

Abort, Retry, Ignore...



Computers Are Easy User Group

August 2001

Suggested Retail Price \$1.95

Volume XIV

Issue 8



Can Spam by Brian Backman

Anyone who has had an e-mail account for more than twenty three and a quarter milliseconds has received Spam, so there's no need for a lengthy description of it.

Basically, Spam is unsolicited advertising e-mail messages. It is also a really tasty meat product that goes great with pineapples and sliced jalapenos, but that's not the kind we're dealing with here.

My goal for this article is to give you a few pointers on how to reduce the amount of Spam you receive or possibly eliminate it, and some ways to deal with it when you do get it. Before we get started, you should understand that there are two kinds of e-mail advertising.

Opt-in and Opt-out

Opt-out is Spam. Opt-in is any sort of commercial mail, such as newsletters, catalogs and sales flyers that you have agreed to accept. Usually, you agree to accept these as a condition, reward or benefit of registering with an online service (remember PriceLine?). Be careful about the difference. If you get a message that you believe is Spam, think first about any agreements you may have made recently. It would be really poor form to report a legitimate, sweet, loving, angelic emailer as a putrid tool of the Devil, Spammer.

With that in mind, to the ramparts!

Attempt to Eliminate

I don't believe that you can totally eliminate Spam, but this is as close as you can get: Filter out mail from any sender whose address is not in your address book. This is the anti-social method, but absolutely the most effective. Set up your mail system so that it will compare the sender's address to those in your address book. If the sender's address does not match anything in your address book, the mail will be rejected or redirected away from your inbox. This is fairly simple to set up, though not all mail systems offer this feature. Using Hotmail as an example, go to Options, then Inbox Protector under Mail

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Calendar
of
Events

!!! IMPORTANT !!!
Meeting dates for
2001
See page 10
for all
confirmed
dates.
Time and Place
remain the same.

Upcoming
CAEUG PICNIC
Saturday,
August 25
2001
11:00-3:00

Map &
Directions
on
page 4

SEE YOU
THERE!!

Computer Central

Next show date
SUNDAY, Aug 26
 College of Dupage
 9:30 A.M. to 3:00 P.M.
 Chicagoland's Oldest and Largest
 Multi-Vendor PC Show & Sale for
 Home and Business

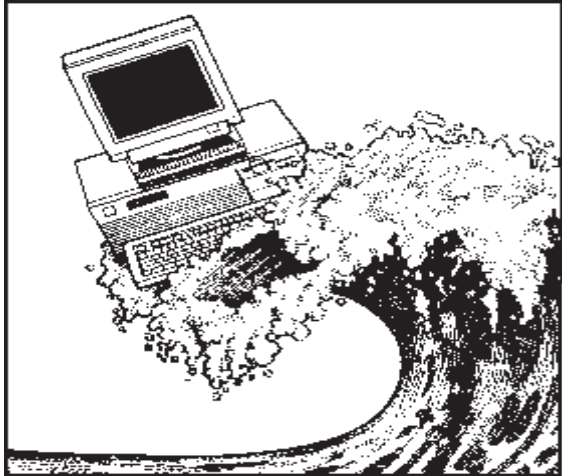
COLLEGE OF DUPAGE
 Main Arena of Physical Education Building
 Corner of Park Blvd & College Road
 Glen Ellyn, IL
FREE PARKING
 Admission - \$6.00
 (With this coupon admission \$5.00)
www.computercentralshows.com
 E-mail address:
compcent@megsinet.net

COMPUTERCENTRAL
 2001 dates
 August 26
 September 30
 COD

PICTURE YOUR AD HERE!
FREE !!

IF YOU ARE A MEMBER OF CAEUG THIS SPACE
 COULD SELL ANY COMPUTER
 RELATED ITEM FREE OF CHARGE.

JUST CONTACT ANY CLUB OFFICERS
 OR THE NEWSLETTER EDITOR TO PLACE YOUR AD IN
 THE NEWSLETTER.



