

The SAGATUG

INTERFACE

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The San Gabriel Valley Technology User's Group. The Club for TRSDOS and MS-DOS

Spyware Demystified

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So, what is spyware?


Spyware is perhaps best described as split-personality software. It resides on your computer's hard drive and usually has a practical and attractive set of primary features. This core functionality has nothing to do with spying. It might be a utility or an mp3 player or some kind of game, and it's usually offered as a kind of free-ware. The problem is, apart from its primary features, spyware also has a second, less conspicuous component. This second component gathers information about your computing habits and sends that information over the Internet to the software's publisher. Because this secondary action often goes on without your knowledge, software with this kind of dual functionality has come to be known as spyware.

How does spyware end up on my computer?

If there's spyware on your computer, it's likely you installed it yourself. When you downloaded that free music player or utility, you may not have known the software was also designed to collect and transmit information about you. In most cases, publishers disclose this secondary functionality in end-user agreements. However, as you well know, most of us never read end-user agreements, at least not completely. We just click OK and go, especially when we're downloading free-ware. And sometimes, even if you read an entire agreement, the description of the spyware component is too ambiguous to make clear what the component does. In any case, there may be spyware on your computer, and you may be wondering whether it's dangerous, or even legal.

Most spyware has a legitimate purpose

Although some spyware has been used to make malicious attacks or to further identity theft, most spyware is a legal, if annoying, technology. It's often used to gather data for marketing purposes and therefore has a valid, generally benign purpose. In some cases, it may even make your online commercial experience more focused and convenient. For example, some spyware tracks the kinds of online ads you choose to follow. The publisher uses this data to replace random ads with those relating to your areas of interest. The net result is the ads you see in your software's interface become more relevant to you. However, some users may be averse to this kind of market



Memory Jogger...
See you at the next SAGATUG meeting this Friday, April 11, 2003 from 7 to 10 p.m. at the Arcadia Park Senior Citizen's Center, 405 S. Santa Anita Ave. (See page four for directions and more upcoming events.)

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profiling and prefer not to trade their privacy for commercial convenience. Because of this, and because spyware can be a tool for bad actors, this begs the question: Is there anything you can do to control spyware on your computer? Fortunately, there is.

Be proactive with spyware

There are several preventative measures you can take to identify spyware and to make informed decisions about whether you want it on your machine.

Be selective about what you install on your computer. If you don't have a reason to trust the company providing a piece of freeware, hold them to increased scrutiny. Visit their Web site to learn more about the people behind the technology, as well as the technology itself.

Don't just click those "Yes, I accept" buttons when installing freeware. Instead, read each license agreement carefully, and look for language pertaining to spyware activity.

Beware of programs that flash ads in the user interface. Many spyware programs track how you respond to these ads, and their presence is a red flag. When you see ads in a program's user interface, you may be looking at a piece of spyware.

Use only trusted download sites, some of which now indicate which of the freeware products they offer have a spyware component.

How to control spyware already on your computer

Once you've installed a piece of spyware and accepted its end-user agreement, the spyware component will go to work. While you're enjoying the main freeware features—listening to music or playing games—the information-gathering tool is functioning in the background. Without some sort of Internet security tool, the spyware will continue working indefinitely, routinely sending information to the publisher. However, a security program like [Norton Internet Security™](#) with [Norton™ Personal Firewall](#) can detect and stop spyware in its tracks.

Norton Personal Firewall monitors when any application, whether it's spyware or a Web browser, attempts to access the Internet. If you haven't already told the firewall to allow a program to connect to the Internet, it will prevent that program from connecting, send you an alert, and ask what action you'd like to take.

At some point all spyware will attempt to connect to the Internet, and when this happens, Norton Personal Firewall will be there to block the program and ask you what to do. Then it's up to you to say yes or no to the spyware activity. You can either keep it (perhaps you see the information it gathers as a kind of "payment" for the freeware you're using), or you can remove it.

If you decide to remove spyware, make sure you delete the entire program. Sometimes uninstall programs only remove the primary software features and leave the spyware component in place. You may want to use a housekeeping utility like Norton CleanSweep™ in [Norton SystemWorks™](#) to make certain there aren't residual spyware elements on your computer.

In the end, there are several things you can do to ease your mind about spyware. You can be careful about the freeware you download, taking the time to read end-user agreements with care.

