Saturday, February 1. 2014

A warning in regard of mdb

You are virtuously using mdb -w to tune a system and type all the commands from memory ... however you can still fsck up the whole system with a single mistake while using it. The mistake in my case was thinking i'm in the left window whereas i was in the right window. In the left window i wanted to exit out of a shell. In the right window was a waiting mdb -kw(yes, the basic mistake to have it left open). At the end the system was doing a panic right after leaving mdb. An explanation for this behaviour can be found here. When using mdb -kw do it like Swigert in the Apollo 13 film ... put a Post-it on your screen saying "Don't exit". Control+D is your way to leave the mdb.

    Posted by Joerg Moellenkamp in English, Solaris at 20:14

I recall a customer who had just set a tunable to 0 using

> variable_name/W0

They then typed in

> exit

Strangely enough the system panicked almost immediately.

What actually happened is that "exit" is a symbol for the system call "exit()" and they wrote a 0 over it (repeated the previous instruction on the named address).

This is why I generally give mdb -kw commands out as echo command mdb -kw.

mdb -kw is a dangerous place to risk mistakes.
    Anonymous on Feb 2 2014, 05:05

Yes, i'm doing it the same way normally with the echo ... however i needed the mdb for different stuff as well and so i thought ... "hey ... i can keep it open" ... bad jörg, really really bad jörg ...
    Anonymous on Feb 2 2014, 08:30

This is why I'm never using "exit" in shell and always ctrl-d.
    Anonymous on Feb 2 2014, 19:25

This mdb bug is fixed in the current Solaris 11 SRU.
    Anonymous on Feb 3 2014, 14:24