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Adam? ... is there a reason your laptop is in the fridge?

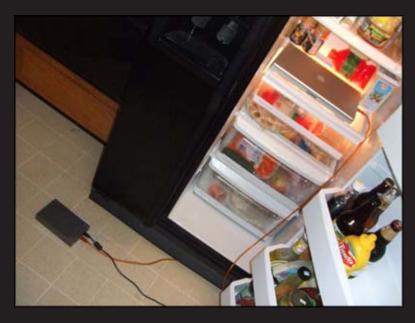
D READ A few times that bringing the temperature of a failing drive down will increase its reliability long enough to salvage important files. When the drive in my trusty Powerbook decided one day last week to stop booting and make horrible clicking sounds, I decided to test the theory.

Not feeling particularly motivated to dissect the Powerbook, since that would void the warranty I planned to invoke to get the drive replaced, I set it on a relatively uncluttered shelf of the fridge when I got home from work. Ten minutes later, I took it out, and the drive booted like new. I copied my iPhoto libraries to an external drive and once that was successful, begun the copying of the only other important file on the drive: a giant iMovie project (~ 30 GB). About halfway through, the drive had warmed up, the copy progress bar had stalled and the clicking was back.

Fair enough. Back in the fridge, for 20 minutes this time. I took it out, booted up (painlessly), hooked it up to the external drive and started the copy again. This time it made it to 75% before the clicking took hold. At this point I considered going after the video clips that made up the iMovie project in small batches, but decided I didn't feel like doing that if it wasn't absolutely necessary. I also didn't want to play guess and check to discover the ideal length of time to chill a powerbook, so I devised a devious plot.

This plot consisted of cooling the Powerbook down again, carting my external drive to the kitchen, booting the laptop in the fridge, beginning the copy, and closing the door. Success! I share this experience with you, the Internet, in the hopes that it is useful.

Adam Kempa works as a web developer in Ann Arbor, Michigan (Yes, people still live in Michigan). His nerdy musings intermittently appear at *kempa.com*.





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