

Microsoft 'streaming storage' patent maps OS future

August 17 2011, by Nancy Owano

(PhysOrg.com) -- Microsoft might be planning a future where Windows open to something far bigger, the next time you push your power button on. A patent filed by Microsoft points to its plan for an operating system environment beyond Windows 8 that depends on cloud computing, not locally installed software. The patent suggests your computer will be booted through remote storage in a cloud computing construct, where software services control your digital work.

The [patent](#) calls for an operating system booted through a chain of [storage devices](#) with various priorities forming a centralized environment. The patent says:

“Various aspects of the subject matter described herein are directed towards a technology by which a virtual storage device for a physical or virtual computing machine is maintained as a chain of data structures (e.g., files) including far data maintained at a far (e.g., remote) backing store and near data maintained at a near (e.g., local) backing store (which initially may be empty).”

Reports in [ConceivablyTech](#) and [Geek.com](#) detail the patent, filed in February 2010, but which are surfacing now.

The patent 20110197052 is called “Fast Machine Booting Through Streaming Storage.” Inventors’ names are listed as Dustin Green, Jacob Oshins, and Michael Neil.

One of the advantages is called out as fast booting time.

“Described is a technology by which a virtual hard disk is maintained between a far (e.g., remote) backing store and a near (e.g., local) backing store, which among other advantages facilitates fast booting of a machine coupled to the virtual hard disk,” says the patent.

The patent explains that “the virtual disk is available for use immediately, rather than needing to download an entire operating system image before booting from that downloaded image. For example, during a boot operation, only a relatively small amount of data is needed from the boot disk, which is available from the far data and/or the near data.”

News of the patent is seen as proof that rumors and tips over Microsoft’s research project Midori back in 2008 and 2009 were on to something big. Midori, an [operating system](#) project at Redmond, was believed to be focusing on the company’s OS future directions and a path to integration with Azure, which is Microsoft’s cloud platform.

The patent’s details and intent will most likely be the subject of conversation in the corridors if not meeting places next month in Anaheim, at the sold-out [Microsoft BUILD](#) conference for developers.

More information: Patent: [appft1.uspto.gov/netacgi/nph-P ...
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