

Casper XP Disk Cloning -

Casper XP revisited.

Each weekend when I check the sale pages of my favorite computer parts stores I see hard drives from \$.40 to \$.60 per gigabyte. A few months ago I even bought two 80 GB Western Digital drives for \$20.00 apiece from OfficeMax. So with all these inexpensive hard drives out there and readily available, there is absolutely no sense in not having a scheduled back up plan for your computers. After all you have a lot of time and money already invested in those machines.

There are two schools of thought in backing up your system. One school supports just backing up your data, because it is very fast and programs can be reinstalled from the original disks. Another school supports backing up your entire drive because who wants to waste all that time reinstalling all those programs from the original disks? (Do you actually know exactly how many and the names of the programs you have installed on your computer?) My personal favorite is a combination of those two schools. For a small business or home office I would use an incremental backup of data at least daily to a partition on the main drive or a CD-RW / DVD RW, and a complete cloning of the hard drive weekly. Both of these methods can be fully automated. Retrospect is great for the incremental images, and a new program called Casper XP is great for the cloning.

Casper XP is a compact program that is very easy to install and use. It is the most intuitive cloning program I have ever used, and runs entirely within Windows XP or Windows 2000. All I had to do was download the program, double click the icon and follow the installation wizard. No reboots were necessary.

With Casper XP you have two back up choices. You may either "Copy an entire hard disk" to another hard drive, or you may "Copy a specific drive" (or partition) to another hard drive. If you copy the entire hard drive, you actually clone the drive, partitions and all. If you opt to copy a specific drive then you can copy partitions, USB, Firewire, Mapped Network drives, CD and DVD drives (even virtual drives).

The ability to schedule your back up is one of the things that put Casper XP ahead of Norton Ghost. Another is the ability to work completely in the background and not having to go to DOS to do the actual work.

AT only \$44.95, Casper XP certainly gives you the "Best Bang For The Buck". For the complete specs go to www.fssdev.com/products/casperxp/ .

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