

Re: Asking about anti-virus programs

Source: <http://www.derkeiler.com/Newsgroups/microsoft.public.security/2003-09/1119.html>

From: Philip Herlihy (*foof8500_at_REMOVEherlihy.eu.com*)

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This is a useful summary from Microsoft:

<http://www.microsoft.com/security/protect/windowsxp/print.asp>

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#####
## PH, London ##
#####
Philip Herlihy wrote:
> I think you're doing enough to keep reasonably secure (but see no 2
> below). The key elements of self-protection are:
>
> 1) Run a decent antivirus (McAfee is fine) but keep it updated,
> weekly or so, with new DAT files. Check the "About" window
> occasionally to make sure your updating process is working!
>
> 2) Run a firewall. (Crucial). You can either enable the one
> built-in to XP (see Help) or download a free one (www.zonelabs.com or
> www.kerio.com). Most home users don't need more than the free
> versions available, but these days, everyone needs a firewall to
> prevent connections being made to your machine from outside. You
> haven't mentioned this, so you should look into it. You may have the
> McAfee one already on your machine?
>
> 3) Keep windows updated via www.microsoft.com/windowsupdate. Check
> once a week. There are also security updates for Office at
> http://office.microsoft.com/officeupdate - less critical (so far) but
> worth doing.
>
> 4) Don't do anything daft, like open an attachment unless you're
> sure (and noone can tell you how to be sure!) that it's safe. If in
> doubt, chuck it out. They'll send it again if it's important!
>
> That lot should keep you safe from all the main risks. I put a
> summary on my own website (overdue for a revamp) at
> www.WalthamSoft.com/gn/security/
>
> Apart from the major hazards of viruses and worms there is another
> "nuisance" layer: spyware, popups, spams of various kinds. Those
> McAfee popups are offering "protection" against things that are much
> less of a problem, and most people don't need this sort of utility.
> McAfee are infuriating in their aggressive selling methods so they
> may well be from McAfee. Of the perils they describe, only ActiveX
> is really a potential threat, and if you spend a bit of time studying
> the security settings in Internet Explorer you'll see how to make IE
> ask you for permission before downloading anything like that. Over
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> time, you'll become more confident in knowing what to accept or
> reject. If in doubt, chuck it out... If you want an extra utility
> to help you understand what's going on, and give you a bit more
> control, you might try www.PopUpCop.com, which I rather like. You
> don't need it, though.
>
> Anyway, good luck with the business, and sleep well!
>
>
>
> DEBORAH ADOPT wrote:
>> Any experts out there that can answer security protection
>> for my hp?
>>
>> Does anyone know about the difference between which anti-
>> virus protection to have: McAfee or Norton? I'm getting
>> confused and I need to know what I'm doing if I'm planning
>> on opening an internet business.
>>
>> I purchased the Windows XP, hp pavilion 780n with the 950
>> all-in-one printer, fax, scanner, and copier. Windows XP's
>> Hard drive came with McAfee.com, which I've heard
>> is "minimal security protection against worms and
>> viruses," as everyone knows of this last big hit with
>> the "Blaster Worm." However, since I bought the computer
>> package in Jan 2001, I figured McAfee was fine and that I
>> would just make sure that I kept my computer updated
>> through "windows update," like installing all those
>> security patches that came as no easy task, but rather, a
>> big challenge for me. I really had a hard time getting the
>> Fix-recovery patch and then just this last year there was
>> the "Class Action Suite, Dec 12,2002; Plaintiff Brian
>> Delre vs HEWLETT-PACKARD, involving the upgrading of HP
>> DVD 100i series to the HP200i series.
>>
>> Now, today I did purchase the online subscription for the
>> McAfee VirusScan 1-year plan of \$24.95 because I followed
>> the 4 steps to inquire about this worm affecting my
>> computer. I did track my history of windows updating and I
>> did install the Microsoft Security MS03-026 within less
>> than the week the worm struck. However, after scanning
>> (using the subscription for McAfee) for updates and
>> scanning all files today, McAfee said "I was unprotected
>> and at risk for JavaScript, ActiveX, Web Bugs, Cookies and
>> JavaX," and McAfee offered me: "The Internet Security
>> Advisor" consisting of both Secure IE and Private IE
>> together as a package to protect my PC from security
>> leaks, and hacking attacks.(I thought all those elements
>> were covered under Windows Update)
>>
>> I decided to wait and closed the window, but a pop-up
>> window appeared and "McAfee Security Special Partner"
>> offered me another \$10.00 off coupon, because "they didn't
>> want to loose as a customer." Then as I went for it,I read
>> their "purchase agreement," which said the software
>> is: "AS IS SALE," with all faults and no warranties, and
>> just basically McAfee is not at all responsible or liable
>> for any damage the product might do to my system or other
>> programs. The total cost for me to have "Secure IE &
>> Private IE with a CD copy" would cost me about \$39.99
>> approximately, and that I need to "hurry because this
>> offer ends Sept 9, 2003, at 12Midnight." If I'm aware of

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>> this software package, I believe I saw something similar
>> at Staples today, and if so, it was expensive...in the
>> ranges of approx \$300 to \$600. Now can someone out there
>> set me straight on securing one's computer?
>>
>> My questions to anyone who knows about this: Is "McAfee
>> Special Partner Offer" legitimate and true? Or am I
>> falling into a trap? Do I even need this, when I've been
>> updating Windows automatically? I feel confused and I have
>> some doubts. After I send this message, I'm going to talk
>> to hp instant support, or contact Microsoft to inquire
>> about this to see if I should buy and install this
>> software. Most of my friends say they like Norton better,
>> but they don't have the same computer I do. My Windows XP
>> came with McAfee already installed.
>>
>> Thanks for your help. Help, help, please? What is true,
>> and what is not? These computers can be risky and they are
>> not cheap! I'm feeling less confident and rather
>> cautious...am I being too insecure? I'd like to think I'm
>> wise to double check before I impulsively act, buy it, and
>> install it, especially if the software is not reliable
>> with no warranties, as number 1 states: "AS IS SALE,"
>> and "WITH ALL FAULTS."
>>
>> Again, I really appreciate those who really know their
>> technology, and who are willing to educate me about what
>> action I should take. In closing, I would hope for tighter
>> security measures to be achieved, because life is already
>> so difficult without having to add fuel to the fire.
>>
>> I apologize for the long message. This is my first time to
>> ever write to a Newsgroup. If I've been out-of-line with
>> any contents of this letter, please accept my apology. Not
>> to try to gain any sympathy here, but I have missed lots
>> of sleep last night trying to figure this out, and missing
>> sleep is not good for my disability.
>>
>> Sincerely,
>> Deborah