

Troubleshooting *SpotOff*

Installation Problems

Please review the installation procedures in this manual before assuming something has gone wrong with your installation.

Installation problems typically occur in the following situations:

1. **A version of SpotOff is already installed, or for some reason directories have been created using the SpotOff name.** The installer will not over write any programs or create any directories if they already exist. If such items exist, they must either be deleted or renamed before SpotOff will be installed onto your hard drive. Running the installer over an existing installation will reset the permissions of the SpotOff binaries if they have, for some reason, become corrupt.
2. **There are missing applications or directories.** This is rare, but it can happen if a system administrator is restricting access to certain directories or applications on your system. In such cases, the system administrator will need to restore these directories or files to your system.
3. **Your system is out of hard disk space, or it doesn't have enough left to install SpotOff.** If there's insufficient disk space, items must be removed to provide SpotOff with enough space to install.
4. **Your system doesn't have enough available memory to install SpotOff.** For this problem to occur, you either need to increase the amount of memory in your system, or terminate as many applications as possible and attempt a *SpotOff* re-install. Please see the chapter 1 of this manual for system requirements.
5. **Administrator I.D. and password are unknown.** *SpotOff* installs and operates using administrative access levels. In order to be installed and operate, these accounts and passwords are required. The only solution in this case is to contact the person responsible for administering your system and have them give you this information or do the installation for you. Typically, most individuals are the administrators of their own systems, but this may not be true in a corporate environment.
6. **Some applications and/or directories install, but others fail.** This condition can occur if the previous installation was terminated by either a power failure, a forced exit, or a partial removal of some components. In

this case, it's best to follow the procedures in chapter 1 for removing *SpotOff* and attempt a complete re-install.

SpotOff Problems

Using *SpotOff* is typically trouble free, but there are things that can happen that make it function incorrectly. *SpotOff* problems are typically created by one of the following problems:

- **The user doesn't have administrative authority to use *SpotOff*.** *SpotOff* requires administrative access, and before launching, most systems except OS X10.5 (Leopard) will request an administrative ID and password (typically the administrative user). If the user doesn't have authorization to launch *SpotOff*, they will not be able to do anything other than check the status of Spotlight. The only solution is for the user to obtain administrative access for their system and re-install *SpotOff*.
- **Spotlight won't retrieve any information after *SpotOff* has disabled Spotlight.** *SpotOff* disables Spotlight, so this isn't a problem, this is what it does.
- **Spotlight won't retrieve any information after *SpotOff* has re-enabled Spotlight.** After *SpotOff* re-enables Spotlight, it honors the "privacy" settings set by the user for Spotlight in *System Preferences*. Ensure that drives, volumes, or folders have not been placed in the privacy section of Spotlight privacy settings. Additionally, if indexing had been manually modified by a command line utility such as *mdutil*, *SpotOff* will re-enable the indexing. This will cause Spotlight to start a re-indexing session during this time, and Spotlight will not be available until it's complete. This will usually be seen when the Spotlight icon in the menu bar is accessed.
- **The permissions of *SpotOff* have been modified.** If there is a permissions problem with the application itself, *SpotOff* will start, but any time the user attempts to use the "Start" or "Stop" buttons the operation will fail. This can be corrected by re-running the installer in the *SpotOff* folder. Do not copy *SpotOff* from one location to the next because such an operation will usually reset the permissions of *SpotOff* making it unusable. If the user wants to use *SpotOff* from another location (such as their desktop), it's best to create an alias of the *SpotOff* application and copy or move the alias to the location.
- **A dialog appears stating that program files are missing or corrupt.** *SpotOff* relies on several files and applications to be in the right place and/or readable. If this error occurs, it either indicates some of the binaries that *SpotOff* uses are missing or they have become corrupt. The most

important of these is a binary called "mdutil" (full path and name: /usr/bin/mdutil). This often implies either a drive is having problems or someone or some application has been tampering with the file structures in the core operating system. These conditions imply there is a system problem of some type. The only option *SpotOff* allows in this situation is to terminate the application.

Troubleshooting Spot-O-Meter

Installation Problems

Spot-O-Meter does not have any special installation requirements. It is either copied directly out of the DMG file (for the free version) or installed with the *SpotOff* application. About the only type of installation problem we can foresee is if a user works in an environment where they do not have authorization to install or remove software from their systems. In this case, the installation will need to be done by the system administrator.

Spot-O-Meter Problems

Spot-O-Meter rarely has problems, but some people, unaware of how it operates **think** it's having problems. About the only things that could cause *Spot-O-Meter* to have problems are the following:

1. The system is malfunctioning.
2. The system resources are exhausted either because of too little available RAM, too little space on a drive, or some applications are using too many resources.
3. The system has been abnormally configured.

None of the items listed above are *Spot-O-Meter* problems. They are problems external to *Spot-O-Meter* and must be corrected by the user, an administrator, or (if needed) repair personnel.

Some of the things that may confuse a user about *Spot-O-Meter* are the following:

- **When Spot-O-Meter starts, it initially scales all the way up and down the scale, then all indicators turn black.** This is normal. *Spot-O-Meter* scales all the way up and back down to signify that the meter is active.

Once active, all indicators may remain black until Spotlight activity becomes detectable. If Spotlight is already active, *Spot-O-Meter* will indicate it.

- **The Indicator bar reads “Inactive”.** *Spot-O-Meter* must be started by clicking on the *Start* button before it begins any measuring. Please review the manual.
- **Once active, *Spot-O-Meter* indicators remain black all the time.** This indicates there is little or no Spotlight indexing occurring. Typically, *Spot-O-Meter* will indicate a few green bars once in a while as Spotlight does periodic indexing, and then show considerably more activity when a full indexing session begins. Spotlight can be configured to ignore indexing some volumes, drives, or folders via *System Preferences* by placing the items in the *Privacy* section of *Spotlight Preferences*. If all drives and/or volumes have been placed in the privacy section, indexing will never occur until some of the items are removed. If all media on a system are removed from indexing, *Spot-O-Meter* will never indicate any activity at all.
- ***Spot-O-Meter* has all black indicators indicating no indexing, but Spotlight says it's indexing the system and the user can't access Spotlight.** Spotlight is a wonderful product, but unfortunately it has some bugs. We would advise waiting a few minutes to see if activity shows up on the indicator bars of *Spot-O-Meter*, and if none occurs, reboot the system. We've seen this occur on some systems after Spotlight has completed indexing, but it won't allow the user to access Spotlight. If you have *SpotOff*, it can sometimes correct this by deactivating Spotlight (off), waiting a few minutes, and then activating Spotlight (on).
- ***Spot-O-Meter* indicator bars are active all the time.** This indicates Spotlight is active. Spotlight indexing will occur any time another drive (such as a back up drive) is added to the system and it hasn't been excluded from indexing via Spotlight preferences in *System Preferences*. *Spot-O-Meter* cannot control indexing, it can only report if it's happening. It is not unusual for indexing on a large drive with a lot of data to take several hours.

More information on *SpotOff* and *Spot-O-Meter* may be obtained, if available, by checking the SCSC web site at:

<http://www.scsc-online.com>