Repairing the Windows Boot Menu

This guide shows how to repair the Windows boot menu where the PC contains either Windows 7 or Windows Vista and a copy of Windows XP. This guide will help you fix the following 2 scenarios:

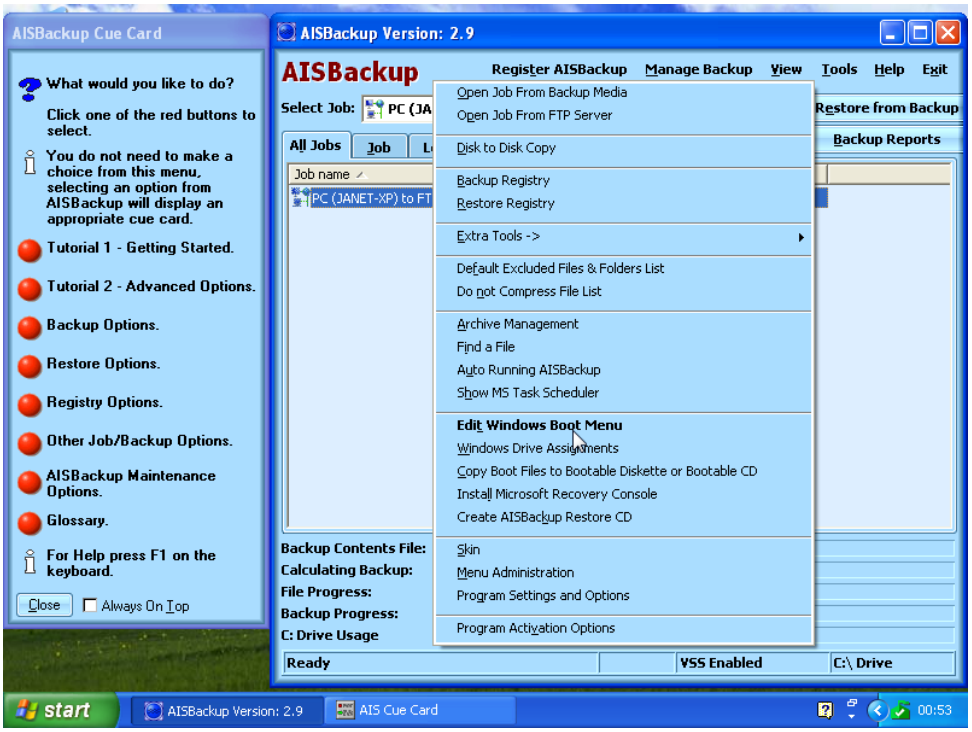
1. After installing Windows XP to make a dual boot system you can no longer boot into Windows 7 or Windows Vista.
2. You disconnected the Windows 7 (or Vista) disk prior to installing Windows XP to a second disk drive because you wanted Windows XP to install as the 'C:' drive. After reconnecting the Windows 7 disk the PC only boots into Windows 7, if you disconnect the Windows 7 disk the PC boots XP.

Scenario 1: The Pc only boots Windows XP.

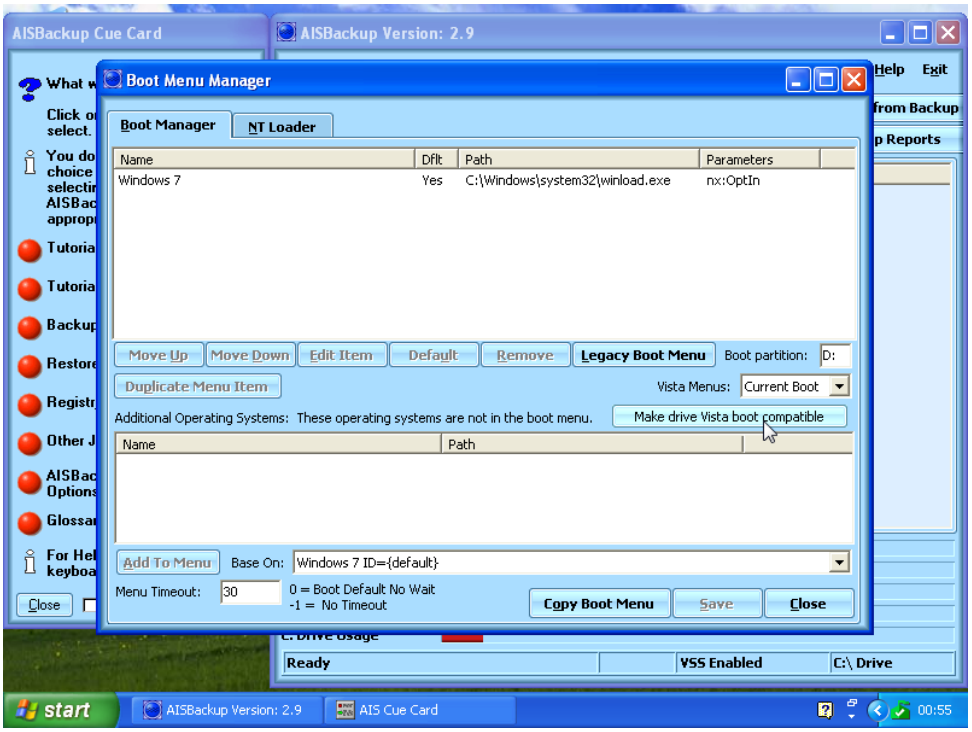
This problem usually occurs when you install Windows XP on a Windows 7 or Windows Vista PC to make a dual boot system. Windows XP does not understand the Windows 7 boot mechanism and writes its own boot code to the boot partition.

