10.3.2 Slow Boot Up   by Ed Matlock

At the Jan. 15th meeting I showed how performing a simple modification reduced startup times dramatically. The information for the modification came from 3 articles published by MacFixit, Macintouch, and Apple. These 3 articles have been reprinted below. On the schools iMac that I performed the mod on for the demo, the boot times went from 1 minute 45 seconds to 1 minute 7 seconds. This is quite a substantial time savings and is something an average person can accomplish. The following is a step by step procedure.

Highlight the following line and copy to the clipboard by pressing Cmd C or going to the EDIT pull down menu and selecting copy.

    sudo ln -s /System/Library/Extensions/BootCache.kext/Contents/Resources/BootCacheControl /usr/sbin

Now go to the Utilities folder in your Application folder and double click on Terminal. You should see a small window open with text similar to this:

Last login: Sun Jan 18 07:59:12 on ttyp1
Welcome to Darwin!
[Edgar-Matlocks-Computer:~] edgarmat%

What you see is the command line interface for Unix. Just behind the % is the cursor or insertion point. Now paste what you have copied to the clipboard into this window right behind the % by pressing Cmd V or going to the EDIT pull down and selecting Paste. After doing the Paste, press the Return key. The next line will have Password: Enter your Administrator password and press Return. You have now applied the mod. Quit the Terminal by pressing Cmd Q. You must now restart your computer twice. During the first restart, check the time of the boot up as a baseline number. Restart your computer a second time, taking note of the time. You should see a savings of between 25 to 50%. Enjoy your new fast starting computer.

ELM

From MacFixit

Late-Breakers Late-Breakers
Monday, December 29 2003 @ 07:50 AM PST
Troubleshooting Mac OS X 10.3.2: Slow startup solution

Steve Minnick has posted a fix apparently endorsed by Apple's support department to the Apple Discussions arena that is working to resolve slow startup issues under Mac OS X 10.3.2 for a number of users.

The fix is fairly straightforward. Simply enter the Terminal and execute:

   * sudo ln -s /System/Library/Extensions/BootCache.kext/Contents/Resources/BootCacheControl /usr/sbin

and then restart twice.

The official Apple solution uses copy instead of a link:

   * sudo cp -p /System/Library/Extensions/BootCache.kext/Contents/Resources/BootCacheControl /usr/sbin

Why does it work? Under Mac OS X 10.3.2 BootCacheControl is called from /etc/rc twice:

   * BootCacheControl
   * BootCacheControl tag

Both times its called using a shell variable set in /etc/rc which originally points to /System/Library/Extensions/BootCache.kext/Contents/Resources/BootCacheControl (and if this would not exist it would get changed to /usr/sbin/BootCacheControl.) But there is another call from the loginwindow process later:

   * /usr/sbin/BootCacheControl autostop 15

It appears that Apple mistakenly left out /usr/sbin/BootCacheControl for some Mac OS X 10.3.2 installations. The copy Terminal command resolves the issue.

From Macintouch

For the operation of OS X it doesn't matter which variant of the slow fix you applied. Just don't use the Finder to delete the file if you used the ln command. To find out which one you used, just execute the following command in Terminal:

ls -F /usr/sbin/BootCacheControl

If the output ends with an @ as in /usr/sbin/BootCacheControl@ then you used the ln method, else you used the copy method. Whichever method you used to apply the fix the command to remove it is

sudo rm /usr/sbin/BootCacheControl

Regarding updates: I will remove the fix on my system before applying the next system update, for now I will keep it.

I've seen about 100 positive feedbacks so far. I have had two reports of negative effects. One user was experiencing kernel panics shortly after the fix. The other user has seen a massive slow down in application launches and GUI operations. We are currently in the process of finding out what exactly is happening on this system.

So my recommendation is simple, if your system startup time doesn't bother you and you have no other problems with Panther, don't apply the fix. If you already installed the fix and you don't see negative effects, keep it.

Jim McCarty
...IMO, the ln -s command should be used since if/when Apple updates the source BootCacheControl program, you will automatically get the new version in /usr/sbin... unless they change the location of course.

From Apple Computer

TITLE

Mac OS X: Longer Startup Time After Installing Mac OS X 10.3.2 Update

Article ID:86639
Created:12/23/03
Modified:1/12/04

TOPIC

In some cases, your computer may take longer to start up after installing Mac OS X 10.3.2 Update. This can happen if you update to Mac OS X 10.3.2 incrementally (from Mac OS X 10.3.1, for example), but does not happen if installing from a Mac OS X version 10.3.2 Install disc.

DISCUSSION

If the computer's startup time is longer, follow these steps:

1. Open the Terminal (/Applications/Utilities/).
2. Type the following (on a single line). Alternatively, copy the text below and paste it into Terminal.

   sudo cp -p /System/Library/Extensions/BootCache.kext/Contents/Resources/BootCacheControl /usr/sbin/

   Note: There is a space before "/usr/sbin/".

3. Press Return.
4. When prompted, enter your admin password.

   Important: If the following message appears in Terminal, verify that step 2 was performed correctly. If so, you do not need to use these steps because your computer is not affected by this issue.

   Message: "cp: /System/Library/Extensions/BootCache.kext/Contents/Resources/BootCacheControl: No such file or directory"

5. Restart your computer.

Note: The first startup after this will still be longer. Subsequent startups will be faster.

This document will be updated as more information becomes available.