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Technology Alliance - Article 1

The Browser, the Internet & You

One of the most dangerous tools for infecting your computer is one that you, if you're anything like the average computer user, are using everyday! Once infected, a computer can and often does fall victim to a whole host of ailments: everything from crashes to computer slow-downs to absolute failure to boot up. Your unique identity, credit card and personal banking information can be stolen. Occasionally all of the above happens.

Sound frightening? It is, and it's happening to countless computer users the world over. Why? Because of the internet browser they are using. Ah, yes... Internet Explorer, the web surfing tool bundled with the Microsoft Operating System (OS.) Don't bother to try and remove it because you can't! Microsoft built Internet Explore into its OS in such a way that the two are one. Don't bother getting upset over it. Microsoft has already been sued, to no avail, over this bundling business.

Instead, choose a different Browser to surf the web, in this case, what you don't use won't hurt you. There are two Internet Browsers that I recommend: Firefox by Mozilla & Opera by Opera Software. The reason these Browsers are safer than Internet Explorer (I.E.) is twofold. First, every hacker out there targets Microsoft's browser exactly because it is the most used. Second I.E. has a scripting language built into it called "Active X." While Active X allows neat things to be done through your browser and to your computer, it is also true that malicious Active X codes now abound on the internet. All you have to do is go to the wrong website and bang! You're infected! With the sheer number of websites and the advanced skills of the underworld of hackers, nearly any site could become the unsuspecting host of these malicious codes. While "Active X" can be installed in Firefox and possible in Opera, it is not installed in either by default.

So the good news is that you don't have to give up your ticket to the world's largest library. Just download one or both of these free Browsers and you're set. To recap then, because neither Firefox nor Opera use "Active X" natively, you are able to avoid being infected by websites that knowingly or unknowingly have code that exploit Active X. By changing the Browser that you surf the web with (Internet Explorer) you have successfully removed you & your computer from the highly targeted zones allotted to browsers like Internet Explorer. All you need to do is simply type "Opera" or "Firefox" into your preferred search engine (Google, Yahoo or DogPile for example) and follow the link to the download site. Once you've determined that it's a safe legitimate source click on the download button and then install the Browser. There should not be any forms or online paperwork to fill out and of course no money paid. Now that you know what you can do to better secure your computers take the time to do this for your other systems and your family members. As a parting tip, if and when you start to see Firefox on everyone else PC, it's a good time to switch Browsers to Opera or another lesser focused on (targeted) Browser... Good health to you and your computer(s)!

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