In order to have your article or item for sale appear in ARI they must be received by the 10th of the month prior to publication.

MEMBERS HELPLINE

Any member with a specific expertise can volunteer to be on the Members Helpline. Contact Carl Schow.

Beginners Helpline.....Billy Douglas

Beginner hardware problems.....Dick Fergus

QuickBooks, Turbo Tax, IBM Lotus, MS Excel, Corel's Quattro Pro....Terry Moye

Win 9x, NT, 2K.....Rick Scalzo
 e-mail.....mitsufan@webcentrix.net

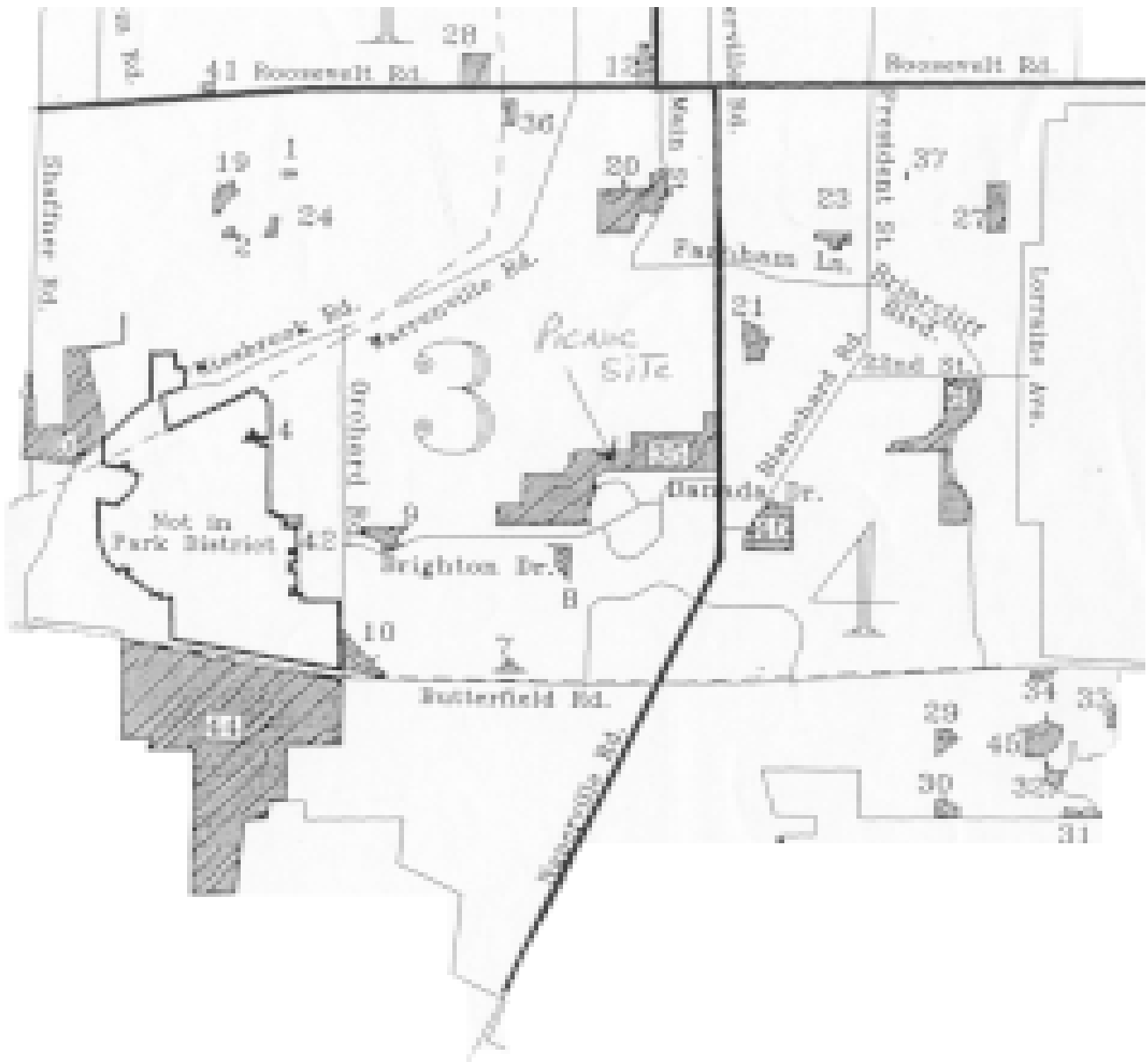
Hardware problems & WIN NT4, Linux.....John Spizzirri

