

## MBTS TEKJOURNAL - 2004

Welcome to the latest edition of the MBTS TekJournal. Beware of Activation Codes. Microsoft uses them to allow Windows XP to continue to run after 30 days and will even supply you with a new code if you have to reinstall everything due to a catastrophic error. Symantec won't! I recently purchased several copies of Norton Anti Virus 2004 from one of my distributors and the first one I tried to install wouldn't. When I contacted Symantec I was told it was a counterfeit version and all copies I purchased had to be turned over to Symantec. When I asked at whose expense and what about replacements, I was told too bad, so sad, I had to eat the cost. Instead my supplier exchanged to "bad" copy for a good one and now all is well. NOT! I am not happy with Symantec and their policies. They don't take into consideration crashes or reinstallation of software due to viruses and other things that corrupt systems. Microsoft does and it is a joy dealing with them. Be forewarned, if you have to reinstall Norton Anti Virus 2004 you may have a lot of explaining to do to a company that may not believe you.

The second problem I have encountered in the past three weeks pertains to email, and I know I am not the only one who has encountered this phenomenon. How many emails do you receive on a regular basis, have been forwarded from someone else that you contact by email on a regular basis? How many of those emails contain other peoples email address? Do you really want your email address being sent to other people that you don't know? I am guessing the answer to that question is NO! How do you stop it from happening over and over again? Whenever you forward a message on, please delete all the email addresses contained in the body before you forward it. When you are forwarding the email, please use the BCC so that you don't give away free email addresses, especially ones that do not belong to you. Also, if you receive an email with attached email addresses for people you have never heard of, chances are very good that the person sending them does this regularly. Send the forwarder an email asking him or her to erase all email content before forwarding and to use BCC in the future. Protect your privacy and do not send indiscriminant emails.

## APPLICATION UPDATES

I have often been asked about SPAM and how to get rid of it. In a short answer, you can't get rid of it and it cannot be legislated out of existence. But you can use software to help identify it more rapidly. Microsoft Outlook 2003, a component of Office 2003, uses white and black lists to help you identify the good from the bad. The white lists identify the people you are allowed to send email to, and the people you are allowed to receive email from. The black list identifies email senders you never want to hear from and their email is blocked immediately. Anyone not on these lists ends up in a junk folder for you to decide their fate at a later point in time. Knowing Microsoft, this feature can only get better with regular updates.

Another application that works in a similar fashion is Norton Anti Spam 2004. The benefit of this application is that it also blocks popups and does so quite amazingly well. Like most security applications Norton relies on Low, Medium, and High levels for identifying and filtering SPAM. Even set on Medium this application is filtering 98% of my email as SPAM because most of it comes from Vendors, Manufacturers, and E-Zines which are not part of my regular email address list. There is quite an extensive list for blocking Ads and Popups however if you come across one not listed you can add it manually. In my opinion the Ad and Popup blocker is the best part of the software but doesn't warrant the price to go buy it immediately. That being said, I have just uninstalled my trial copy of this product.

For those of you who want to spend a lot less on this problem, I have been hearing from my clients that [0Spam](#) is a good website that fulfills this need at no cost to the end user. According to the website "0Spam.com is a free, virtually 100% effective anti-spam service designed for **POP E-mail** accounts

and now works with **Yahoo** and **Hotmail** accounts.” They use a white list technique with no software to download and install on your system. They don’t readily identify however where the SPAM goes to and what happens when a legitimate party not on the white list tries to contact you. Since you don’t have to download software on to your computer, you do have to remember to access 0spam.com every time you want to access your email so you can stay spam free.

For those interested in loading software on your system without the price tag here is a short list. (I am finding in the wee fine print of most of these sites that FREE means for a while and eventually you will have to pay for something) Everything listed here has been installed on one of my systems and hasn’t yet asked for money, but many of the products must be run manually before you access your email to prevent Spam from being downloaded.

[EmC](#) – According to the website “EmC (Email Control) is an anti-spam tool that allows you to reduce the number of junk mails arriving in your inbox. The program works with a combination of filters that can be customized by the user and checks the mail while it is still on your ISPs server. Based on your filter criteria, it will process the mail and optionally delete all Spam or mark it for deletion. EmC also works as an email checker, allowing you to view messages on the server, before doing any delete actions. In addition, you can check your mail for any script based viruses or other hazards before downloading it to your computer. New filters can be easily added and the programs comes equipped with a large list of presets include "Find sender owner domain" in the registration domain database..”

