## Web browsers continually writing to "disk" -- or SSD!

http://www.ghacks.net/2016 /09/26/display-the-disk-activity-in-bytes-of-any-process-in-windows/

Before trying to follow these instructions, listen or
- Firefox:
  about:config [search] browser.sessionstore.interval
  ○ Defaults to "15000" - every 15 seconds.

- Firefox:
  ○ Terminate Firefox.
  ○ Edit the **%appdata%\Mozilla\Firefox\profiles.ini**
  ○ Set **IsRelative=** x value to **zero**, and edit the path.
  ○ Move the existing profile folder to the new location *not on SSD.*
  ○ The profiles.ini  file:
    - [General]
      StartWithLastProfile=0
      [Profile0]
      Name=default
      IsRelative=1
      Path=Profiles/{nonce}.default
      Default= 1

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## Excerpt from transcript:

Okay. So what we talked about, I don't remember which of the three weeks it was, Leo, when you were away, and Father Robert and I were doing the podcast, was it came to light that both Firefox and Chrome are frantic about taking snapshots of the current browser tab space constantly, and to the tune **of gigabytes redundantly written to the system drive per day**. And in fact, if you take the write endurance of an SSD, that is, the amount that you write to it per day over its life, leaving Firefox or Chrome open, even on an idle system, can be consuming half of the total write life of the SSD.

So one of the things that we talked about the first time this came up was that Firefox does offer a tweakable setting under about:config. And we've talked about that little amazing zone of configuration many times. But you put about:config in the URL, and then you need to use a search term because there are so many options. But browser.sessionstore.interval is the item. And it's in number of milliseconds per refresh. It defaults to 15 seconds. And what it must be doing, and this is what's sort of disturbing, is that apparently they just didn't try to optimize this at all. If they had done any optimization, they would, for example, ask the question first: Has anything changed in the last 15

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seconds? Apparently they don't. And so they just take a snapshot of the entire context of the browser and write it down into your session profile. And not only Firefox, but Chrome does the same thing. In fact, I think Chrome was even a little - it was writing a little more.

Now, this was of huge interest to many people. I have an SSD-based laptop, and we know that the Windows 7 machine that I recently built has an SSD as its system drive, with spinning drives in a RAID as backup. And so I am absolutely going to do what I think is a better solution, and that is, at least for Firefox - and I haven't explored this for Chrome. But for Firefox, under application data > Mozilla > Firefox directory, there's a profiles.ini. It's a short little INI file, about seven lines, and one of the lines is IsRelative. You need to set that from a one to a zero, and then there's a path where you can specify where these profiles are written. Just change that to a spinning drive, that is, you know, not your system C, typically, SSD, but I normally use Z or something, like something at the other end of the alphabet as my archival storage. And so I will absolutely create another non-write-fatigable place for my browsers to write their profiles. And I will also hope that they get smarter about this because it's just crazy how much data that they're writing constantly.

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