

TECHNOLOGY NEVER SLEEPS

Technology, especially in the areas of computerization, seems to never sleep. It is always changing, evolving, giving us new ways to help, and sometimes hurt ourselves.

The Internet brought a new medium called electronic mail, or e-mail. Initially it was a great way to send a quick note across the city, province to province, or around the world. Then came the marketing guys with the electronic version of the flyer in the mailbox and SPAM was born. California is the first state in the US to enact a law that says SPAM is a no no. On October 20th an article appeared in the San Jose Biz Journal on the first case of a company convicted under this new law. The fine is US\$2,000,000 and the story is here: [Spammers lose in court](#).

Is there something we can do as individuals to help curb SPAM, without having elected officials - who probably know less about computers than the average home user - enact laws to try and get rid of it. Yes, there is!

We can be responsible users and read everything on the screen that we install or fill in that may say "Can we send you future information about our product", and "Can we make your name available to other companies that offer similar services". These two questions are usually ticked for you, and if you don't cancel them you have given someone the right to add you to a mailing list that you may never get off. Eventually you will become a regular target of the SPAM world and will depend on the new laws.

We can also think about what we are sending. Before you send an email, or forward one of those cute emails about friendship or luck or whatever, ask yourself if there was no email would you spend \$ 10.00 to snail mail this to 10 "friends"? If you would, then use Canada Post.

Since technology never sleeps, it seems lately that I don't either. Life in itself has been very hectic and eventful, and in my downtime I have been updating my [website](#). Check out the Internet section under Help. It may evolve into it's own command button soon.

Also, thank you to the very few people who want to stay informed and have filled out the on line client update form. I will be sending out the coupons shortly. (First I have to design them) I have a new supplier for compatible ink cartridges and I am currently redesigning the pages for the website. They will be added soon.

HOW DO I...

I keep getting asked about SPAM and how to curb it. Curbing is easy: Don't click on banners, don't visit adult sites, don't fall for stupid marketing ploys like "Hit the monkey and win \$ 100". Use Cookie Washers to curb what stays on your computer. Use Spybot and Spyware Blaster to protect your computer from Spyware, Adware, etc. Use a good anti virus (Norton Anti Virus) to keep you system safe from programs that want to hurt it. I say Norton Anti Virus because I have found that other product like McAfee don't always catch everything they should. In the past two weeks I have replaced McAfee on more that three systems and when the System Scan for Viruses was run, each system had more than one virus found. Doesn't say much for the competition. But, back to SPAM...

If you are already on someone's hit list, there isn't an easy way to get off it. But there is a program that may help. [Mailwasher](#). This is a great little FREE program that will read the email headers in your email box before you download it. You can then preview the headers and decide if you want to keep it or purge it. One of the best features of this program is you can "Bounce" the message back to it's origin. "Bounce"ing a message tells the originator that the email address that was used is invalid. Some people actually do read these bounce backs, and will remove you from their lists. It may take many months to get you off all the lists you're on, and it may never happen, but it's a start. Download

and install your copy today, and only open your email client when you know what you will be receiving.

Another question I get a lot is “How do I change the fonts in Outlook”? Open Outlook and go to Tools, Options, and then the Tab called Mail Format. Select the button Fonts located under Stationery and Fonts. Here you can set the default fonts for your system to Compose new email, Reply to or Forward received email, and Compose and Read Plain text email. Email that comes to you in HTML format is already preformatted with whatever font the creator used and your system will display it in the fonts used (or as closest as possible font if the exact font isn't installed). Also, there is a select at the bottom of that dialog to change fonts that provides you with a choice of fonts to use if you have enabled stationery. I have checked off “Always use my fonts” because I know what style I like to compose and read messages in.

Many people have added HotBar to their systems so they can have stationery and cute things like the people that use [Incredimail](#). Unfortunately, HotBar is SPYWARE and mucks up your computer. If you think Hotbar is okay to use, and have installed it or are seriously thinking about, [read this now](#). These “free” programs are very bad for your systems health.

SURF'S UP

One site I really want you to surf is my company website, [MicroByte TekSolutions](#). If you don't want to wait the seven seconds for the Flash advertising to finish, you can click on the underlined tag line to enter the site faster. Here you will find sections on the services we offer, as well as everything that ends up in [Surf's Up](#), an extensive [Help](#) section to answer your questions, the [Client Update](#) page in case you move or change your email address, [Links](#) to manufacturer's pages to find drivers or read about new products, our [Newsletter](#) section where we have recently added all old publications in PDF format for online reading or downloading, a link to an excellent [Data Backup](#) solution that we use and rely on to keep our data safe, and our coming soon section on [Compatible Ink Cartridges](#). We sincerely hope that you visit us, once or twice or more often, and when you have questions or can't find exactly what you're looking for, send us the question so we can add the answer to the site and help more people.

With the Internet becoming the medium of choice for disseminating information, it won't be long before all of our news is available on line and we can selectively read what interests us and miss all the other stuff. Here is a list of the more popular news sites:

[CNet News](#) - Tech News First

[World News Network](#) - Headlines and stories from around the world

[CNN](#) - News from all sources. Has a free registration section that may or may not have hooks. We signed up and will let you know.

[Fashion News](#) - reports on the latest mergers and acquisitions, company profiles, exclusive interviews from fashion insiders.

[MSNBC](#) - Microsoft and NBC, need we say more...

[Online Newspapers](#) - find newspaper links from around the world.

VIRUS UPDATES

There never seems to be a shortage of viruses. Just a few people causing problems for the rest of us. What was it you're parents used to say about one bad apple... Here are the latest level 2 and higher threats to watch out for.

W32.Yaha.AF@mm - W32.Yaha first popped up in July 2002, and this strain was discovered

on November 12th with a fix to Norton being added November 15th. This worm Terminates some anti virus and firewall processes; Uses its own SMTP engine to email itself to all the contacts in the Windows address book, MSN and Windows Messenger, Yahoo Pager, ICQ Pager, as well as in all the files whose extensions contain the letters HT; Attempts to spread itself through shared network folders and mapped drives; Attempts to spread itself through the KaZaA file-sharing network; Installs a keylogger and emails the logs to the author; Performs Denial of Service (DoS) attacks to some specified and random hosts on TCP ports 135, 139, and 445.

W32.Mimail.H@mm - This mass mailing worm was discovered on November 13th, and even though a fix was released on the 14th it is still classified as a level 2 threat. This virus attempts to steal credit card information and displays a web page which asks the user to enter their credit card information. This information is saved and later emailed to several predetermined email addresses. The email has the following characteristics:

Subject: YOUR PAYPAL.COM ACCOUNT EXPIRES

Attachment: paypal.asp.scr -or-
www.paypal.com.scr

Keep yourself and your system safe at all times. Make sure your copy of Norton Anti Virus is current and up to date. Make sure Norton Anti Virus protection starts each time you start your computer, and checks all incoming (and outgoing) email. If you need a new copy, call us. We are more than happy to deliver and install it for a small fee.