[Email Remover](#) "Email Remover can save you the trouble of downloading unwanted email. It connects to your ISP and retrieves mail header information (sender, subject, date, etc.), letting you pick mail you don't want to receive and deleting it from the mail server. The anti spam software will optionally run your regular email client when it's done so that you can transfer and read the mail you do want. Email Remover is a handy little tool in the never-ending battle against spam -- and it's free!" This review was done by ZD Net on April 30 1998, but the product still looks free and like it will do the job.

[MailWasher](#) – copied from the website “Mailwasher is the easiest way to check and manage your e-mails before you download them. MailWasher is a powerful email checker with effective spam elimination. Discover the safe way to stop unwanted viruses and e-mails before they get to your computer. No gimmicks here, it is so easy to set up and use that you'll be managing your email like a pro in seconds. It can even be used as an effective privacy tool. You will be amazed at how quickly you will like using MailWasher.

[Eliminate SPAM](#) – this site talks to you to tell you about their product. Might be worth a few minutes of your time to help get rid of this problem. There is a link from this site to a free Popup Killer that I have downloaded and tried but it eliminates all new window pages from my website. Since I know these are valid windows and not ads, this product will have to be updated at \$ 19.95 US to work properly and isn’t worth it if we are looking for FREE software.

## HOW DO I ...

(1) Ever once in a while I get a request about keeping program names out of the Most Frequently Used Programs list. I guess some people like to play games at work but don’t want someone looking at their system to see what the last x number of programs they were using. The only way to keep the program in question off this list is to edit the registry and add a key to identify the program that should never be added to the list. Remember to always backup the registry before making any changes. MBTS makes no warranty about the stability of your system should you decide to implement this change to the systems registry.

1. Start Registry Editor – START | RUN | regedit
2. Navigate to HKEY\_CLASSES\_ROOT\Applications\progname  
where progname is the name of the executable file used to start the program
3. Add an empty string value called **NoStartPage** to the key above
4. Quite Registry Editor and restart your computer

(2) Do you ever feel like your computer is getting over burdened with programs? Does your program list when you highlight All Programs expand to the point where you can't read all the programs available? Do you want to do some housekeeping and group like applications together even though they might be in a folder already? Here's how:

START | All Programs | right click and select Open All Users  
Double Click on the Programs Folder

All the files listed here are found on your Start | All Programs. They can be moved into other existing folders; you can create new folders and move existing folders into the new ones, you can easily rename existing folders. When you are done, click the X in the top right corner to close the window and your Start, All Programs section will be more organized.

## SURF'S UP

People are constantly sending me different sites to go to and I must admit as long as they don't look weird I will generally click on any link once. A friend sent the following link which is a little strange but some people might get a kick out of it. I would like to assume the idea is to improve hand eye co-ordination with the mouse for game playing. I don't endorse or condone cruelty to animals and I don't think this site does either. I will explain what you will find here so that if you take offense easily you can choose not to click on the link. The idea is to see how far you can bat a penguin which slides down a hill. There is a penguin at the top, and a Yeti at the bottom. Click the mouse once to start the penguin sliding down the hill and when you think the time is right click the mouse once more to have the Yeti swing his club. No actual penguins are hurt in this animation. It is just another example of Flash Programming. The repetitive motion used in this web site is the same motion used with many video games especially gold games. The link is [here](#).

We haven't been to any "Free" sites lately so today we will see if "free" really is. A lot of people like to dress up their computers with different pictures or wallpapers to change from monotonous rolling hills that Microsoft provides, so [YourWallpaper.com](#) is a good place to look for free wallpaper for your system. Another good place for wallpaper and screensavers is [Screensavers.com](#) of course.

Wallpaper and screensavers may not be what you want. How about entertaining games, some of which are Freeware and others are demos or shareware where it may cost you a little money to unlock the real thing. [Game Xstasy](#) is as good as any place to start. Games are broken down by type and there is a link button to take you to other sites as well. [Freeware Files](#) is billed as "Your free software resource". The tabs across the top take you to New Files, Most Popular, Free Content, etc. Some people have sites on the Internet where they have collected all kinds of things. [Ray's Freeware](#) appears to be just such a place. It seems to be updated regularly and has a link jumper to take you to software (hopefully all freeware) grouped by other classifications: Applications, Utilities, Email, Organizers, Power tools, etc.

While I was surfing, checking out the above sites, a link popped up asking if I wanted to join [Bravenet.com](#)? It says it is the web's number one site for free web tools. Since I like free and I am always looking for free web stuff, I am going to do it and I will let you know what I find out.

