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PC Service Information

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Service Hints & Tips

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IBM PC Server/IBM PS/2 - (IML) system partition not accessible

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Symptom:
The cursor fails to move to the upper right corner of the monitor during an attempt to boot the System Partition of an IML machine on either a cold-boot or a warm-boot.

Note:
On some IML systems, it is normal for both stage 1 and stage 2 POST to complete without the cursor moving to the upper right corner of the monitor, when cold-booted. (This is model and Reference Diskette version dependent.) The system will "beep" one time and the operating system will begin execution. After the "beep", a warm-boot should be done (CTL-ALT-DEL). The cursor will then move to the upper right corner. Depress the keyboard CTL-ALT-INS keys to boot the System Partition.

Problem Isolation Aids:
1. Diagnostics (from Reference Diskette) run error-free.
2. Restoring the System Partition from a known good   Reference Diskette does not fix the problem.
3. Removing additional features and attachments does not   change the failure symptoms.
If the above description fits the problem, it is possible the system has been contaminated by a computer virus.

Fix:
Certain versions of computer viruses have been known to cause IML failures of the System Partition on PS/2 products. There are two methods of identifying and correcting this problem:
1. Current virus scan programs should be run. A virus could still be present, even if none is detected, as it may be a new or unknown virus.
2. Back-up the customer data and software, or confirm with the customer that he has valid back-up software. Original software source diskettes (physically write protected) are the best. Next, run the low-level format program on the fixed disk using the Advanced Diagnostics. This will completely erase anything on the fixed disk, including the System Partition and any hidden virus software. Then using a "known good" Reference Diskette set, the system partition should be re-created.
When complete, if the system boots to the newly created System Partition, no hardware failure has occurred. If the problem recurs after the customer's software is reloaded, then it can be safely assumed the customer software is contaminated or corrupting the System Partition.

Note:
Due to the exposure to Servicer's Reference Diskettes being contaminated by a computer virus, it is strongly recommended that they be kept mechanically write protected and virus scan software run on them frequently.

NOTE:
Only the utility provided on the Reference Diskette should be used to reproduce additional

"back-up" copies of the Reference Diskette Set. Reproducing Reference Diskettes by ANY OTHER METHOD exposes the servicer to the following situations:
a. Hidden files not being copied.
b. Contamination of the Reference Diskette with viruses.
c. Unwanted and/or unsupported files.

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SAS KEYWORDS:
PSY2            PS/2            PS2             PSY2PROG
D/T9556         D/T9595         D/T8595         D/T8577
D/T8556         D/T8557         D/T8580         D/T8565
D/T8560         D/T8590         D/T9577         D/T9576
D/T9590         D/T9557
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