To repair this problem we need to reinstate the Windows 7 boot partition and then add Windows XP to the Windows 7 boot menu.

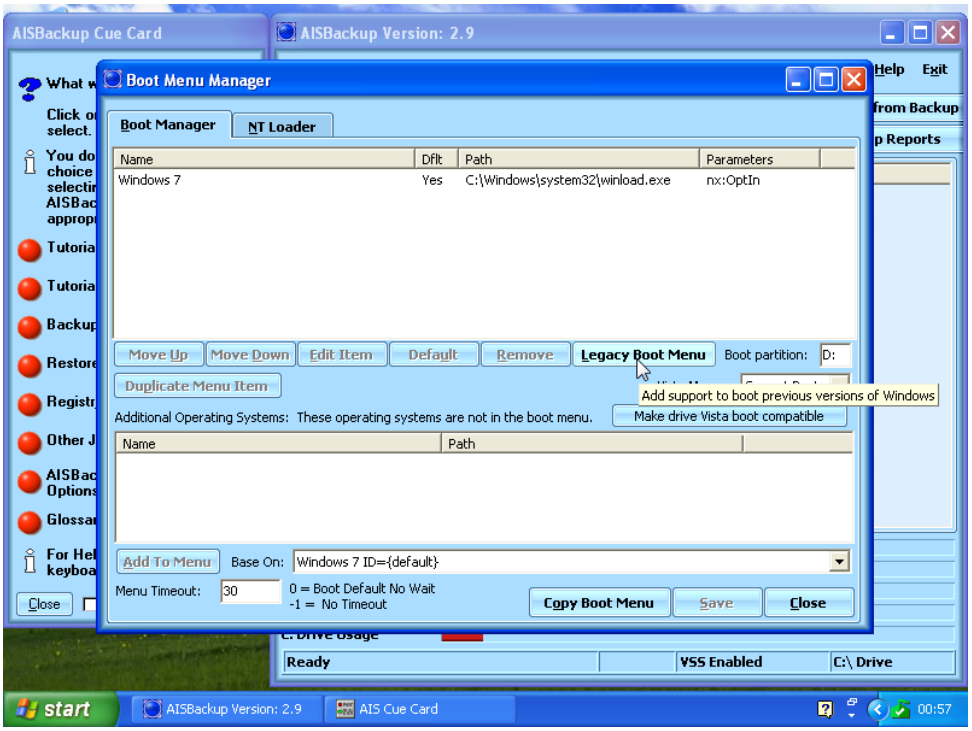
Start AISBackup and select the menu option **Tools / Edit Windows Boot Menu**.



Select the **Boot Manager** tab then click **Make drive Vista boot compatible**, confirm the changes.



Click the **Legacy Boot Menu** button then click **Save** to save the changes.



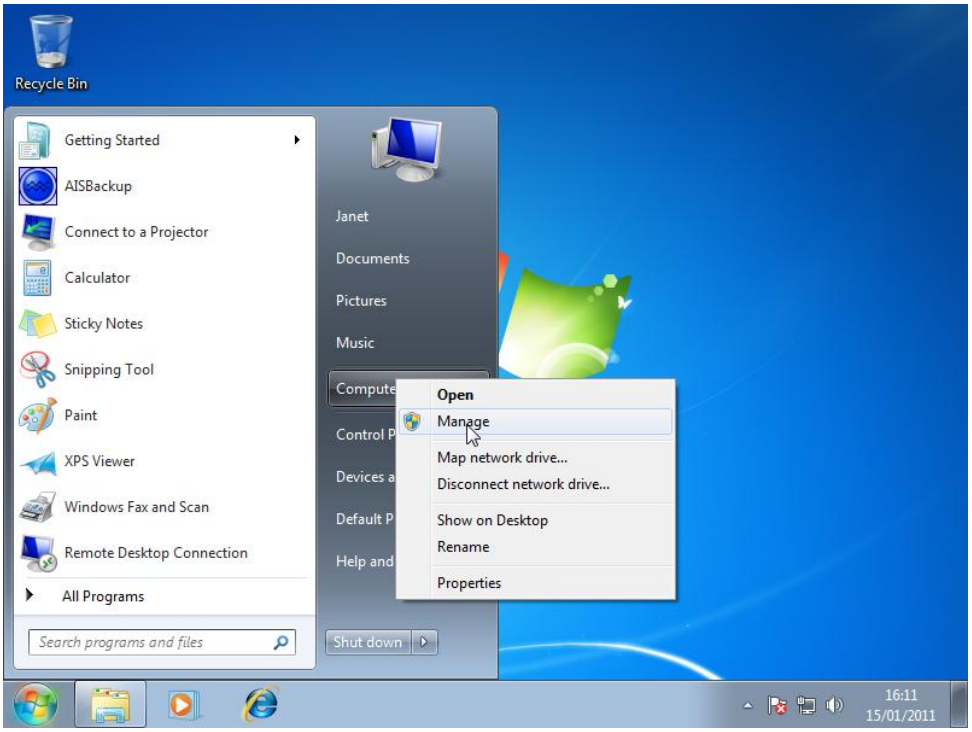
Close down AISBackup and reboot, you should now be presented with a choice between Windows 7 / Vista and Windows XP.

Scenario 2: The PC only boots Windows 7.

