

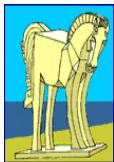


The Paper Modem

August 2004 Volume 4 Issue 7

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EARTHLINK & WEBROOT SOFTWARE RELEASED A REPORT, REVEALING THAT NEARLY ONE OF EVERY THREE COMPUTERS SCANNED IN APRIL FOR TROJAN HORSE PROGRAMS OR SYSTEM MONITOR SPYWARE WAS INFECTED.

Internet access provider EarthLink and security software maker Webroot scanned nearly 421,000 computers for their April Spy Audit Report. Trojan horses and system monitors accounted for 133,715 pieces of the Spyware found on those computers--representing almost one in three machines. System monitors track

users' computer activity, capturing virtually everything they do online. Trojan horses appear to be software programs a user has requested but actually aid hackers in stealing computer data. That information is then used to gain unrestricted access to users' computers while they are online. "Consumers should be aware of the applications and files residing and running on their machines," Matt Cobb, Earthlink's core applications vice president, said in a statement. "While certain types of spyware are malicious, other programs can be used to improve their Internet experience." Security experts note that the damage from Trojan horses or system monitors can sometimes be more severe than adware and adware cookies typically found on PCs. When adding all four types of

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A clean desk is a sign of a cluttered desk drawer

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spyware found on the scanned computers during April, the Spy Audit Report found 11.3 million instances of spyware on the computers. That averaged 26.9 pieces of spyware per machine. In March, 237,200 PCs were scanned, with 7.1 million pieces of Spyware found on

the computers. That averaged 30 pieces of spyware per PC, according to the report.

Submitted by: Greg Wilson



IF HARD-DRIVE MAKER MAXTOR AND NETWORKING COMPANY LINKSYS HAVE THEIR WAY, YOUR EXTERNAL HARD DRIVE IS ABOUT TO BECOME VERY EXTE-

TERNAL. The companies announced a partnership featuring a \$99 Linksys device that lets an external hard drive connect to a wireless router, allowing PCs to tap into the storage and share files without any physical link to the drive. The joint effort is geared toward small offices and homes. The latter is a crowded market, overflowing with companies pitching home networking-technology. Maxtor and Linksys--a Cisco Systems unit--are marketing products together and tout a common set of instruc-

tions for tying drives to routers with what's dubbed the "Linksys Network Storage Link." Those common instructions reflect an attempt to make the technology easy to install. Small businesses "need stuff that's going to be really simple," said Stephen DiFranco, vice president of corporate and brand marketing at Maxtor. "They don't have an IT (information technology) department to set things up." Bob O'Donnell, analyst at research firm IDC, said the technology seems like a miniature version of so-called network-attached storage, which refers to specialized computers that serve up files over networks and are typically found in larger companies. "It's bringing network-attached storage down from the high end of the enterprise to the small office and home," he said. "It's just a logical extension." Products to store data and zap it around homes are proliferating as companies try to help consumers manage the digitalization of entertainment. The devices include the Mirra "Personal Server" and a new product from Apple Computer that acts as both a portable wireless base

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A conclusion is the place where you got tired of thinking

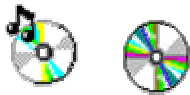
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station and a way to stream music throughout the home. The Linksys Network Storage Link connects to an external hard drive through one of two USB ports and includes a file management system, the

companies said. It is designed to work with a wired or wireless network, and to work with other external drives apart from Maxtor products.

Submitted by: Greg Wilson

*The Globe and Mail
Monday, July 26, 2004
By MARY NERSESSIAN*



COMMUNICATION BREAKDOWN: CDS AREN'T FOREVER AFTER ALL

When compact discs first appeared in the 1980s, they were hailed as the medium guaranteed to provide "a lifetime of listening enjoyment."

But recent evidence suggests that CD owners may outlive their music collection.

CD deterioration may start with a smattering of pinpricks or what appears to be rust creeping inwards from the edge of the disc. Certain tracks jump or emit clicking noises. Eventually, the CD loses all data and is better used as a shiny coaster.