For years computers have been used as a form of entertainment, specifically being used for 3<sup>rd</sup> person shooting games. Classic examples are Wolfenstein, Doom, Hexen, and all their sequels and copiers. The world is now waiting on [DOOM3](#) which is said to be the best of the best. Click on the [DOOM3](#) link to be transported to the site to view the trailer and see what the hype is about.

## TIPS AND TWEAKS

Some people are annoyed by the little arrow that appears on all icons that are designated as shortcuts. We know they're shortcuts, that's why they are there, but get rid of the arrow. Here's how:

1. Start the registry editor. ( start | Run | regedit ).
2. Navigate to HKEY\_CLASSES\_ROOT\lnkfile
3. Delete the IsShortcut registry value.
4. Exit the registry to save changes.
5. You may need to restart Windows XP.

I always tell people to make a backup copy of the registry before making any changes, just in case. Some people have asked recently how to do that. Here's how:

Start the registry editor. ( start | Run | regedit ).

1. To backup the entire registry, highlight My Computer and click File | Export
2. Where prompted, navigate to where you want to save the file and provide a filename.
3. Click Save.
4. To backup a hive, highlight the hive and repeat steps 2 and 3.
5. To backup a key in the hive, highlight the key to backup, and repeat steps 2 and 3.

Does your system experience Icon Lag from time to time? Does the menu pop up fairly quick, but the icons take a whole lot more time to appear? To refresh the icon cache used to load the icons, simply delete the original. The IconCache.db file can be found in your profile directory (everyone's is unique). The profile directory where you will find the file is usually here:

/Documents and Settings/Username/Local Settings/Application Data)

## VIRUS UPDATES

Need we say more about viruses. I have had it with little children being funny and grownups who think exploiting oversights in Windows is fun. But until we live in a perfect world I suppose we have to put up with these critters just like we do mosquitoes, black flies, hornets, etc.

There are a lot of recurrences of old viruses currently, nothing really original.

**W32.Welchia.D** worm is a minor variant of W32.Welchia.C.Worm. Although it tries to exploit the MyDoom backdoor, it will also try to remove the W32.Mydoom.A@mm, W32.Mydoom.B@mm, W32.HLLW.Doomjuice, and W32.HLLW.Doomjuice.B worms. This worm was found on the 23<sup>rd</sup> and the last fix was updated on the 24<sup>th</sup>. It is currently at a threat level 2.

**W32.Bizex.Worm** is also a threat level 2, and spreads by sending an ICQ message to all the contacts in the users' ICQ contact list that contains a link. The link opens an Internet Explorer window and links to an .html file that exploits a vulnerability in an Internet Explorer function. W32.Bizex.Worm has several components which can be downloaded by clicking on the link. It was discovered on the 24<sup>th</sup> and the latest update patch was released on the 25<sup>th</sup>.

And discovered on the 24<sup>th</sup>, back by popular demand at a threat level 3 (very serious) **W32.Netsky.C**, a mass-

mailing worm that uses its own SMTP engine to send itself to the email addresses it finds when scanning hard drives and mapped drives. This worm also searches drives C through Z for the folder names containing "Shar" and then copies itself to those folders. The last virus updates were made on the 25<sup>th</sup>.

The Subject, Body, and email attachment vary.

## TEKSPECIALS

From now on, TekSpecials will only appear in the distributed version of the newsletter.

For a limited time I have available a few computers that have been bundled together from systems that were traded in. Warranties vary from system to system depending on what new components. None of the systems identified here come with monitors.

**System 1:** An Athlon 900MHz system on an Asus A7V133 motherboard with 256 MB SDRAM, 40GB Hard drive, CD ROM and CD RW, a GeForce4 MX440 64 MB AGP video card and Windows 98SE, all for \$ 385.00 plus PST & GST.

**System 2:** An Intel P4 2.8 GHz processor with a 533MHz Front Side bus running on a Gigabyte GA-8SR533 motherboard with 512MB DDR, a GeForce4 Ti AGP graphics card, 40GB Hard Drive, CD ROM, Burner, and Windows XP Pro, all for \$ 981.00 plus PST & GST

**System 3:** An AMD Duron 1.3GHz processor with 256MB RAM, Radeon 7000 video card, CD ROM and CDRW, Windows XP PRO. \$ 659.00 plus PST & GST.

That's all for now. Hope you enjoy it as much as I have.

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