

## Re: pop-ups and banner ads

**Source:**

[http://www.derkeiler.com/Newsgroups/microsoft.public.windowsxp.security\\_admin/2003-11/1559.html](http://www.derkeiler.com/Newsgroups/microsoft.public.windowsxp.security_admin/2003-11/1559.html)

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**From:** Bruce Chambers (*bchambers\_at\_nospamcableone.net*)

**Date:** 11/08/03

Date: Sat, 8 Nov 2003 15:57:07 -0700

Greetings --

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

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

This type of spam has become quite common over the past year, 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, such as the Blaster Worm that recently swept across the Internet. Install and use a decent, properly configured firewall. (Merely disabling the messenger service, as some people recommend, only hides the symptom, and does almost nothing to truly secure your machine.) And ignoring or just "putting up with" the security gap represented by these messages 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>

Oh, and be especially wary of people who advise you to do nothing more than disable the messenger service. Disabling the messenger service, by itself, is a "head in the sand" approach to computer security. The real problem is not the messenger service pop-ups;

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they're actually providing a useful, if annoying, 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?

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

3) To deal with pop-ups caused by any sort of "adware" and/or "spyware," such as Gator, Comet Cursors, Xupiter, Bonzai Buddy, or KaZaA, and their remnants, that you've deliberately (but without understanding the consequences) installed, two products that are quite effective (at finding and removing this type of scumware) are Ad-Aware from [www.lavasoft.de](http://www.lavasoft.de) and SpyBot Search & Destroy from <http://security.kolla.de/>. Both have free versions. It's even possible to use SpyBot Search & Destroy to "immunize" your system against most future intrusions. I use both and generally perform manual scans every week or so to clean out cookies, etc.

Bruce Chambers

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

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

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

<anonymous@discussions.microsoft.com> wrote in message

news:012c01c3a648\$e6f703b0\$a601280a@phx.gbl...

> i have been getting pop-ups like crazy in the last rwo

> weeks and don't understand why, can you help me stop them.

> gdwood@bellsouth.net