

Samirius's Corner

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Prevention is better than cure.

In the last decade PCs have become more than an integral part of our lives, and to a certain extent we have become tremendously dependant on them. Almost all our work is being done on these machines whether it be a home or office PC, laptop or PDA. We surf the web for information, read mails from different people on different email addresses we have and also use a myriad of packet programs for various tasks that await us in our daily routine.

The most common problem we still face are **intrusions** that come in such varied forms that sometimes even the most advanced of users get cornered. These intrusions can be classified into 3 groups:-

1. **Virus** – usually a program that attaches itself to another program that will run on a users command, unaware users spread the virus by sharing the infected file or by simply clicking on send. They have a severity level and can affect anything on the PC.
2. **Worms** – like a virus it infects machines, unlike a virus it replicates [greater devastation] unaided and then without a helping hand it facilitates its transportation via the information pathways like the network, internet and even a simple sharing of a file.
3. **Trojan** – as the name suggests, it's a malicious program that disguises itself as a useful executable, after running it only can you know the extent of the damage it causes.

We tend to think that because we don't share files, download material off the internet, we are invincible. Far from that, we are as vulnerable as we are to the common flu virus. All these problems are so well guised they could walk thru our front door unmarked as dangerous material.

So if you are reading this remember, if you don't have an updated version of your operating system (OS) ¹, antivirus software or a spy ware program that is running, you have just shared your whole hard disk to the world, not to worry that was only a wakeup call. To keep ahead in the cat and mouse chase, in this maze that might lead you begin chopping board way, read further.

Most of the antiviruses aren't for free except those that come on your laptops preinstalled but will only last for 90 days and of course those that are available on warez, cracked and hacker sites ², the only one that is recommended by most PC experts is **AVG Free Edition** ³. This can be downloaded and installed in very simple steps that they offer within the program. If you are happy with buying antivirus software, **Norton Symantec** ⁴ is among the best ways to go, but there are lots of antivirus programs that one should research about before taking the plunge ⁵.

As for OS updates, depending on whether you have an original copy of the OS you are using or the pirated version, these updates may or may not function leaving your system either protected within a confined space or totally open to attacks. Getting an original OS would mean that you can benefit from the other programs that are offered together with the OS. In the case of **Microsoft Windows XP**®⁶ Home or Professional, they prefer using **Windows Defender**® previously known as Giant Anti Spy ware as their in-house anti spy ware protection manager ⁷ which is effective, only drawback is your windows has to be original or is the drawback really having the pirated OS?.

If you are on the internet often downloading, checking email, sharing files frequently, make sure that you have taken the necessary precautions so that you don't have to stay awake at night trying to salvage your data ⁸ and starting afresh.

“Stay clean, stay safe ... ”

Notes:-

1. **OS** most PCs use Windows XP of course there are those outdated machines that still die hard on Windows 98, the newest is the Windows Vista which is still very new to talk about. There are MACs that are totally different and come with MAC OS X and Linux for those advanced users and server and mail administrators.
2. **Warez, download sites** are all the sites that have software piracy as a business. Mostly all programs that are available on these sites have been cracked and ready to use on your PC without paying for them, the only problem one might face are the pop ups asking you to download other side programs that can most probably be **Trojans** or **Worms**.
3. <http://free.grisoft.com> will take you there and it's all very clear if you read a little. This anti virus has been made specifically for home users who aren't very vulnerable to attacks. Why they offer it free is written on their website.
4. <http://www.symantec.com> is the main site, the software is available in most well known computer shops every where and does cost some money, and it allows the user to be updated for a year from date of installation. Not only that it is an anti virus program but if you buy the whole package then you get an image maker and also system toolst.
5. **Anti Virus** programs that can be found over the internet are so many. The ones that are most common after Norton and AVG are Panda, PCcillin and McAfee. All these have their own websites that will give you an idea of what they are and what they aren't capable of.
6. **Windows XP®** Home and Professional seems to be a major issue that will be one of the things that will be discussed heret.
7. **Anti Spy ware** unlike an anti virus will check whether you have a program that is leaking information to another computer that is logged to yours without your knowing, yes, a Trojan. If you have an original Windows OS, I suggest you get the Windows Defender® and see what it says about your computer. Having both and Anti Spy ware and Anti Virus is always the best way to go.
8. **Data salvaging** a thing of the past if you know what you are doing. This is another issue that will be discussed†.

Note: If as a reader there is an issue that is important to you, that needs clarification write to samirius@gmail.com. If you want any of the †above topics to be prioritized please feel free to mail.