

# BootIt NG—A Review

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BootIt NG (the NG translates to Next Generation) is a shareware application for partitioning hard drives. It is offered by (and developed by) TeraByte Unlimited, <http://terabyteunlimited.com>.

The developer claims that this application can do many things, including:

- Create over 200 primary partitions
- Boot multiple operating systems
- Format FAT, FAT32 and NTFS file systems without data loss

and many others. It comes with a 51 page manual and tutorials on the TeraByte website.

Does that sound attractive? I found it so, until I discovered that the application does not live up to its claims. Before I describe my frustrations with this product, I need to tell you that I consider myself a reasonably knowledgeable computer user. The key word is “user.” I have knowledge of a number of software applications, but I am not very knowledgeable about hardware details—especially such technical details as hard drive partitioning.

This story starts with a purchase of a new Maxtor One Touch III 500 GB USB hard drive. I intend to use that hard drive to store backups of my laptop hard drive and to store media files (audio and video). I decided to create two partitions on the hard drive, calling one partition “Backup Storage” and a second partition “Media Storage.”

The first problem that I encountered was that I could not use the Windows (Windows XP/Pro SP2) partitioning feature. That feature did not recognize the new drive (even though the drive shows up in My Computer). That may be due to my lack of hardware knowledge, but because of that, I went searching for a freeware partitioning application. I ended up with BootIt NG based on a recommendation from one of the online Tech Support sites I use. BootIt NG (also known as BING) is shareware, not freeware, but it comes with a 30 day trial period. I decided to take advantage of that trial, because I wanted to expand my knowledge of this topic.

I had no problems installing the application. You create a boot disk (“installation media”) and then reboot the computer to start the application.

The first problem that I ran into was that the application does not work with a wireless mouse. OK, that is not a big issue.

The second problem is that 51 page manual. Of those 51 pages, 5 pages discuss partitioning, and about 1/3 of one page describes the task of creating a partition. Even

with the tutorials, I found the process of creating partitions very difficult. The best I can say is that there is information missing from both the manual and the tutorials—the process is NOT intuitive, at least to me. Adding screenshots to the manual may help.

During the process, the application crashed twice when I tried to switch the BING display between one hard drive and another. And I *do* mean crashed. I had to use the laptop power switch to clear the problem.

Eventually, I created the two partitions I wanted. The Backup Storage partition I created was 125 GB, with the remainder of the space for the Media Storage partition. The partition on the laptop hard drive that I backup is just over 70 GB, and the backup program uses compression (the laptop hard drive is about half full and the backup software reduces that to about 2/3 of the uncompressed data). I use Acronis TrueImage 10 for backup. I then tried to backup my laptop hard drive to the Backup Storage partition on the new hard drive. I immediately received an error message that the drive was full. That did not make any sense to me, and I did not (and do not now) know if that error was a result of the backup software or BING (or some other operator error).

My solution was to resize the Backup Storage partition. I discovered that I had to first resize the larger partition, which I did, without much trouble. That left two partitions and some free space. After several unsuccessful tries at resizing the Backup Storage partition, I concluded that I could not resize the Backup Storage partition without first moving it so that it was contiguous to the new free space I created by reducing the Media Storage partition. Actually, it was necessary to move the larger (Media Storage) partition.

The jargon used by BING for moving a partition is “Slide.” The manual warns that the process can be lengthy. It was. Something over 12 hours. At the end, there was, for some reason, a small amount of free space left over, the Media Storage partition, and then the Backup Storage partition.

I thought I was finished. However, when I tried to backup the laptop, Acronis did not see the Backup Storage partition. I looked for it under My Computer. It wasn't (and isn't now) there. For some reason, perhaps operator error, or perhaps a bug in the BootIt application, Windows does not see that partition. And remember—Windows *did* recognize two partitions before I tried to resize the smaller one.

You can imagine my reaction. Call it frustration, call it despair, call it whatever you like. This program may be suitable for those with extensive hardware knowledge—provided they can live with what appear to me to be serious deficiencies. I may try to contact TeraByte to troubleshoot these problems. I may not.

Conclusion: this application is not appropriate for the overwhelming majority of computer users.

Last minute update:

I figured out why I was missing a partition in My Computer (and why the Acronis software could not see the Backup Storage partition). Yes, it was an operator error. At this point, that new hard drive is (mostly) partitioned as I want it. However, I find BootIt NG very difficult to use, as will, I expect, a large percentage of computer users.

I stand by my earlier conclusion.