Start UP Discussion Group

Ask questions and discuss computer experiences with the Start UP group.
 Such as:

1. New to Computers? (basic topics)
2. How to use the Web or download information
3. How to install hardware/software
4. Discuss how to troubleshoot hardware conflicts, learn boot up emergency tricks
5. What do you want to know??

Meets before regular meeting from
 9:15 to 9:45



CAEUG Picnic Directions

Directions to CAEUG Picnic at Seven Gables Park:
 From Naperville and Butterfield Roads head NORTH on Naperville Road 0.8 mi.
 Turn left (WEST) on Danada Road.
 Follow Danada for 0.2 mi. to the stop sign at Brighton Road.
 Turn right (WEST) on Brighton Road.
 Stay on Brighton Road for 0.2 mi.
 Turn right (NORTH) onto Winner's Cup.
 Follow Winner's Cup 0.2 mi. to the entrance to Seven Gables Park . Entrance is on the left.
 A short distance into the park is a stop sign, At the stop sign turn right. That road will take you past the football field. We will be at the EAST end of the football field in an area that looks like a refreshment stand. □

Handling. For Level of Protection select Custom, and then check only—The senders address is in your Hotmail address book. If you really don't want to be bothered, you can also select the trash can as your discard folder.

While this method seems foolproof, I have heard anecdotal evidence that some Spam has slipped through, so I can't guarantee it. Also, remember that this will not protect you from any virus that an "approved" sender might mail you.

You should also keep in mind that this will prevent you from receiving any mail you have requested, such as newsletters you sign up for, unless you can get their address into your address book first.

This can be very annoying as when your Uncle Finster's lawyer sends you a message that the old boy is about to croak and you'll not get a dime of the inheritance unless you show up at his bedside pronto.

Anti-Spam Mail Accounts

This one usually incurs a fee, so move on if you're a cheapskate.

There are mail systems out there whose main claim to fame is the near total elimination of Spam, as well as aggressively reporting Spammers. These services use a combination of methods to prevent Spam. I'll give a quick description of the most famous one, SpamCop (URL listed at end). When you sign up with SpamCop, give them a list of approved sender addresses. Mail from these senders will pass through unimpeded, exactly as in the Hotmail example previously mentioned.

Now things get complicated. Any mail from a service provider that is on SpamCop's approved list, or that SpamCop has never heard of, will be passed through as well. Any mail from a service provider whose name is on the Evil Children of Satan list will be placed into a "holding area." The sender will receive an automated reply explaining that they've been blocked because their service provider is in league with the minions of Hades. The sender can then fire back a reply that he or she is not a spammer and this was a legitimate message. The mail will then be sent on to you.

If you do receive Spam, you report it to the mail service and they'll take care of reporting it. If a

provider causes a lot of complaints from members, then that provider will be considered scum of the earth and placed on the bad list.

You don't totally eliminate the Spam, but you do cut it way down and get the satisfaction that providers who generate a lot of Spam will be inconvenienced.

Try to Fight Back

Ah, you valiant fool. Do not go quietly. . . Rage, Rage!

Fighting back is OK as long as you understand that you will ultimately lose. At best, you may close down a few Spammer's accounts, but they will just open new ones. At worst, your mail account may become unusable.

But if you want to try...

