

## Tech Tip #3: Repairing a Failed License (and how to avoid it)

Overview: How to detect a failed license and repair it; using deactivation for hardware changes

Sometimes, license issues (like the Status 161 we looked at in the last Tech Tip) are created by licenses getting deactivated. To understand this, let's first review a few key license topics.

PSQL licenses can be installed to a single computer at a time. This is controlled by Actian's Electronic Licensing System (ELS), a web-based tracking system that enforces the licensing.

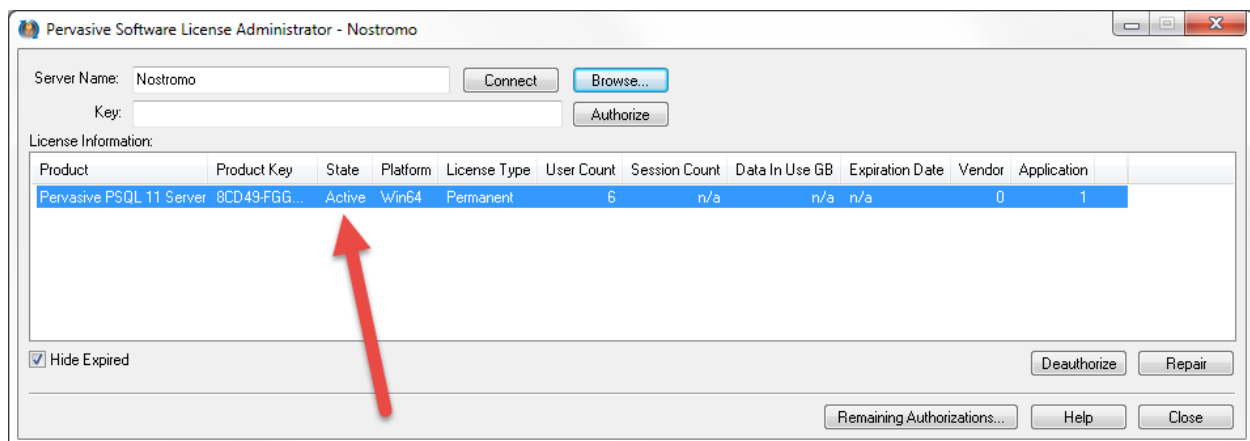
The ELS system tracks a computer's hardware fingerprint (the combination of CPU, memory, network card, hard disk, and other factors) and ensures that someone is not trying to copy the license to new hardware once it is activated. This process, as well as a complete list of data collected, is explained in more detail here:

<http://www.pervasive.com/database/Home/Support/PSQLAuthorization.aspx>

If the ELS system detects that a computer's hardware has changed, the system will mark the license as *"Failed Validation"* and start to notify you via the **Notification Viewer** icon (in the system tray), via the Pervasive Event Log (PVSU.LOG file), and via the Windows Event Log about the problem. If nothing is done about that after approximately 14 days in the *Failed Validation* state, the license state will change to *Disabled*, and the system will cease to function from that point forward.

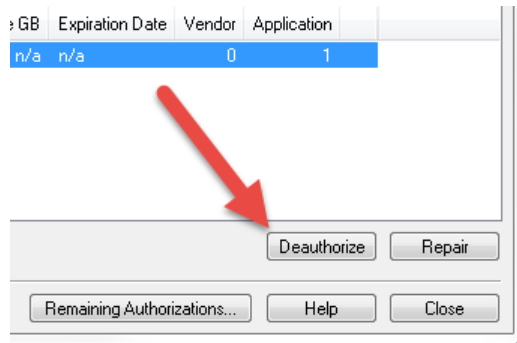
Sadly, many people do not monitor their servers closely enough to see these warnings, and they may not always remember that a hardware change was made two weeks later, so they think the licenses "just break." However, that is not really true – there are plenty of warnings, we just don't see them unless we are looking for them.

If you find yourself in this position, you can repair the license yourself with the **Pervasive License Administrator**. First, launch the tool to get to the following screen:



The *State* column will indicate whether the license is *Active*, *Failed Validation*, or *Disabled*. If the license is not active, you can highlight the license (by clicking on that line) and click the *Repair* button in the lower right corner. You can repair your own license up to 5 times without Actian's involvement. After that, you will need to contact them at 800-BTRIEVE for help.

To avoid this problem in the first place, you should always deactivate a license before making any hardware changes, and the reactivate it afterwards. To deactivate a license, start the **Pervasive License Administrator**, highlight the license, and click *Deauthorize*:



This will remove the license from the server and from Actian's ELS system. After you have made your hardware changes in the environment, authorize the license again (just as you did when you installed it the first time), and you'll avoid the entire mess. You can do this process 30 times on your own. To see how many more times you can do this, highlight a license and click *Remaining Authorizations....* Contact Actian at 800-BTRIEVE if you run out and need more.

If you constantly run into this because of changes in a virtual server environment, you may wish to consider the Actian PSQL Vx Server 11 license model instead. This model tracks only a server name and virtual MAC address, instead of the entire hardware fingerprint. At the same time, however, PSQL Vx uses a different licensing model – tracking *Sessions* and *Data Size In Use* instead of *Users*, so estimating your license needs is much more difficult. Contact Goldstar Software for pricing and other information about the PSQL Vx product line, or see this page for more information:

<http://www.goldstarsoftware.com/psql11vx.asp>