

Spyware Software

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Recently I was reviewing the results of a Google search for baltic birch plywood when suddenly a window opened and a program called "Spy-Shredder" began running full tilt. It looked like a scam so I used the back button and went back to my search results. It persisted and reappeared and began a download I did not request (as far as I could tell.) I caught it in SeaMonkey's download manager and stopped it. Somewhere in about the same time frame I stopped a download from "spywarebegone.com" too using the same technique.

I abandoned learning about plywood and set about learning about "Spy-Shredder." I should have slept on the problem. I grabbed the first 'solution' I found on PC Magazine's website and downloaded and installed "Spyware Bot." It was free until I ran it and discovered that to have it clean up what it had found I had to register and pay. I balked and uninstalled it. I was not impressed. It found "TimeSync" and declared it malicious. It was upset about cookies from PriceGrabber, ZDNet and Travelocity. It seemed as though it was bent on finding as big a list as it could compile, just to impress me with its effectiveness.

Today I looked more carefully, I thought, and found "Spyware Doctor." That came via PC Magazine, too. Again the come-on suggested a home user for free product like Avast, but once the program was installed and run, I ended up on what looked like the same website demanding that I register and pay in order to have the software clean up my computer. Once again, I uninstalled the program.

Then I ran AdAware and it found only 8 items. I recalled that there was an item that it did not find that Spyware Doctor found. I failed to do a screen dump of the results before I deleted the program! I think it was "DealHelper."

I tried reinstalling Spyware Doctor to rerun the scan. I was troubled when the install reported that the target directory was still on my hard disk. The reinstall failed part way through. The install program "was not responding" when I looked in the Task List. I tried another uninstall only to learn that the uninstall module was now corrupted.

I went to ZTree and scanned down through ProgramFiles. The directories

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for both SpywareBot and SpywareDoctor were still there. I found the log files and copied and pasted them to Word.

What does an uninstall routine do if it does not remove the ProgramFiles directory and its contents as part of the process?

I do not want to dig myself an even deeper hole. I'm remember being told that it is unwise to just find a program's folder and delete its contents.

- 1) What do I do to clean this software from my machine?
- 2) Is there a reputable program (one that does not bait-and-switch) that handles spyware effectively?

I have "HijackThis" and can run a log if that is helpful.

Thanks,

baumgrenze

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