Dan Koster first noticed signs of deterioration in his CD collection in 1997. The rot manifested itself as brownish patchy areas and a smattering of pinholes.

"When you hold a CD up to the light, you see the area where the light shines through," said Koster, web-content manager at Queen's University of Charlotte in North Carolina. He esti-

mates that 10 to 15 per cent of his almost 3,000-CD collection -- both major and independent labels -- show signs of deterioration.

"Even as recently as this year, I have taken off the plastic wrap and seen rotting," he said.

Koster says he kept his CDs properly stored, away from direct light and in a cool environment free of humidity. He backed up the CDs that began deteriorating a few years ago. They are now completely unplayable, he says.

"On a few of them, the damage is so severe the aluminum can be rubbed off with your finger," he says.

The poorest-quality CDs will last less than 10 years and the best will last 50 or more, according to U.S. Library of Congress preservation specialist Michele Youket, who contacted Koster when she read about his CDs in an Associated Press article.

She is leading a four-year study that will help determine whether to transfer the library's CD data onto "a more stable medium."

When Youket put Koster's CDs under the microscope, she saw "black swirly areas, almost like cumulus clouds . . . it looks like something

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Bills travel through the mail at twice the speed of cheque's

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is being eaten away."

Library of Congress researchers have completed the testing process during which discs were "soaked" in varying temperature and humidity levels in an accelerated aging process. Youket was unable to confirm how many years of aging the testing amounts to.

Although the testing is over, the scientists have not yet completed the data analysis. The impending results could prove to be significant for record companies and music aficionados worldwide.

But Youket says, "All media will degrade over time if they are made from organic materials."

CD rot may be caused by air sneaking under improperly sealed edges or incorrectly applied lacquer. Air and moisture oxidize the aluminum layer, which creates the appearance of rust, Youket explains.

"We've been seeing that, in general, the discs do hold up quite well. The problems are in the older discs where they don't seal the edges very well," Youket said from her office in Washington.

She has seen the aluminum layer on some compact discs become completely transparent after undergoing the testing process. CDs that have had a low number of errors after the accelerated aging include Conjecture's 1992 album *Eyes and Ears*, Tommy Castro's 1997 *Can't Keep a Good Man Down* and Stratton's 1995 *Check out the Beat Side*.

CDs with a high number of errors after testing include the Jordanaires' 1997 *The Jordanaires Sing Elvis' Favorite Gospel Songs* and the

Jets' 1998 *Then and Now*, which was completely unplayable due to the blistering of the aluminum layer under the silver paint.

Music lovers may need to haul their dusty record players out of retirement. It seems records really do keep spinning right round, baby.

John Fodi, the University of Toronto's Faculty of Music technical librarian, says more than 50,000 of the library's 78 rpm records are in playable condition.

Some of them are more than 100 years old.

"If they've been well taken care of, some are better than CDs. I do have some albums that sound better on vinyl," he said.

Although both CDs and records are stored at carefully monitored temperatures, "I'll tell you [records] seem to last much better. You don't even need special equipment," Fodi said.

He explains that vinyl records can be played even without a record player or electricity.

All it would take is a horn of paper with a needle on the end, and a pencil in the record's hole to keep it spinning, Fodi said.

"It's a simpler technology," he said.

He can tell CDs are deteriorating when "the last tracks slowly but surely begin bronzing, and as you get to the end of the CD you hear little clicks.

The longer they sit on the shelf the more information disappears."

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Double your drive space. Delete Windows

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The library replaced 900 CDs after discovering they were corroding because of the paper booklets, which were high in sulphur.

They were produced in Britain in the late 1980s and early 1990s, and the manufacturers replaced them for free.

When asked about the best medium for preservation, Youket says "paper," without skipping

a beat.

"Good-quality paper will last for a very long period of time, in good storage conditions."

You might not be able to hear the music, but you can keep a record of the composition on paper, she explains.

Even thousands of years? "Easily."