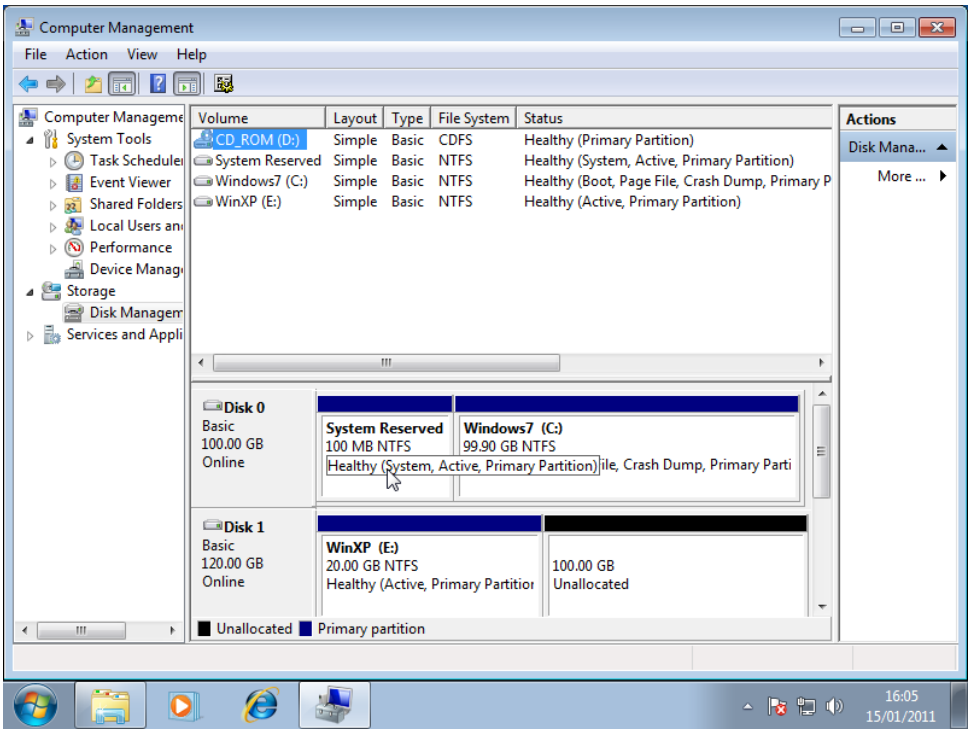
This problem is because either the XP boot files are corrupt in the Windows boot partition or more likely the boot files for Windows XP are not in the Windows 7 boot partition.

As we know that Windows XP does boot when the Windows 7 disk is disconnected it is safe to assume that the boot files on the Windows XP disk are okay. We will start by copying the Windows XP boot files to the Windows 7 boot partition.

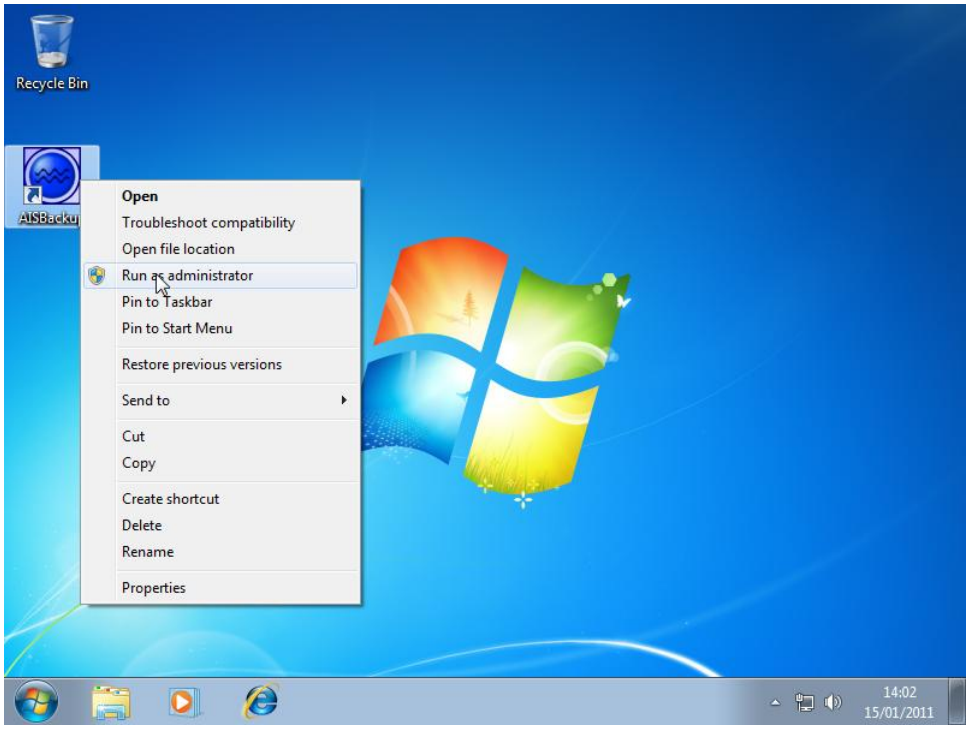
The boot partition on a Windows 7 system is usually a 100MB hidden partition, however we will check this as the Windows Vista boot partition is usually on the C: drive. Click the Start button then right click **Computer** and choose the menu option **Manage**.