When you open a message that turns out to be Spam, there will almost certainly be a link at the bottom that you can click on to cancel further messages. This seems pretty easy, just click and end the torment.

Right?

Don't you believe it!

What you're really doing is proving to the Spammer that your e-mail account is valid and that you read Spam. The vicious little insect will then sell your address to others of its species and you will be inundated.

You could try reporting the Spammer. This may give you some personal satisfaction, but don't think for a minute that it'll accomplish much.

First off, you'll need to set your e-mail system to "display full header information." What you're doing here is inserting all of the available routing history into the message when it's displayed, rather than just who sent it to you and the date of transmission.

This will, hopefully, give enough information to the Spammer's provider that they can track down the weasel.

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The Lamp Post

Number 21 by John Spizzirri
July 10, 2001



The Federal tax rebates are being sent out as you read this. Perhaps, you have gotten yours already. What to do with all that money is the question. If you are thinking of upgrading your machine, get memory. Right now it's the cheapest I have seen it ever. It is the easiest upgrade you can do. It will make your machine run faster. If you are thinking of getting a new machine, the rule of thumb is to replace your machine with a machine with 3 times the megahertz of your current machine. TigerDirect.com (<http://www.tigerdirect.com>) has super deals on new and refurbished machines (some as low as \$330). I'd guess they know the rebates are coming with that \$330 price. Another thought would be to get an operating system, so you won't be locked into Windows XP the next time you purchase a computer. Various distributions of Linux, Windows 98, Windows ME, and Windows 2000 are priced less than \$300.

Have you ever thought of owning a super computer? Don't have \$20 million? Now you can get a little piece of a super computer thanks to Uncle Sam. Sandia Laboratories operates under the auspices of the Department of Energy. It developed a Linux based clustering program that it offers on the Internet for free at <http://www.sandia.gov>. The whole story is in Information Week Magazine at <http://www.informationweek.com/thisweek/story/IWK20010628S0019>.

What's new on the Windows XP front? Last month I said the next few months would be interesting. I had no idea. Microsoft (MS) (<http://www.microsoft.com>) has filed an appeal of the latest ruling of the Appellate Court to the U.S. Supreme Court. The Department of Justice (DOJ) filed a brief, contesting the appeal (this brief was the first DOJ mention of XP by name). MS filed a brief contesting the DOJ brief. What is MS's point in these maneuvers? Delay. The Supreme Court does not start considering cases until September. If it declines to hear the MS appeal, the case cannot be sent back to the District Court for at least 6 weeks. If the Supreme Court decides to hear the appeal, the case would be put on the docket some time between the first week in October and the last week in March 2002. The decision would not be announced until 2002 some time. Either way, MS can meet its October 25 deadline for the release of XP without government interference. It is unlikely that DOJ will file for an injunction to stop the release of XP because the original case was not about XP but an earlier version of Windows and MS's operating practices.

JunkBusters (<http://www.junkbusters.com/>) with other privacy groups have complained to the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) that MS's Passport technology in WinXP violates consumer's privacy by allowing MS to track consumer Internet usage and buying patterns. They also claim that Passport, which stores personal information including credit card numbers, is insecure. MS says that what these groups have to say is not true.

(con't on page 7)

Kodak (<http://www.kodak.com>) took exception to XP features that prohibit use of Kodak photo ordering, photo printing, and digital camera interconnection services. Kodak screamed bloody murder (in the newspapers) and MS suddenly relented. XP will now allow a choice between MS photo services and Kodak. I wonder if those are the only two choices we will be allowed to have?

David Byrne, former vocalist of the Talking Heads, will be the singer for the XP theme song. This song will play the first time the Media Player is started. 'Start Me Up' by the Rolling Stones was the song that kicked off the campaign for Windows 95. David Byrne is known for his rendition of 'Psycho Killer'. If you buy XP, you can tell me how it sounds.