Submitted by: Kate Compton



NUMBER OF NEW VIRUSES IN MAY HITS 30— MONTH HIGH !!!

The number of new viruses released on the Internet in May hit a two-and-a-half-year high

last month, an anti-virus vendor said Wednesday. Five new viruses released in May made Sophos's Top 10 for the month. Included are Sasser, Netsky-Z, Sober-G, Bagle-AA, and Lovgate-V, the company said. Sasser led the pack in the number of infected machines reported.

Sophos found a total of 959 new viruses on the Internet in May, the highest number since December 2001. The number includes new viruses that were variants of older viruses.

Submitted by: Greg Wilson



Energizer Bunny arrested and charged with battery



COMPANIES BRACE FOR MICROSOFT SECURITY UPDATE

Monday, July 19, 2004 Posted: 10:13 AM EDT (1413 GMT)

SEATTLE, Washington (AP) -- As a vice president at security software leader Symantec Corp., Matthew Moynahan applauds Microsoft Corp.'s effort to make its Windows operating system safer from attack.

But Moynahan is not so excited about the

flood of help-desk calls almost certain to come when Microsoft releases a comprehensive security overhaul of Windows XP next month. His company's Norton anti-virus software runs on about 100 million desktop computers.

To make the new Microsoft system work smoothly with Norton, customers will need to download a Norton update. The company is already bracing for the change, working with its customer support staff and making plans to increase phone support.

Read More ...

<http://www.cnn.com/2004/TECH/ptech/07/19/microsoft.security.ap/index.html>

Submitted by: Y. Bulger

Tips & Tricks

MS Windows Error Messages

is a small utility that will allow you to look up MS Windows error code numbers and display a descriptive message explaining what the numeric code actually means. If you have software programs that produce numeric error codes, now you can find out what they really mean. The program also provides an option to display or print all of the error codes and messages defined for your version of Windows. Free download for Windows 98/ME/2000/XP at - <http://www.snapfiles.com/get/mserrors.html>

Office XP: Blocking Automatic Task Panes

One of the features introduced in Office XP was the Task Pane -- a set of quick options or actions off to the right side of the document work area. As useful as the Task Pane is, it can also be annoying. Luckily, you can stop it from opening automatically when you start an application.

1. Use the *Tools/Options* command.
2. Click on the *View tab*. (In FrontPage, click on the *General tab*.)
3. In the *Show* section, be sure the *Startup Task Pane* box is not checked.

Submitted by: Greg Wilson



How many of you believe in telekinesis? Raise my hand



Don't Be A Service Pack Pioneer

SP2 will include improvements to WinXP's built-in fire-wall, a pop-up ad blocker, anti-spyware features, and a number of other changes aimed at making WinXP a more secure operating system. Users will be able to download XP SP2 for free, but if past is prologue, the old saying "Pioneers get arrows, settlers get land," will apply to those who install SP2. For those who missed the excitement the first time around, SP1, released in September 2002, filled a graveyard with pioneers. On one popular Web site that allows users to review software, 49% of the 300 reviews of WinXP SP1 are negative. Users reported the following types of problems after installing SP1:

If you're planning to install SP2, I advise you to wait until two months *after* it is released. (If you're only a few months away from buying a new computer and disposing of the old one, you probably shouldn't install SP2 at all.) Two months should be sufficient time for the pioneers to discover the problems caused by SP2.

Although waiting two months leaves your computer more vulnerable to hackers, the downside of installing SP2 too soon may be far worse. That's because each new Windows service pack seems to include more bugs and features. No, that's not a misprint. "Feature" is my term for a new feature that

gives users fits because it is designed improperly and/or is enabled by default. For example, when Outlook Express 6.0 was

released, users found that they could no longer open email attachments. That's because Microsoft decided to add *and enable by default* a feature that prevents users from opening attachments that "potentially could be a virus." The problem is that the default setting prevents *any* attachments from being opened. Although you can configure this feature to block only certain types of attachments, I think that the best solution is to disable it and allow your antivirus software to do its job.

