



The Spirit of Giving

Christmas..... The time of year where everyone gets together with loved ones and celebrates in the spirit of giving.

Giving is the most unselfish thing a person can do. But this doesn't mean that you should be giving away the information on your computer. The information that is stored on your computer is YOURS and rightfully should be. So why should you give it away. No one is paying you for it?

The fact of the matter is, you aren't giving it away. You are being robbed of it. They are taking it without your knowledge, and to make it worse.. it's happening in broad daylight. **Welcome to the world of SPY-WARE.**

What is spyware you ask?

Spyware is defined as computer software that is installed on a personal computer, without the user's knowledge or consent, in order to intercept or take partial control over the user's interaction with the computer. In layman's terms, it's a program that steals from you and/or modifies your computer without your knowledge or consent.

How did I get infected?

Let's face it. At one point or another, your computer has had spyware on it. In fact, it probably is on your machine right now and you don't even realize it. When people find out they have spyware on their machine(s), understandably they are upset and confused as to how it got on there in the first place. In order for Spyware to escape detection from Antivirus & AntiSpyware companies, Spyware needs to use a multitude of entry points into your system. Spyware can use one or all of these entry points to gain access to your system.

- Direct Downloads - *Downloading programs or files from the internet*
- Attachments - *Opening attachments received on your email*
- FoistWare - *Unrelated, hidden applications bundled with the software you want*
- AdWare - *Installed via pop-up ads or RogueWare*
- RogueWare - *Software applications that claim to be something they are not*
- Web pages - *Applications installed via javascript, active-x, etc.*

During 2007, F-secure identified & added over 250,000 NEW malware samples, which is equivalent to the the total number of samples over the last 20 years (1986 - 2006). Likewise, Symantec also estimated the increase in MalWare in 2007 at 187% up from the year before.

www.2-

spyware.com

WebSites that tend to distribute Spyware are typically sites that:

- allow you to download free software & freebees
- contain expired security certificates
- contain suggestive contain (ie. pornographic)

What kind of information is stolen?

First of all, there is no limit to what information spyware is capable of harvesting from your computer. The list below identifies peices of information that are considered fair game for spyware companies.

- Full Name
- SIN Number
- Telephone Number
- Street Address
- E-mail Address
- IP Address
- License Plate Number
- Driver's License Number
- Face, Fingerprints, or Handwriting
- Credit Card Numbers
- Digital Identity

How can I protect my computer from Spyware?

In order to prevent your system from being infected with SpyWare, you need to first have an AntiSpyWare program installed. Spyware typically employs stealth techniques when infecting a system, which makes it extremely difficult to detect even by the best AntiVirus programs.

*Our recommendation for AntiSpyWare software is **WebRoot's Spy Sweeper 6.0**. It not only has the highest rating in AntiSpyWare software for 2009, but also provides you with savings of up to **\$169.80** depending on the length(years) of the license and the number of computers.*

Checks out WebRoots website for more information by clicking [here](#).

Wrapping up... be vigilant when going to websites or downloading content off the internet. Install an AntiSpyWare application like WebRoot's Spy Sweeper 6.0, and run scans frequently. Doing this will make sure that both your computer and data, remain yours.

You can also check out our past articles at www.tsgcs.ca/articles.htm

Have a wonderful Christmas, and a happy, prosperous new year.

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