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storage device and the identity of the selected operating system or the retrieved installation characteristics and rule set for the operating system to be installed indicates that the selected operating system to be installed is an updated version of the operating system that already exists in an existing partition on the data storage device and where one or more files are required from the existing operating system, the controlling means enables the computer processor to create a new partition and copy the required files to the new partition and install the operating system in the new partition.

33. The computer-readable medium as set forth in claim **29** wherein the controlling means enable the computer processor to generate a user alert when the two installation

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characteristic sets differ by at least one predetermined storage characteristic.

34. The computer-readable medium as set forth in claim **29** wherein prior to modifying the storage characteristics of the data storage device, the controlling means enable the computer processor to:

determine a strategy for modifying number, size and boundaries of partitions of the data storage device storage device based on a set of predetermined weighting factors and parameters required to install the operating system properly on a data storage device.

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