WinXP SP2 will also cause users some fits.

A Microsoft spokesman has already stated that because of the way Microsoft is changing some defaults, some older, less secure applications may no longer run on your machine. By waiting, you accomplish four things:

1. You give the pioneers a chance to identify and report all of the bugs in SP2 so that Microsoft can develop patches. This means that when you finally install the service pack, you will also install a number of Microsoft Critical Updates that rectify all of the reported problems.

2. You give users a chance to discover all of the new features in SP2 and provide instructions on how to reconfigure or disable these features.

You give other software vendors time to ensure that their applications work under SP2.

Most importantly, you save yourself a ton of grief.



If at first you don't succeed, skydiving is not for you

By IAN JOHNSON
Globe and Mail Update
June 19, 2004



Here's the thing about vinyl. It's fine when you want to play DJ at your dinner parties, but when it comes to taking your tunes on the road, you need to go digital.

Starting out with a decent turntable makes it all the more worthwhile, because this is an up close and personal process – you'll have to record the songs in real time rather than the high-speed dubs possible with a computer and an audio CD.

First, choose your format. You can transfer records to CD-recordable (CD-R) discs as large CD audio files, or save several albums on a single high-capacity DVD disc that will play in newer DVD players.

Alternatively, if you save the music as compressed MP3 or WMA digital files that can be read by computers and modern CD players, you can get hundreds of songs on a single CD-R disc (this kind of copying for personal use is legal in Canada).

All you really need is the standard audio hardware in today's desktops and notebooks, along with a good stereo system, a patch cord, software and some time. The tedious bit is typing in all the song, album and artist information for each track yourself, but the payback is that

you can use the recording software to make the files sound better than what you started with.

First the hardware. The cheapest option is to buy a patch cable for around \$15 from the local electronics store, and run it from the line-out or tape-monitor jack of your stereo system into the line-in jack of your computer's sound card.

Another option is a little box called a pre-amp that boosts the signal directly from your turntable so that your sound card can "hear" it, without having to use a stereo amplifier (so you only have to move your turntable over to your PC, not the whole stereo system). A stand-alone pre-amp starts at around \$50, or there are some made specifically for a PC, such as the XPsound XP201, which mounts right into a computer drive bay. A company called Plus-Deck even sells a cassette deck for a PC drive bay if you have a massive tape collection to convert.

Products such as Clean Plus from Pinnacle Systems bypass your sound card's inputs and transfer digital music signals to the computer over a USB cable. Griffin Technologies has a dirt-cheap USB connection cable that runs between Macs and a turntable, as well as a more elaborate and expensive pre-amp with line-level jacks.

Once you have your turntable or cassette deck linked to your computer, software comes into play.

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For Sale: Parachute. Only used once, never opened, small stain

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During the two month waiting period, read computer magazines and surf WinXP Web forums to learn about the bugs and futures discovered in SP2. Try visiting the Windows XP Annoyances.Org forum at <http://www.annoyances.org/exec/forum/winxp> and the Windows XP Gripes forum at <http://www.computergripes.com/WindowsXP.html>. Microsoft also provides WinXP forums at <http://www.microsoft.com/windowsxp/experzone/default.aspx>.

When you *do* decide to install SP2, I urge you to make a backup of your hard drive just prior to installing the service pack. This

way, if SP2 precipitates a computer disaster, you can immediately restore your computer to its previous stable configuration.

Immediately after installing SP2, test all of your applications and hardware to make certain they function properly.

You can find more info about SP2 at <http://msdnmicrosoft.com/security/productinfo/XPSP2/default.aspx>.

Good luck and watch out for those arrows!

Story by: Alan Luber
www.pcfearfactor.com

Submitted by: G. Bulger



What's up on in August

August 11th—Ev Mudryk of Hennesy Information Systems will be showing everyone how to do simple web pages using Word, PowerPoint and Publisher.

August 17th—Tips & Tricks—Greg & Wes—not to be missed as the last tips & tricks one was a great success



Quantum mechanics: The dreams stuff is made of