

Internet Commando

By BB Lee

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(739 Words)

If you are Online these days, you need to arm yourself like a Commando entering a war zone. Why? Let me break down the 4-1-1. You have to learn to cover your back because while you are happily surfing the Internet or running your Online business, intruders are itching to infiltrate your territory, discover secrets hidden in your computer, spread a virus, or place a spy in your system to learn your habits.

Sounds a little Scary? A little Paranoid? Well, you are right! You should be Overly Cautious and Extremely Aware when you are Online. Fortunately, ways exist to fight back using full stealth armor tactics to protect your front lines and allow you to surf safely through the World Wide Web.

Top Internet Enemies:

-Hackers: A malicious enemy spy who gets a rush out of breaking into your computer through unprotected ports. This is not only bothersome but could be costly to the victim. This enemy could easily gain access to passwords, credit card numbers, and other personal info stored on your hard drive.

Solution: Install a firewall on your system. This will set up a strong security wall and restrict who has access to your computer

when you are Online. Zone Alarm is an Internet Favorite. And it is FREE!
<http://www.zonealarm.com/>

-Viruses: There are a lot of malicious viruses invading the Internet. They gain access through e-mail attachments, or an executable program you download. A virus can do nasty things to your system. This is exactly what the enemy wants. It can do everything from deleting a few important files, crashing your hard drive, re-writing programs, or something more malevolent.

Solution: Install an anti-virus program on your system. This will give you coverage while you are Online and an enemy virus tries to invade your system when you download. Most systems are packaged with Norton or another anti-virus program. A good FREE anti-virus system is AVG Virus Protection. This virus scanner comes highly recommended by many. Go here to download: <http://www.grisoft.com>

-Enemy Spies In Your System: Many commercial web-sites hire marketing spies to invade your system, take over the controls, record your surfing habits, buying preferences, personal data, and send the information back to them. Think of what they could do with this personal data. Do you really want anyone to know how many times you visited that X-rated site in one week, or that you purchased Viagra Online. Or you like the Teletubbies.

Solution: Ad-aware by Lavasoft is a good program to wipe these spies out of your system by searching through a list of known spyware and deleting them. It is FREE also. Download here: <http://www.lavasoft.de>

-Got Cookies: Cookies bloat your hard drive and slow down your system, plus they are an early warning signal to the enemy that you are returning. Cookies are supposedly harmless little text files that are stored on hard drives by a web-site that you visit. They remind the web-site the next time you visit. Can you think of the invasion of privacy issues raised here? Do we really know what they do with this information?

Solution: Cookie Monster is an excellent FREE program that will wipe all the cookies off your hard-drive and clear your cache. Download Cookie Monster at <http://www.cnet.com/downloads>

-I Know What You Did Last Night Online: External invading forces might target your history folder and record the web-sites you visited. Want to keep your surfing history private. Nuke that sucker. Download Window Washer to rid your system of history, cookie, temp, and cache files. <http://www.webroot.com>
Note: The Above Program Is Free to try for 30 days.

-Password Safety: Enemy forces could easily hack into your computer and steal passwords. Think of the damage these forces could do armed with your trusty passwords.

Solution: Do you have copies of your password stored in your computer? Delete them or encrypt them. Better, write them down in a notebook and store them in a secret place in your desk.

-Backup Plans: What will happen if your forces are defeated and the enemy takes out your computer?

Solution: Store copies of your files on a floppy disk, tape, or CD. Most computers are bundled with backup software.

BB Lee is Editor/Publisher of SmallBizBits Newsletter
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