

Freeware Security Package

WCASC Computer Forum, 2/8/2007

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(Revised by Linda Bryson 5/21/07)

In these days where hackers, spammers and scammers have grabbed a vast chunk of the internet traffic space, it is mandatory that the average Windows user protect him/herself with a combination of protection tools, including:

- anti-virus
- anti-spyware
- 2-way firewall
- anti-spam
- anti-phishing
- anti-everything else (whoops!)

Let's look at the last few items first:

* While the comprehensive internet security suites (Norton, McAfee, Zone Alarm, Panda, Trend, etc.) attempt to provide the whole range of threat protection, your ISP is likely to do the best job of anti-spam/scam and avoid your even having to download the problems before they are detected and eliminated.

- for example: just in the last week, CCIL has turned on anti-spam for the first time with their relatively new webmail system (Squirrelmail).

The results have been dramatic in only one week!

Spam for my account has gone from a daily average of about twenty (20) spams to about one (1)!!!

And, they'll likely get better as their system learns!!

* When it comes to 'anti-phishing', it looks like your web browser (Internet Explorer, Firefox, Opera or other) can do a better and better job of this as they have continuous access to an online database of phishing sites and can warn you, or block, going to this type of web page.....

* That leaves the first three functions to deserve more of your attention.

NOTE: many (most?) if not all ISPs are also using some form of anti-virus, but it appears to still be good practice to have up-to-date AV protection on your computer, too.

There are a bazillion products out there - commercial and free - that can handle the chores; so what do we choose???

Well, let's start with "FREE"!! We all like the sound of that word (even when it's a lie)!

Fortunately for the Windows PC user, there are very competent (even top-notch) freeware products out there.

And, a lot of them!

So, we have to pick and choose, even for FREE.....

For the recent past, as well as the present, I have discussed and demoed various of these.

The following choices still seem to be good ones and the ONLY ones that I feel capable of "supporting" - that is, I don't feel capable of learning enough about the details of a raft of products in each category. So, I've narrowed it down, for now, to:

ANTI-VIRUS:

Grisoft's "AVG Anti-Virus Free"

The web page is: <http://free.grisoft.com/doc/1>

ANTI-SPYWARE:

Here there are multiple products (for reasons we've reviewed before).

Lavasoft's "Ad-Aware SE Personal"

The web page is: <http://www.lavasoftusa.com/>

Safer Networking's "Spybot - Search & Destroy", with its real-time piece "TeaTimer"

The web page is: <http://www-spybot.net/>

Microsoft's "Windows Defender", with a real-time function

The web page is:

<http://www.microsoft.com/athome/security/spyware/software/default.aspx>

FIREWALL (2-WAY):

Zone Lab's "Zone Alarm Free Edition"

The web page is:

http://www.zonealarm.com/store/content/catalog/products/sku_list_za.jsp?dc=12bms&ctry=US&lang=en

Now - good luck, safe surfing and (if you can after all this doom and gloom) ENJOY the 'net !!!

Operating Systems Supported:

Version	98/Me	XP	Vista
AVG AV	√	√	√
Ad-Aware	√	√	
Spybot	√	√	√
Defender	X	√	√
Zone Alarm			
v6.1	√	√	X
v7.5	X	√	X