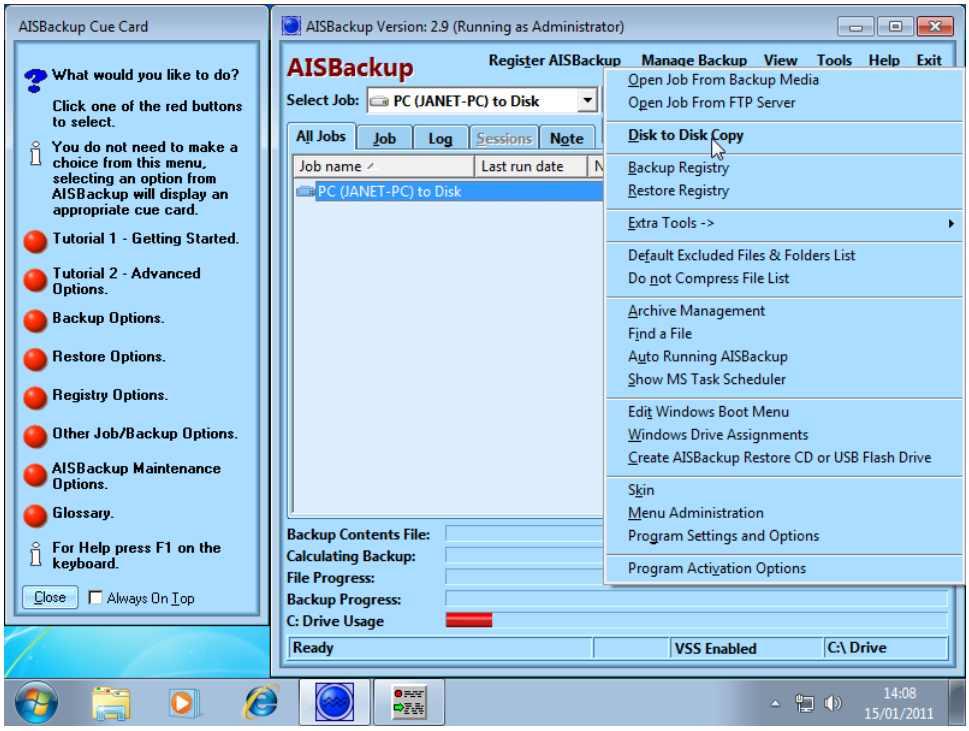
Expand **Storage** then click **Disk Management.** You are looking for the *System, Active, Primary Partition*, as shown below. On this Windows 7 PC it is the 100MB hidden partition. Remember this partition as we are going to copy the Windows XP boot files to it.



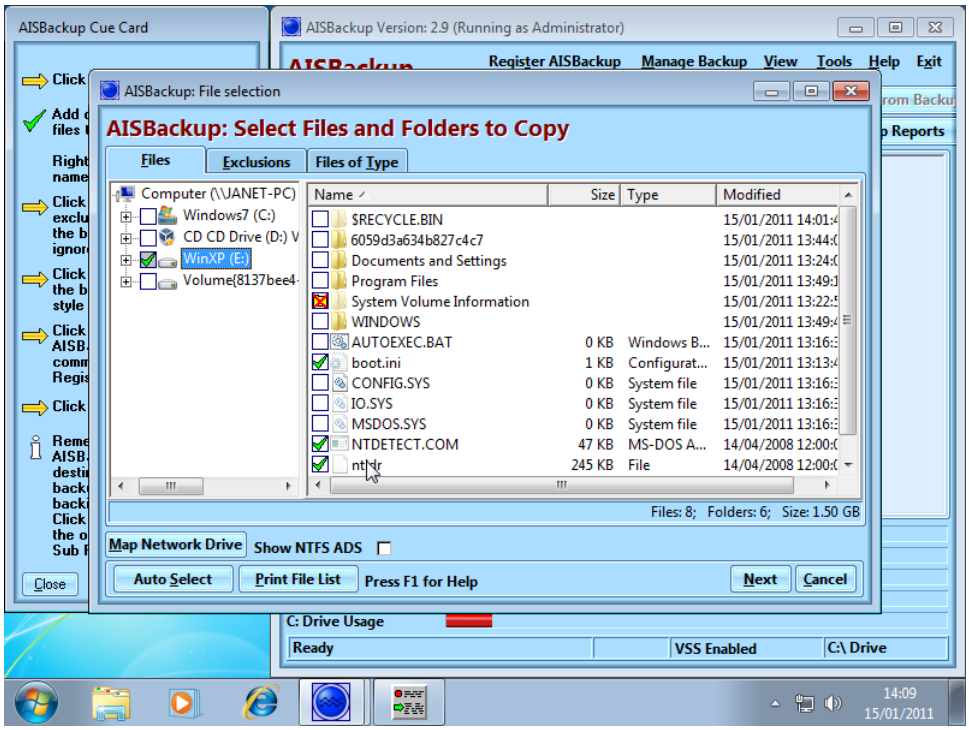
Start AISBackup by using **right click / Run as administrator** option**.**



