

1. What platform does SPS run on?

The SPS system is cross-platform and very portable. SPS runs on all Win32 versions and a large number of UNIX based operating systems. If SPS is not already running on your specific choice of operating system, it is fairly simple to port SPS over to your environment.

2. Is SPS really that portable? What about our specific platform?

Yes, SPS is extremely portable as it abstracts all of the OS specific issues away from the main body of the code enabling it to be portable across Web servers and operating systems. Any platform that can run Perl and a CGI compliant Web server can have SPS ported to it easily.

3. What is the programming technology base for SPS?

SPS was written in the Perl programming language to take advantages of Perl's portability, runtime interpreting and advanced dynamic data structure capabilities. The code is pre-compiled before it is released to clients. For Win32 releases the code is packed into executables.

4. What is the database for SPS?

The database is a custom implementation that is roughly modeled on Relational Database Management Systems but allows arbitrary structure support to handle the complexity of the final documents. This custom database has been optimized to be extremely fast and robust.

5. What is the Web server technology for SPS?

SPS can utilize any CGI compliant Web server for communication, including Microsoft ISS and Apache. This allows the maximum flexibility in setting up SPS on various platforms.

6. What Web browser technology is supported by SPS?

SPS generates pages for a wide variety of browsers. Specifically, SPS works with any HTML 3.0 compliant browser with basic JavaScript support. This allows SPS to support Internet Explorer 4.0+, Netscape 4.0+ (some Netscape 6.x versions have JavaScript problems), Mozilla and some of the lesser known browsers like Konquer and Opera.

7. Can SPS be customized to suit my organization's environment?

Yes. SPS allows for a huge amount of customizations for the visual appearances of the system, its behavior and how it interconnects to other systems. This allows SPS to be customized to suit any organization's environment.

8. Can SPS be integrated into our Web portal?

Yes. SPS can exist as an extension to any existing Web portal. It supports this integration by dynamically generating users and automatically logging them into the system. It can also jump directly to any specific Template within the system.

9. Can SPS use our authentication system?

Yes. SPS works with a large number of different authentication system interfaces to provide dynamic user generation support and automatic logins. SPS can be easily extended to meet your integration needs if your authentication system isn't already supported.

10. Can SPS use the data from our system?

Yes. SPS can connect directly to a large number of databases using methods such as ODBC or handle time based extracts in formats such as CSV or XML as well as other different popular protocols and file formats. Data can also be exported from SPS back into other systems. Custom interfaces can also be created to accommodate client specific feeds or special data extraction issues.

11. Is SPS difficult to install and/or upgrade?

No, SPS is quite simple to install/upgrade and has standard installers for each OS. One line commands are all that are required to initialize the database or to upgrade it from an existing implementation. Medea provides all copies of Perl and the modules that are needed for installation and can also provide any onsite assistance required for a given platform.

12. How do I change the configuration of an installed system?

SPS contains a large number of very simple configuration files that are responsible for customizing the system for specific installations. When an install is created, it is client specific and includes all of the known client config file changes. Medea maintains all of these changes in specific repositories and can easily update them to reflect client modifications should clients choose to make their own changes.

13. Does a system administrator need to install new Templates into SPS?

No, the Templates in SPS are independent from the system. Any new Templates are packaged in zip files and distributed by either email, FTP or CD Rom. Any person designated as a SPS content administrator can use the SPS interface to install, update and delete the current Templates in the system as well as make duplicate Templates or change the arrangement of the Template hierarchy. Marketing Personnel responsible for handling content within Templates generally manage these tasks. Assistance from system administrators is not required.

14. How much is involved in the ongoing administration of the SPS system?

SPS is easy to use for both the users and administrators and every effort has been made to reduce the system administration to an absolute minimum. However, there is always a need for some system administration and for these tasks a trained system administrator is required. The system administrator should have a technical background and understand the underlying principles of modern operating systems and have some specific experience with client/server communications and Internet technologies.

15. Should SPS run on its own hardware?

Yes, Medea recommends this approach as it reduces the possibility of any inter-software issues and simplifies the installation process. Also recommended is having a test machine available to ensure that any integration issues are caught during integration testing and do not affect the final production environment. Please note that there are no limits to the number of individual SPS installations that can be installed and running on the same machine

16. Can SPS be load balanced?

Yes. It can be spread across multiple machines. However, each SPS instance is required to point to the same database to allow for the sharing of content and session information. Some implementations have chosen to put the database on a separate machine to reduce the issues with having a single point-of-failure.

In some environments, it may make more sense to partition the users across different SPS installations. This helps to ensure that the SPS databases remain fairly small and run fast.

17. We have less than 10 users. Can we host SPS locally?

Yes. SPS can run on hardware as small as a PC running either Linux or Windows. It can even be installed on laptop computers.

18. Can SPS be put on the Web?

Yes. SPS can be put directly on the Web or Intranets, and can be accessed from any other Web-based application. We have insured that all possible security issues have been addressed.

19. Is SPS difficult to backup?

No. All SPS database files are contained within one directory and can easily be transferred between similar SPS versions.