((•x•)) WILDLIFE ACOUSTICS

Wildlife Acoustics Bulletin
TECHNICAL SUPPORT

How to Minimize SD Card Issues with Song Meter Family of Recorders

(SM4, SM4 TS, SM4BAT, Mini, Mini Bat, Micro)

Dear Song Meter Customer,

This bulletin is intended to communicate best practices to avoid SD card issues on your Song Meter recorder, including missing recordings, corrupted cards, or cards going "dirty" resulting in failing to record mid-deployment. ("Dirty" cards are described in more detail below.)

Update your firmware

We have recently updated the firmware of the SM4 family of recorders to 2.4.0. This update significantly improves SD card reliability for SM4, SM4BAT FS and SM4 TS recorders. This will help prevent the above mentioned issues, particularly using SanDisk cards. Additionally, we recently updated the Mini/Mini Bat/Micro firmware to 3.0. Again, this improves card reliability, but also allows the firmware to communicate specific SD card errors to the app on the status screen. You can find the latest firmware here and will need to be logged into your Wildlife Acoustics web account to access them.

Format your cards before deployment

Always format your cards before deployment so they are in a fresh and error-free state. All Song Meter recorders include a built-in utility to perform this function. Formatting deletes your recordings. Transfer any data that you want to save to a computer before formatting the card

Make sure the cards are properly inserted into the card slot

New SD cards can fit very tightly in the SD card slot. This can make it difficult to insert the card properly and result in card errors. When cards are inserted properly, you will hear a distinct "click" indicating proper insertion. From this state,

you press the card again to eject and will hear another "click" as the mechanism releases. If the card is very tight, it might be difficult to tell what state the card is in. Pressing further might result in a "click", but it could be the ejection "click" and the card is just too tight to be ejected. If you are having issues or are unsure if the card is inserted correctly, simply insert and remove the card several times. The card should loosen up and it should become obvious when the card is inserted and seated properly.

Insert a second SD card in recorders that have more than one slot

If you have a Song Meter recorder that accepts more than one SD card, insert a second card. Even if you do not expect to need the extra capacity for a given deployment, the Song Meter will start recording on the second card if an issue arises with the first card.

A word on "dirty" cards

If a Song Meter recorder detects a problem with an SD card, it will mark the card as "dirty" and no longer record to that card in order to avoid corrupting recordings. The "dirty" state can happen if a recorder momentarily loses power or if the batteries drop below a specified voltage. This is very likely to occur during deployments that run the battery down to the point that they can no longer power the recorder properly. This is completely normal. You may also see empty WAV recordings when the batteries are run down fully. Recordings on "dirty" cards may still be transferred to your computer. Your computer will either repair the "dirty" state automatically or prompt you to do so. The "dirty" cards may be used again after they have been formatted using the built-in recorder utility.

We hope you find the above guidance useful. Please do not hesitate to contact us at support2021@wildlifeacoustics.com if you have any questions.

Happy recording!

The Wildlife Acoustics Technical Support Team