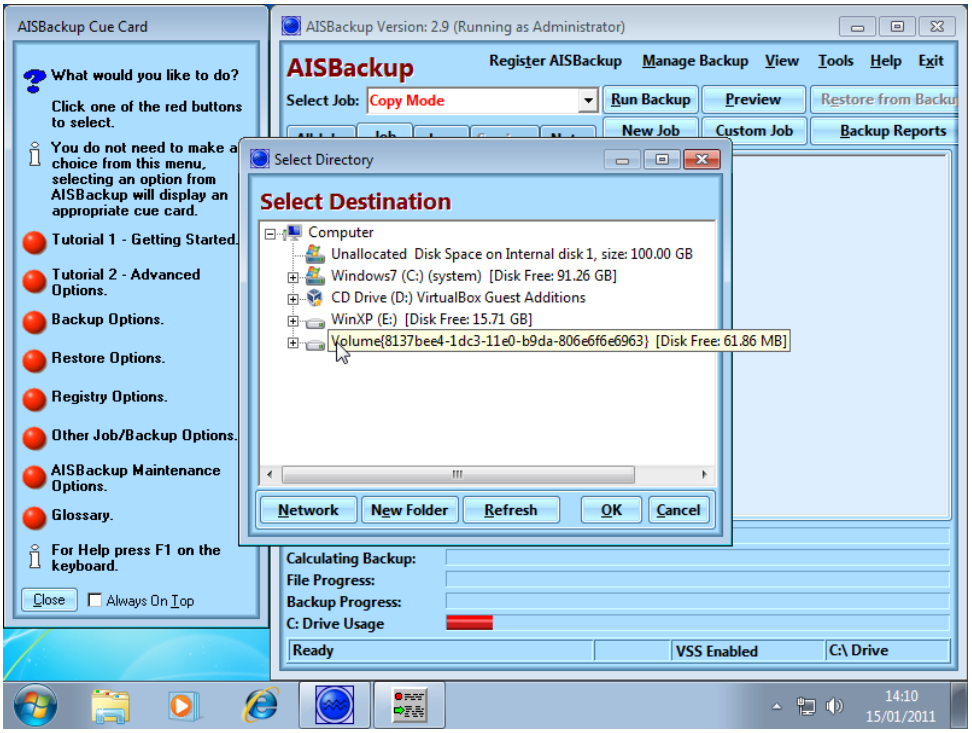
Select the menu option **Tools / Disk to Disk copy**.



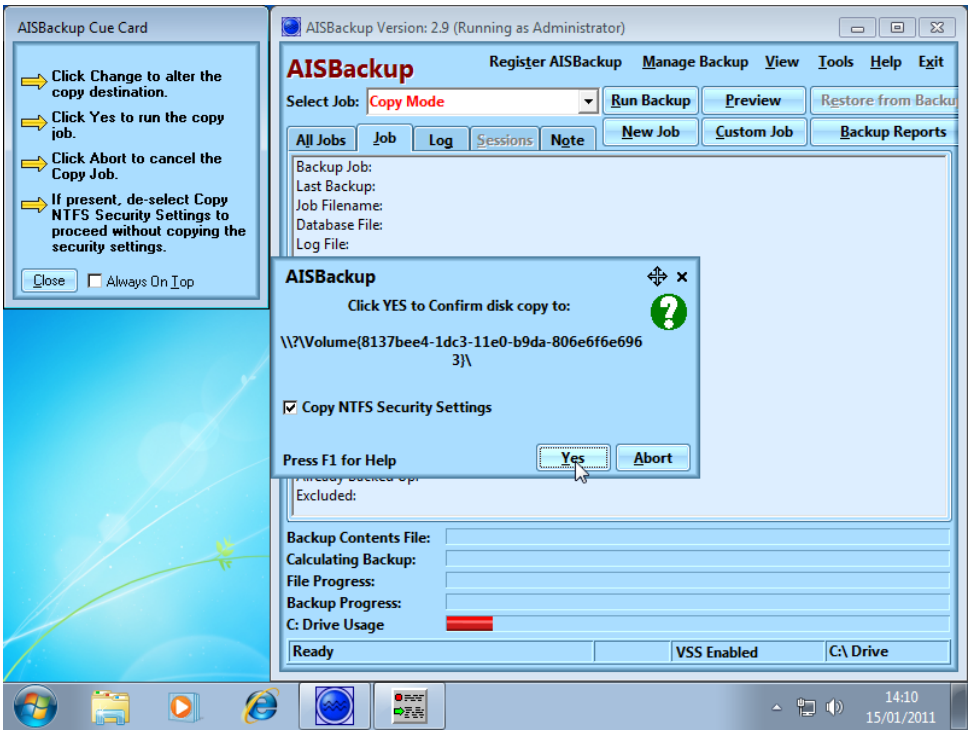
Locate the Windows XP drive then select the 3 files *boot.ini, ntdetect.com* and *ntldr*. After selecting the files click **Next**.



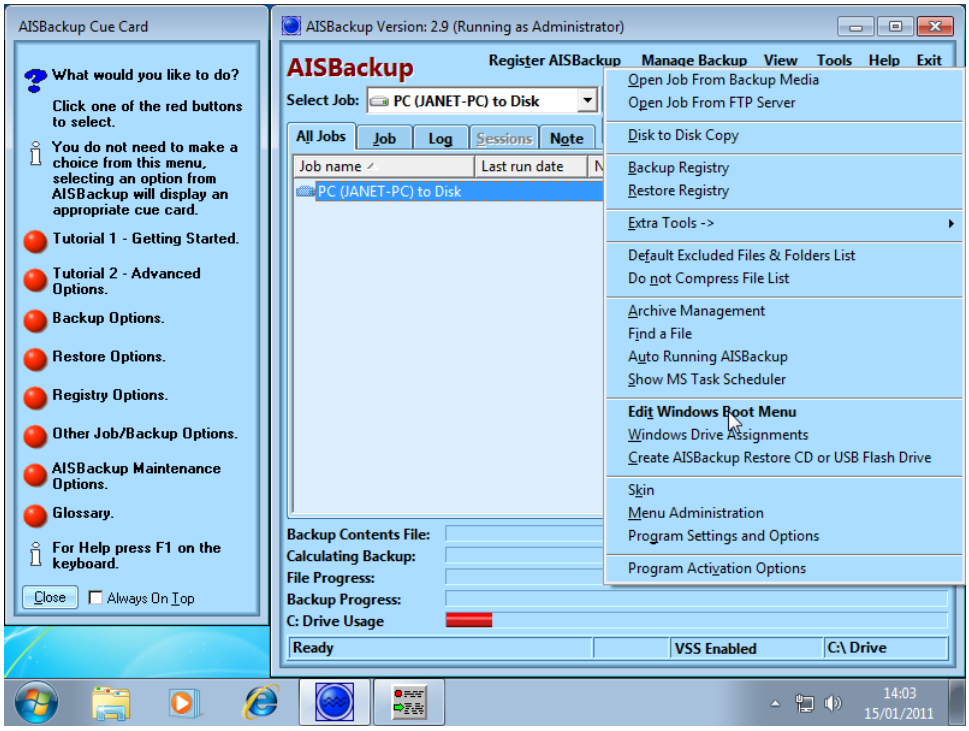
Select the boot partition identified, above, as the destination, then click **OK**.



