

Can't reinstall SP4 – file lock on "atapi.sys"

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Hi folks,

I need help badly with the following problem:

A few weeks ago my Windows 2000 (SP4) installation suddenly didn't boot any more (it bluescreened after or during driver loading) and after some unsuccessful troubleshooting I was faced with the options of either a clean re-installation of Windows, or trying the "repair" option of the Win2k installation CD. I chose the second one, terrified at the thought of also re-installing some 200 programs & apps after a clean Win2k install.

Well, Windows setup replaced some files, presumably checked the integrity of others and the system registry, and my Windows was up and running again. However, it had obviously reverted to the original, pre-Service Pack state. I tried reinstalling SP4, but Service Pack Setup stopped midway through saying that the "atapi.sys" file was in use and that I should resume after closing all apps using it. However it wouldn't resume under any circumstances, it kept repeating this error message.

I read on the Net that this problem sometimes occurs with virtual drive emulators installed on the system, like Daemon Tools or Alcohol. I stopped and uninstalled Alcohol and CloneCD, then after reboot tried to install SP4 again. No luck – same error. Then I tried that in safe mode, when no 3rd party drivers are supposed to interfere – didn't work either.

I tried deleting atapi.sys so that the SP4 setup could copy it's newer version without any problems – to no avail: Windows seems to restore the file out of some driver cache and the file lock is still in place.

I also tried tinkering with the service pack's "ini" file and removing references to atapi.sys, so that everything else would be updated – then I could overwrite atapi.sys with the newer version myself afterwards. That didn't work either, since Windows checks the integrity of the "ini" file before performing the SP installation. (It's not a simple checksum either, it's done using the crypto API.)

Well, what do I need the latest updates anyway, you might ask?...

It's because some software I need to use for my work (either some that stopped functioning correctly after the Windows "repair", or new ones I need to install now) require a newer version of Microsoft Setup (instmsi) or simply SP4 itself. I wouldn't have suspected that, but yes, Macromedia Studio needs the latest Instmsi, so does the latest Photoshop, and not even Cisco's VPN client doesn't work without SP4.

Oh and by the way, I did manage to install SP2 instead, but when I tried SP3 the same problem occurred again...

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Does anyone have a clue as to how I could bypass this file lock problem and update my system?
I'd be awfully grateful for _any_ suggestions...

TIA,

Andrei

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