How to Repair a Windows Server

(Tested on Windows 2003)

When to Use:

1) After applying updating drivers, applying service, etc. The server will not boot. Example: The server looks like it's going to boot, the splash screen paints, then the server dies a blue screen death or the servers goes into a continual reboot cycle.

2) You restored a Ghost or XML Drive image [see appropriate restore documentation for procedure], to **a different type** of server than the original. If you restore to a different kind of server, and you can't get it to boot, it's likely because you need different drivers. If you **MUST** restore to a different server, and it won't boot **(you tried),** try this, it **MIGHT** work.

A system repair is recommended as a <u>LAST RESORT</u> do this at your OWN RISK.

Try this First

(Long Shot): If your system failed after device or driver update (etc.) Try this fist **(not for restoring image to different server)**

Press the F8 key as the server boots. You need to time it just right, be sure to hit the key just before the boot starts.

Choose: Last known good configuration

If "Try this First" doesn't work then you will need to do a **System Repair**.

Needed for System Repair:

Bootable OEM Windows 2003 Installation CD
(Not an upgrade disk and **not a Dell CD** – be sure it's the **same version of Windows** you are trying to recover)

Product Key

Diskette with drivers appropriate to the server. If a Dell server, download from Dell.

Windows Repair Install

Synopsis:

You will repair by reinstalling Windows. This should leave all the settings and programs intact. This is a **REPAIR**, **NOT recovery console and not a complete reinstall!!!!!**

Steps

1) Boot the computer using the Windows Install CD **(Do not use a Dell Disk)**. You may need to change the boot order in the system BIOS so the CD boots before the hard drive. Check your system documentation for steps to access the BIOS and change the boot order.

2) You may get the message "Press any key to boot from the CD", (press enter as instructed)

3) When the install tells you to press F6 if you need to install a 3rd party SCSI or RAID driver, do so (quickly).

   It will pause and ask if you want to specify and additional device. Insert a floppy with the driver and press "S"

   It will ask you to insert the floppy, press Enter

   It may ask you what version of Windows the driver is for - select appropriate version of Windows and press enter

   It may recommend that you use the Windows driver instead of the floppy driver you just inserted. **You want to use the floppy version, not the Windows version.** Press "S"

   It will tell you what driver setup is going to use, press Enter

4) Windows will ask you:

   Setup Windows now, Press ENTER

   To repair Windows Installation using Recovery Console press "R"

   You want to **Setup Windows Now** **NOT Recovery Console**

   >> At this point, it looks like it's about to do a complete re-install of Windows, but don't worry. If you followed instructions to this point, a future screen will ask you if you want to do a repair.

   Agree to the license terms when asked, press F8

   Then it will ask you:

To Repair the selected Windows installation, press "R"

To continue installing a fresh copy without repairing, press ESC

You want to repair so PRESS "R"

As the repair is running, it may ask for the driver disk again, and it may tell you it doesn't have a Microsoft Digital Signature, that's OK

When the repair completes, be sure to re-apply the OS patches

Possible Problems

If you run into Windows Installer starting up every time you try to run something:

From a DOS prompt or Start/Run, type: MSIEXEC / UNREGISTER
Reboot
Download and run the latest Service Pack (you may need to download from a different server)
Reboot
Download the latest service patches