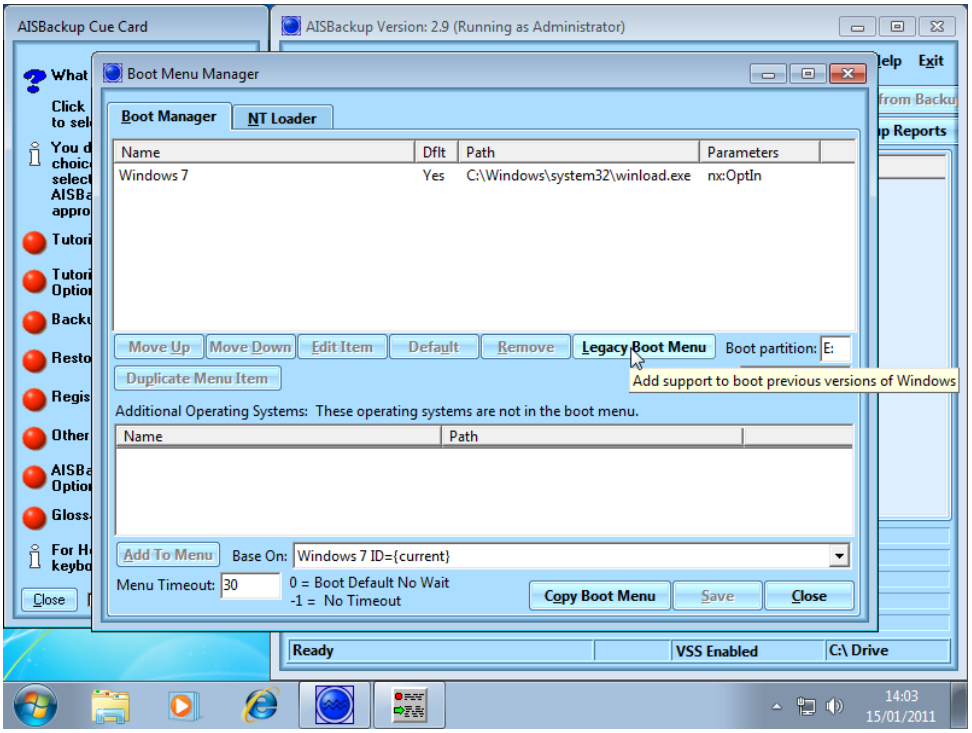
Confirm the copy by clicking **Yes**.



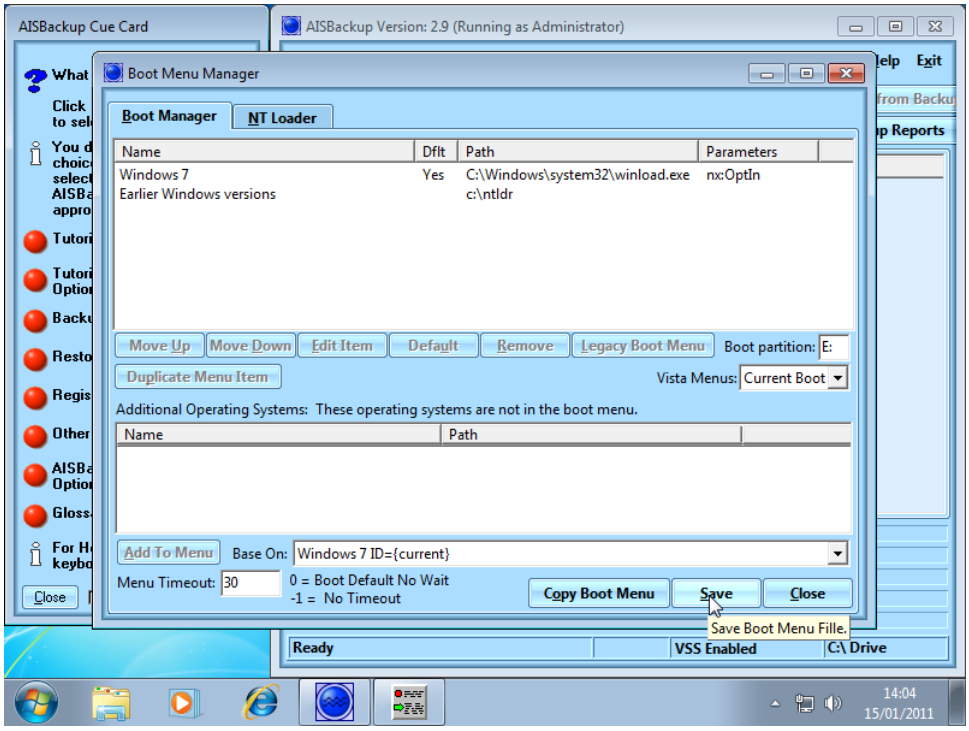
Start the boot menu option using the menu option **Tools / Edit Windows Boot Menu**



