



Spyware Programs Are Out To Get You

by: Lawrence Andrews

The average computer is packed with hidden software that can secretly spy on online habits.

The US net provider EarthLink said it uncovered an average of 28 spyware programs on each PC scanned during the first three months of the year.

There are currently over 38,000 spyware and adware programs that are infecting innocent Internet users such as yourself through downloadable games, music, screensavers, pictures, pop-ups, emails, and the list goes on and on. Spyware and Adware can cause your PC to run extremely slow and even crash, and allow hackers and advertising companies to invade your privacy whenever they wish.

What Is Spyware?

Spyware is a broad term for programs that collect information from your computer without your knowledge or consent. Spyware is a software program that transmits a unique code to identify you (for tracking purposes) without your knowledge or consent. The program collects or transmits information about your computer use, or other habits without your knowledge or consent.

This internet pest which is better known as spyware installs itself on your computer without your knowledge or consent. It performs other unwholesome duties, and continues to reinstall itself no matter how many times you remove it.

Spyware!

It has become so pervasive that lawmakers in the US are looking into ways to prevent or regulate it. The Spy Audit by EarthLink reflects the results of scans involving over one million computers between January and March. It uncovered more than 29.5 million examples of spyware.

Why should I be concerned about spyware or adware?

Passwords, credit card details and other personal information could end up in the wrong hands.

Your computer could get unwanted viruses, worms or even Trojan.

You would receive unwanted emails.

Your computer could be used by malicious operators to do damage not only your own computer, but to other computer users too.

How did I get spyware on my computer and how do I eliminate it?

It usually happens when you visit a web site, and are prompted to download something that is said to be "necessary" to view or use features of that web site. Also, you might want or download a program that has some nice features, but also installs program code that can send information out without your knowledge.

"By tracking and publicizing the growth of spyware, we can better educate consumers of its risks and encourage them to take steps to protect themselves and their families while online," said Christine Stevenson of Webroot, which conducted the scans.

People concerned about what might be lurking on their machine can download software such as the popular ZoneAlarm Pro, Pest Patrol, and Spybot to disinfect their computer.



About the author:

Lawrence Andrews is a software developer, consultant and author of numerous books. Visit his site for more information at <http://www.traffic-o-matic.com>

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