You can research the companies who make spyware and decide whether you want them to know about you and your surfing habits. And, once spyware is on your computer, you can use a product like [Norton™ Personal Firewall](#) to monitor and control the software's Internet use. These basic steps put you in control and take a great deal of mystery out of this shadowy figure with the enigmatic name.



The Jam Cam 3.0 (a Review)

by *Danniel Jacobsen*, email *danniel@accesswest.com* (Provided by APCUG)

Here we are again. The wonderful world of amateur photography. If you are like me you love to take photographs. Thankfully my children love to have there pictures taken. They hear the word cheese and there are three big smiles.

The one thing I don't really like about photography is having to wait for the pictures to be developed. Or remembering to take the pictures in to have them developed. Well the computer age has changed that for us. There is a world full of digital cameras. You can click and load and see what you hopefully took a picture of all in a matter of minutes.

I have been using the JamCam. It is a cute little inexpensive (under \$100.) camera. Let me tell you a little about it.

The package the comes with the camera, software, and the cables.

The camera contains many features: It has an on and off button. the same button will also change the menu settings. The menu button has 5 options. You can set it for self timer, set the flash on or off or set it to automatic. There is a resolution setting. To go between r1 or r2. . You can clear all pictures. And the most important one. You can take pictures.

There is also a battery indicator to tell you when you battery if full ,half, low, or empty.

Most of the feature are pretty self explanatory. But maybe I should take a minute to explain the r1 and the r2.

The r1 (320x240) gives you 28 pictures to take. They are much smaller picture and the quality is not as clear ans the r2.

The r2 (640x480) gives you 8 pictures to take. They are a much clear picture then the r1.

There is also the option of adding more memory to your camera by purchaing a Sandisk

MULTIMEDIA Card. This will let you take more pictures before you have to download them. A 16 mb Sandisk will let you take 61 pictures. I'm not sure if this is in low or high resolution.

Once you have taken all the pictures for a session then you need to load them onto you computer. You can do this two was. With the serial cable or the USB cable. After you decided which to use it is a simple process of loading your software and the hook up the camera and load in your pictures.

The software does a lot of your work on your pictures after you have downloaded them from the camera. It also gives you the options of saving your photos, sharing your photos, printing your photos, or doing a project with them. Projects gives you the option of using online projects or using Adobe PhotoDeluxe, which the software also loads on your computer for you to use on editing your photos.



**Next SAGATUG Meeting
Time and Place:**

7 to 10 p.m., Friday, April 11, 2003

**Arcadia Park Senior Citizen's Center, 405 South
Santa Anita Avenue, Arcadia.**

(In the park just south of Huntington Drive)

Meetings are on the second Friday of every month

Club Officers and Board Members:

President	John Calhoun, john@sagatug.org
Vice President	Royal Brown
Treasurer	Art Heywood, heywoodm@worldnet.att.net
INTERFACE Editor	Bob Allen, boballen99@earthlink.net
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Webmaster, SAGATUG.org	John Calhoun, john@sagatug.org

Upcoming Events:

Manhattan Beach, last Saturday, monthly, TRW
Swap Meet, Admission Free.

Santa Ana, last Sunday of each odd month, ACP,
1310 E. Edinger, Admission Free.

Pomona Swap Meet 3rd Saturday, monthly, at Cal
Poly Pomona, 3801 W. Temple Ave., Admission Free

Pomona Fairplex, April 26 & 27 in bldgs. 6 & 7 at LA
Fair grounds, Gate 14, Admission \$7, plus parking.

Burbank, June 21 & 22, 2003(Sat. & Sun.), Hilton
Burbank Airport & Convention Center, 2500
Hollywood Way, Burbank, CA 91505. 10 a.m. to 5
p.m. \$5 admission

Costa Mesa, April 12 & 13, bldg. 12, 2002, Orange
County Fair and Exposition Center, 88 Fair Drive,
Costa Mesa, CA 92626, 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., \$5
admission

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Deadline for the Newsletter

The deadline for the INTERFACE is the last
Saturday of the month.

Republication:

Articles may be republished if credit is given to
the author and the San Gabriel Valley
Technology User's Group.

**Please visit the new SAGATUG website
at www.sagatug.org There you will find
photos of the meeting site, maps to the
meeting, articles from other sources and
an archive of the *SAGATUG Interface*.**

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