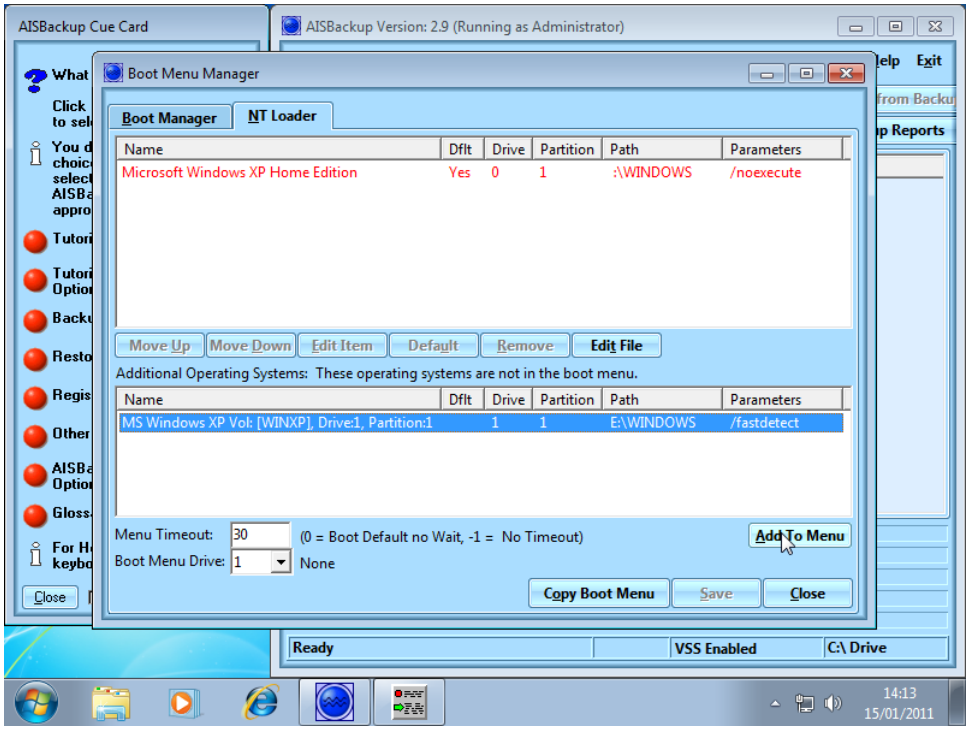
To enable booting operating system's prior to Windows Vista click the button **Legacy Boot Menu**.



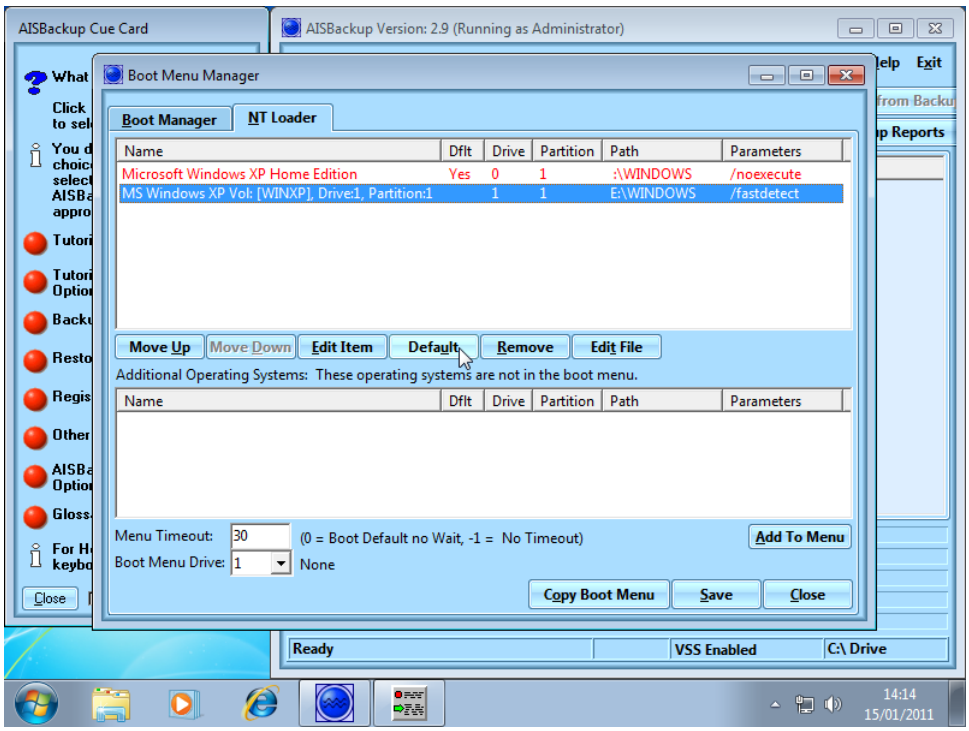
To save this change click **Save**.



