you installed Windows XP.
- You reinstalled Windows NT 4.0.

Note Windows NT 4.0 does not detect the additional startup features of Windows XP, and it replaces the shared Windows boot files (Ntldr and Ntdetect.com).

RESOLUTION

To resolve this behavior, replace the Windows XP Ntldr and Ntdetect.com files. Follow these steps:

1. Start the Recovery Console, type fixboot at the prompt, and then press ENTER.
2. If the Recovery Console does not appear, follow these steps:
   - Use one of the following methods to start the computer so that you can access the file system of the boot partition:
     - Specify another operating system on the Boot menu.
     - Start from the Windows XP CD-ROM, and then at the Windows Setup screen, press "R" to use he Recovery Console to repair the Windows installation.
     - Use a Windows NT 4.0 boot disk that also contains the Windows XP boot files.
     - If your boot partition is a basic disk that is formatted with the FAT file system, use an MS-DOS boot disk.
   - Copy the Ntldr and Ntdetect.com files from the I386 folder on the Windows XP CD-ROM to the root folder of your boot drive. The boot drive is typically drive C.

If you are using MS-DOS to perform this file replacement, you may have to remove the System attribute, the Read-only attribute, and the Hidden attribute from the files by using the attrib command. To do this, type the following lines at the MS-DOS command prompt, and then press ENTER after each line:

attrib ntdetect.com -r -s -h

attrib ntldr -r -s -h

STATUS

Microsoft has confirmed that this is a problem in the Microsoft products that are listed at the beginning of this article.

MORE INFORMATION

Windows NT 4.0 Service Pack 5 (SP5) or later is required to perform a successful dual-boot operation with Windows XP.

For additional information about how to dual boot your computer with Windows XP, see the following Microsoft article:

306559 (http://support.microsoft.com/kb/306559/) How to create a multiple-boot system with Windows XP

For additional information, click the following article numbers to view the articles in the Microsoft Knowledge Base:

119467 (http://support.microsoft.com/kb/119467/) Creating a boot disk for an NTFS or FAT partition

245808 (http://support.microsoft.com/kb/245808/) Prompt for choosing hardware profiles even if only one exists

283433 (http://support.microsoft.com/kb/283433/) Cannot start Windows XP after you install Windows 2000

APPLIES TO

- Microsoft Windows XP Home Edition
- Microsoft Windows XP Professional
- Microsoft Windows XP Professional x64 Edition