

## Re: Annoying Messenger Pop\_ups

**Source:**

[http://www.derkeiler.com/Newsgroups/microsoft.public.windowsxp.security\\_admin/2003-08/1865.html](http://www.derkeiler.com/Newsgroups/microsoft.public.windowsxp.security_admin/2003-08/1865.html)

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**Date:** 08/10/03

Date: Sun, 10 Aug 2003 10:25:21 -0600

Greetings --

There are several varieties of pop-ups, and the solutions vary accordingly. Which specific type(s) is troubling you?

Does the title bar of these pop-ups read "Messenger Service?"

This particular "sales method" is strikingly similar to the "protection" rackets offered to small businesses by organized criminals. Yes, it's a scam; no reputable business would need to resort to extortion. Particularly since they're trying to sell you a type of protection that is already available to you free of charge.

This type of spam has become quite common over the past few months, and unintentionally serves as a valid security "alert." It demonstrates that you haven't been taking sufficient precautions while connected to the Internet. Your data probably hasn't been compromised by these specific advertisements, but if you're open to this exploit, you may well be open to other threats. Install and use a decent, properly configured firewall. (Disabling the messenger service, as some people recommend, only hides the symptom, and does nothing to secure your machine.) And ignoring or just "putting up with" these messages and the problem they represent is particularly foolish.

Messenger Service of Windows

<http://support.microsoft.com/default.aspx?scid=KB;en-us;168893>

Messenger Service Window That Contains an Internet Advertisement Appears

<http://support.microsoft.com/?id=330904>

Stopping Advertisements with Messenger Service Titles

<http://www.microsoft.com/windowsxp/pro/using/howto/communicate/stopspam.asp>

Blocking Ads, Parasites, and Hijackers with a Hosts File

<http://www.mvps.org/winhelp2002/hosts.htm>

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Oh, and be especially wary of people who advise you to do nothing more than disable the messenger service. Disabling the messenger service is a "head in the sand" approach to computer security.

The real problem is not the messenger service pop-ups; they're actually providing a useful service by acting as a security alert. The true problem is the unsecured computer, and you've been advised to merely turn off the warnings. How is this helpful?

Equivalent Scenario 1: Somewhere in a house, a small fire starts, and sets off the smoke alarm. You, not immediately seeing any fire/smoke, complain about the noise of the smoke detector, and are advised to remove the smoke detector's battery and go back to sleep.

Equivalent Scenario 2: You over-exert your shoulder at work or play, causing bursitis. After weeks of annoying and sometimes excruciating pain whenever you try to reach over your head, you go to a doctor and say, while demonstrating the motion, "Doc, it hurts when I do this." The doctor, being as helpful as some of your respondents, replies, "Well, don't do that."

I'm beginning to think that the people deliberately posting such bad advice are hacker-wannabes who have no true interest in helping you secure your system, but would rather give you a false sense of security while ensuring that your computer is still open to exploitation.

For regular Internet pop-ups, you might try the free 12Ghosts Popup-killer from <http://12ghosts.com/ghosts/popup.htm> or Pop-Up Stopper from <http://www.panicware.com/>. Myself, I use Norton Internet Security, which, in addition to containing Norton Anti-Virus and Personal Firewall, also blocks most of the pop-up ads on the Internet.

For pop-ups caused by some sort of "adware" and/or "spyware" that you've inadvertently installed, two products that are quite effective at finding and removing scumware are Ad-Aware from [www.lavasoft.de](http://www.lavasoft.de) and SpyBot Search and Destroy from <http://security.kolla.de/>. Both have free evaluation versions.

Bruce Chambers

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Help us help you:

<http://dts-l.org/goodpost.htm>

<http://www.catb.org/~esr/faqs/smart-questions.html>

You can have peace. Or you can have freedom. Don't ever count on having both at once. -- RAH

"BBC" <BCurete@Houston.rr.com> wrote in message

news:006e01c35f56\$4419bef0\$a101280a@phx.gbl...

> Please let me know how to disable these annoying pop-ups.

> The only thing that helps to slow or stop is to disable

> Kazaa, sign out of Windows Messenger, disable other open

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> windows to the internet,etc.  
>  
> bbc