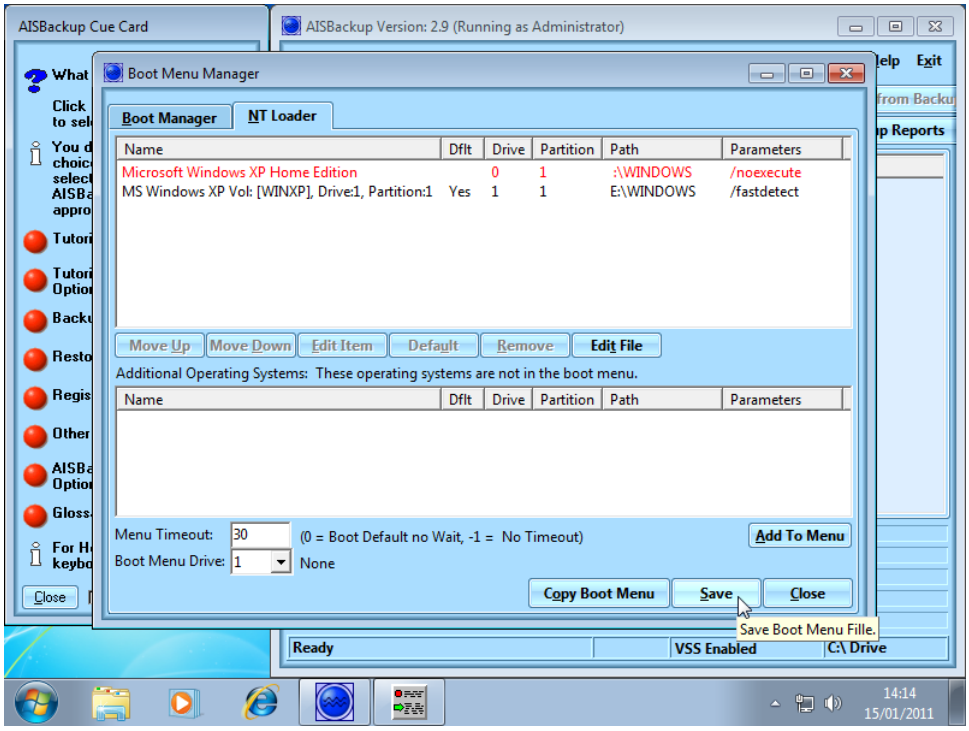
Select the tab **NT Loader**, you may notice a boot menu entry in red as shown below, this is because the disk has 'moved' after reconnecting the Windows 7 disk. There is another entry in the lower pane that shows the 'new' location of Windows XP, select this entry then click **Add to Menu**.

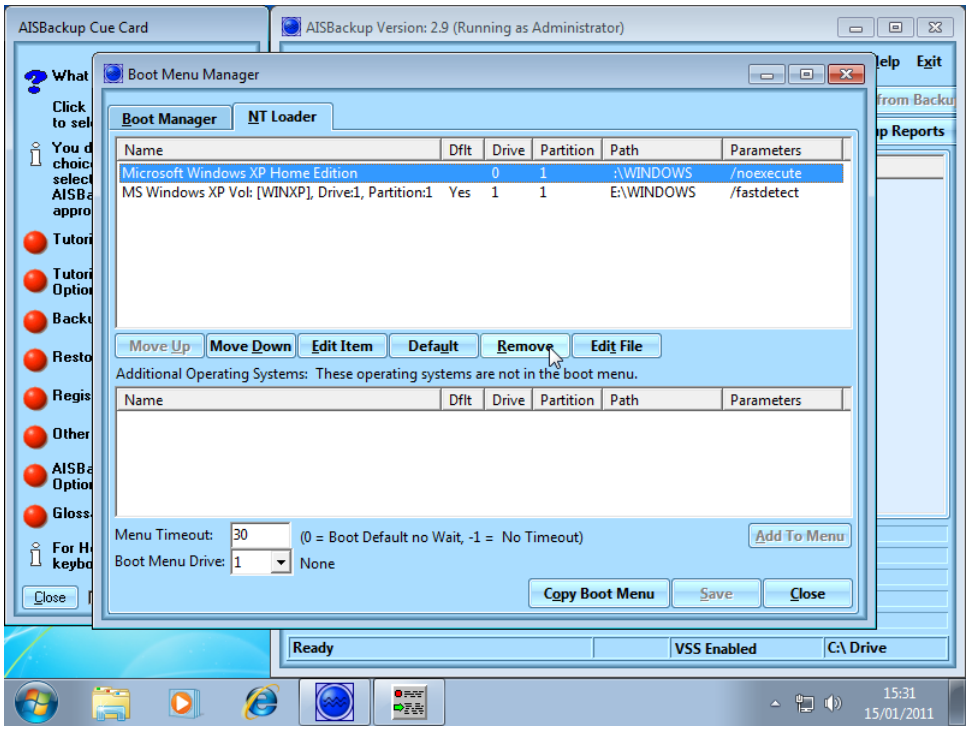


For now we will leave both entries in the boot menu as it is possible for some PC's to use a different disk number during the boot process to what AISBackup detects. However most of the time AISBackup is correct so select the second menu entry and click **Default**.



To save the changes click **Save**.



Close AISBackup and restart the PC, test the Windows XP boot menu and remember which menu option successfully boots Windows. The incorrect menu item will show an error message stating that a file called *hal.dll* is missing.

Restart the PC into Windows 7 and restart the AISBackup boot menu editor. Select **NT Loader**, select the incorrect menu item then click **Remove** followed by **Save**.