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**TRINUS**  
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**GETTING YOU BACK TO WORK**

## **Spyware Scare**

"Spyware" is the common phrase that refers to malicious files or programs that infect a person's computer, usually without their knowledge or express consent. It can also be referred to as adware, malware, scumware, system monitors, key-loggers, Trojan horses, and unwanted cookies. Use this article to find out how this is infecting the personal and corporate computer, and what you can do to battle this widespread problem.

According to a survey completed by *Watchguard Technologies* in January of 2005, two-thirds of Corporate IT administrators think that spyware is a bigger threat than viruses or other security concerns on their network. However, most of them still admit that viruses are still their main focus in regards to security on the client computers. The same group also indicated that almost 75% of their end users have no idea what spyware is.

Further research conducted by *The Ponemon Institute* suggests that other users are not much better off. They report that 84% of heavy Internet users have experienced spyware infections over the last year. Of that 84%, the following was determined:

- 42% have no idea how the programs were installed
- 38% said the spyware came from downloading "free" software
- 8% reported the malicious software downloaded automatically off a web site

Through the same study, it was also determined that poor user habits are as much to blame for spyware infections as anything else. This is indicated by the many who admitted to downloading free programs, such as file-sharing programs or games. Further, most respondents admitted they did not read the license agreements before downloading programs, and had no idea how companies make money by giving away free software. With these user habits entrenched, it is no wonder that this spyware "market" generates over 2 billion annually by delivering advertising through pop-up ads, hijacked home pages, and redirected searches.

So how can we combat this wide-spread problem? Trinus recommends the following best practices for keeping up the fight for your organization.

- Get an automated anti-spyware software package that scans your systems on a regular basis. Trinus recommends LavaSoft's Ad-Aware, which starts at \$50.00 per stand alone workstation, or \$400.00 for the network version (10+ licenses)
- Install Windows and other software updates. Spyware companies tend to exploit known software vulnerabilities
- Educate and train your users as to how spyware works, and how to avoid being infected

Trinus Technologies can supply your organization with anti-spyware tools, as well as a proactive maintenance plan to help rid your network of this major security threat. Contact Jason today through the Trinus office at 877-489-9985 or via e-mail [jvance@trinustech.com](mailto:jvance@trinustech.com) for a custom solution that will address your needs.