

ACRONIS TRUE IMAGE FILE DIVISIONS

Gene Barlow, September 23, 2008

<http://www.ugr.com/TrueImageQuestions.html>

QUESTION: Using Acronis 10 or 11, when full backups are produced, some people get a single image file containing everything on their hard drive, while others doing the same kind of backup are getting multiple backup files, each about 4 Gb in size. The total size of the multiple files for each particular backup, when added together, appears to be about correct considering the contents of the hard drive involved. What causes that?

ANSWER: This is one of the most common questions I get.

The answer is very easy. All external hard drives are formatted as FAT32 when they are purchased. FAT32 has a maximum file size limit of 4GB. Most files that user have on their computers never exceed the 4GB limit, so most users are not aware of this limitation. However, backup image files can be larger than 4GB and FAT32 cannot handle them.

So, True Image steps in and handles this file size limitation for those with FAT32 external hard drives. True Image will split a large image file down into 4GB or smaller segments when the image file is saved on the external hard drive.

The files will all be named the same, but a sequence number will be added to the end of the file name to indicate the sequence of these multiple image file segments. If you should need to restore an image with many files, just pick the one with the highest sequence number and all before that one will be included in the restore.

True Image handles this limitation of FAT32 so that the user does not need to worry about it.

If the external hard drive has been formatted as NTFS, then any size image file can be saved on it as one larger file. So, if users would like to only get one image file, they need to format their external hard drive at NTFS and that will do it.

Just remember that when you format a hard drive, you lose all of the files on the hard drive, so this may not be a good solution for folks with lots of backups on their external hard drive they don't want to lose.

I hope this answers the question for you and your members.

They can read about this and other solutions on my Website at <http://www.ugr.com/TrueImageQuestions.html> in my frequently asked questions section.