Subject: **Re: Is there a program to test PC BIOSs for Y2K compatibility?**
Date: Thu, 28 Aug 1997 12:34:25 GMT
From: slug@fast.co.za (Chris Anderson)
Organization: Intertech Systems, Johannesburg, South Africa
Newsgroups: comp.software.year-2000

>In article <33fd1c61.84277773@news.wilmington.net>, Mark Samwick
><mark@walshnet.com> writes
>>Is there such an animal for the PC? I've had several clients ask
>>about testing their computer BIOS' for year 2000 compatibility.

There are literally dozens. Check out the More Y2k Links
archive at Cinderella. Interestingly, most are flawed because
they check for the wrong things. Many are freeware.
Some require expenditure.
A UK company(Solace) has written a report reviewing a few of these
and came out with the statement "don't invest in any BIOS checkers
Just Yet."
The consensus is that these First Wave products are cute toys
which merely emphasise the negative aspects of Y2k and fix nothing.

With the exception of Year2000.com from GT Becker, at
http://www.rightime.com ,
the Second Wave (which will implement fixes and bypasses)
are still on the drawing board.

In the meantime here is a draft of the new Cinderella
manual checkout procedure(with thanks to Rico Terblanche).
If this does not precisely define any BIOS problems with
your machine, I would like to hear about it. It uses a little display
freebie from GT Becker called Viewcmos.

PROCEDURE

(This procedure has been tested using MSDOS 3.2 through
MSDOS 6.22 7 and Win 95 (v4.00.950)

Create a Bootable Floppy or Stiffy. Use only this medium
for the test. The data and programs on your hard disks
will therefore be unaffected. Once created, leave the
diskette in the drive.

1. Create the test diskette. It must be in a bootable
drive, usually A:. The format command will wipe all data
off the diskette.
From DOS:
"FORMAT a: /s" OR type "SYS A:"

From Windows File Manager:
Click on Disk, Format, check Make system disk, Label "Y2ktest"

2. Shutdown your System. Switch off the power. Don't just hit Reset.

3. Switch the power on, the system will boot from the diskette.

4. System should display today's date. (Otherwise your BIOS was not correctly set to start with.)

5. Test 1: The crucial test. Other tests are academic if this one fails.
" Test if the system clock can be set beyond the year 2000"
1. Enter a 4 digit year when asked for input. Don't be fooled by the 2 digit mm-dd-yy prompt. The First date to test is January the First, 2000. Type 01-01-2000
2. Check the Date
3. If the date is set correctly, power OFF
4. Power ON
5. Re-check the date

If Sat January 1 2000 displays, your BIOS and RTC keeps the Century Byte.

6. Test 2:
" Test the system clock automatic update function when the power in ON - "Step/Roll Over"
1.Set the system clock to 1999-12-31, 23:58:00
2. Keep power ON
3. Wait until the clock reaches the year 2000
4. Check the RTC and BIOS date using Viewcmos utility. It must be 2000. If not 2000, the BIOS is flawed, but may be recoverable. Issue the Date command to set 01-01-2000.
5. Check the RTC and BIOS date using Viewcmos utility. It must be 2000.
6. If it is set correctly, power OFF, power ON and re-check the date

If Sat January 1 2000 displays, your BIOS is OK (it may be flawed but is manually recoverable) and the Step-Over performed acceptably. Some BIOS testers may flag a BIOS which displays 1900 in step 4 as

"non-compliant" without bothering to see
if the situation is recoverable."

7. Test 3:
" Test the system clock automatic update function when the power in OFF - "Step/Roll Over"

1. Set the system clock to 1999-12-31, 23:58:00
2. Power OFF
3. Wait until the clock reaches the year 2000
4. Power ON
5. Check the date. If not 2000, the BIOS is flawed but may be recoverable. Issue a DATE command to set 01-01-2000,
6. If it is set correctly, power OFF, power ON and re-check the date

If Sat January 1 2000 displays, your BIOS is OK and the Step-Over performed successful. This is the "classic" Rollover test. If this test reports 1980 the first time through on Step 5 then the BIOS is flawed, but may be recoverable. If Tests 1 and 2 are successful, then failure of this test is academic and merely means that manual correction on 01-01-2000 is necessary
Some new machines pass this test but fail on step 5 of Test 2.

8. Test 4:
" Test for the leap year"
1.Set the system clock to 2000-02-29, 10:00
2.Power OFF and wait a few seconds
3.Power ON
4.Check the date

If Tuesday 29 th February 2000 displays, your BIOS detects 2000 as a leap year.
You could also check if the system will roll over from 2000-02-29 to 2000-03-01.
9 Final Step. Very Important. Use DATE to set today's date. This will bring your BIOS back through time.

10. type DATE
Enter Today's date

END OF PROCEDURE

Chris Anderson email: slug@fast.co.za
Y2K Cinderella Project webmaster@cinderella.co.za
http://www.cinderella.co.za Striving for Year 2000 Compliance
---