

## the newsletter of Tarragon Solutions

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### Solutions!

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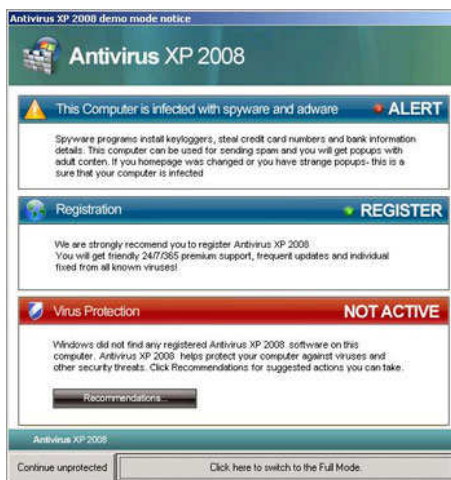
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## Scareware - don't let them catch you out!

Many security organisations are warning about the rise in instances of Scareware - fake virus warnings with offers of free anti-virus software - that turn out to be just another way to lure unsuspecting users into downloading malicious software.



You are happily browsing the Internet when up pops a box warning that a virus has been detected on your PC. Your first thought is to do whatever is necessary to remove the threat as soon as possible so you click on the associated link to download the cleaning tool.

Unfortunately, this may well *introduce* a threat rather than remove one as more and more fraudsters are resorting to playing on fear as a means of infiltrating PCs. Clicking that link may mean you will download a back door into your PC, allowing a hacker to steal personal or business information or take control of your PC.

If you receive a "virus warning", take a few moments to study it before taking action. In most cases, the fake warnings appear in a browser window (albeit a small one!) rather than as a message from your anti-virus product and will always entice you to click on a button or link. Hovering the mouse pointer over the button or link will usually show up the target web site and that's normally enough to warn you of a scam. If you have any doubt, try searching for the name of the Antivirus program on the 'net - for the example shown above, Googling "Antivirus XP 2008" will bring up plenty of hits to show it is a fake product!

Searching the web is always a good idea if you're unsure about any site; earlier this year hackers put fake parking tickets on cars with a URL directing them to "view pictures with information about your parking preferences" that in reality downloaded a Trojan that then prompted the user to install fake anti-virus software. Checking a URL before you visit it could save a lot of pain.



Type	Run type
Spyware	C://windows/system32/i...
Adware	autorun
Spyware	autorun
Backdoor	C://windows/system32/...
Trojan	autorun
Dialer	C://windows/system32/...
Spyware	autorun

As ever, if you have worries or a need for confirmation of the authenticity of a site, contact us at Tarragon; it's what we're here for!

Microsoft's Windows Update release for September includes patches for several security holes which Microsoft describe as "critical". Please ensure you have Automatic Updates turned ON or run Windows Update yourself - at work *and* at home!

# Firefox Add-ons

by Steve Booth

An occasional series highlighting some of the useful Add-ons available to users of the Firefox web browser

## BetterPrivacy

More info: <https://addons.mozilla.org/en-US/firefox/addon/6623>

You probably know about Internet 'cookies' and quite possibly you regularly clean them up using your browser's privacy tools. However, there is a class of cookie – so called 'Flash Cookies' or 'Super-Cookies' – that are unknown to your browser but can nevertheless be used to track your use of the Internet. Properly known as Local Shared Objects (LSOs), these are not stored in the usual temporary file folders but elsewhere on your system. They are created by Adobe Flash thus almost any site that includes animation, videos, etc. might use them. LSOs *do* serve a legitimate purpose. However, advertising sites and others have learned that using LSOs will increase the likelihood of their tracking cookies remaining on your system and so their use has grown rapidly. For more information about LSOs, see this description by the Electronic Privacy Information Center (EPIC): <http://epic.org/privacy/cookies/flash.html>

The BetterPrivacy Add-on will locate LSOs and remove them for you, either on-demand or automatically when you close your browser. You may have web sites whose cookies you wish to keep so these can be marked accordingly.

To install BetterPrivacy refer to the "Finding a Firefox Add-on" notes on this page and enter "BetterPrivacy" in the search box.

**N.B.** Even if you don't use Firefox, you can adjust Adobe's settings for LSOs by visiting: <http://www.macromedia.com/support/documentation/en/flashplayer/help/help02.html>

### Finding a Firefox Add-on

- In Firefox, go to Tools > Add-ons
- Select the *Get Add-ons* tab
- Use the search box or click on the *Browse all Add-ons* link
- Follow the instructions for installation

## Genuine Advantage? or Unfair Advantage?

Windows XP's anti-piracy scheme, Windows Genuine Advantage or WGA, has got Microsoft into court again. This time the world's largest software company is being sued in a Washington District Court for allegedly violating privacy laws by gathering information that could be used to trace the PC running WGA.

WGA was originally introduced as being merely a check that a copy of Windows is genuine – but it was soon found out to be more than that. WGA can block essential Windows updates and, each time you start Windows, it sends back to Microsoft certain information about the system. It is this aspect that the current suit is based upon.

Although Microsoft state that no personal information is collected, the plaintiff claims it provides the user's IP address and other data that could be used to identify an individual home. Could be an interesting time in court!

## Tip of the Month - Forcing received emails to be in Plain Text (Outlook)

There are many people who prefer their emails to be in 'plain text' rather than HTML format and this tip will ensure that all incoming emails are automatically converted to plain text.

In Outlook 2007, go to Tools > Trust Center > Email security and tick the box marked "Read all standard mail in plain text". For Outlook 2003, use Tools > Options > Email options.

In both 2003 and 2007 versions, Outlook allows you to change the format of any message back to HTML by clicking on the Infobar. All replies will be initiated in plain text but, again, you can switch to HTML if desired.

Please let us know what you think of **Solutions!** - email [solutions@tarragon.co.uk](mailto:solutions@tarragon.co.uk)