IBM (<http://www.ibm.com>) recently celebrated the 20th anniversary of the PC. The term PC was actually coined by Hewlett-Packard (<http://www.hp.com>) for its 911A calculator (circa 1968). Because of the IBM bureaucracy, the creators of the PC used off the shelf parts and MS software leaving ownership of these valuable items to their respective companies. The only thing that was truly IBM was the BIOS. That was swiftly reverse engineered creating the term 'IBM PC compatible'. The result was that 3 million units sold in the first 5 years. IBM tried to regain hardware dominance of the market with its MicroChannel architecture in the late 1980's. The industry and the consumers did not bite. IBM machines became IBM PC incompatible, causing a \$4 billion loss to IBM. I think we all can thank IBM for its invention. Without it I would not be writing this column nor would anyone in the club even know each other. I think that MS should look at the mistakes of IBM and take note. The consumer will only put up with so much, then look out.

AOL (<http://www.aol.com>) pulled a double cross on consumers this month. It announced last month that it was going to make AOL Messenger service interoperable with a major consumer instant messaging (IM) service. This was to be done because regulators demanded that AOL provide interoperability with another IM service in order to get approval for the Time-Warner purchase. This week they announced they were close to interoperability with Lotus. Those of you who use IM know full well that no one outside the business community uses Lotus. Yahoo! (<http://www.yahoo.com>) and Microsoft MSN are crying foul.

Princeton University professor, Edward Felten, headed a group of researchers from Princeton and Rice Universities and Xerox PARC in publishing their research on breaking the Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA) anti-piracy security. Last year the RIAA held a contest to see if any hackers or researchers could break their anti-piracy security that would prevent people from copying CDs. The prize was \$10,000. They awarded the money to some hackers in November. Felten and company had dropped out of the competition before the award. They previously tried to publish but were threatened with a lawsuit by RIAA. They counter sued in June, on the basis of free speech and academic freedom. The RIAA recently relented in the face of the lawsuit to let Felton publish. The RIAA has blundered through the copyright infringement law from the beginning. First they sue Napster for copyright violations. They offer money for people to break their code and when the code is broken they get upset. Songwriters are suing them because RIAA won't pay them for their

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copyrights. Now they are being sued for violating academic's free speech. This whole mess seems to be designed to get trial attorneys rich at the expense of free speech, artistic ownership and the Constitution.

NetZero (<http://www.netzero.net/>) will drop free Internet usage from 40 hours per month to 10 hours per month beginning in October. This drop in service is due to the economic slow down which has affected all Internet revenue streams including those of NetZero.

Paint the moon (<http://www.paintthemoon.org/>) is a sight that wants you if you have a laser pointer. The man who runs the sight wants to organize everyone in the country who has one of these devices. He wants all these gizmos pointed at the moon at the same time to see if the red color can be seen from earth. If you don't understand this, you are not alone.

Between you, me and The Lamp Post that's all for this month.

Minutes of CAEUG Meeting July 28, 2001

John Spizzirri called the meeting to order at 9:50 am.

There were 37 in attendance.

The next meeting is scheduled to be the Clubs picnic August 25, 2001, starting at 11am going to 3pm.

Raffle items included: an Idema 3D sound Card, the Corridor 7 CDROM game, and a PC Raider Joy Stick.

Volunteers for the COD show were discussed. Anyone willing to represent the club at the show can get a free admission. The show lets two members in free and the club will reimburse two other members who work at our table. The reimbursement does not happen until the next monthly meeting.

The minutes were approved as published in the Newsletter.

The Financial Report showed a starting balance of \$4,981.71, income of \$95.50 and expenses of \$89.87 for an ending balance of \$4,987.37.

OLD BUSINESS

Rick is still looking for a new projector

There was some discussion on the picnic.

New Business

Roger Kinzie donated a Brother ER-15 printer that was auctioned off for the benefit of the club.

The presentation was made by John Spizzirri on the Linux Operating System features.

Respectfully submitted,

Al Skwara

The downside is that the full display option takes up more space. It'll also insert a mountain of text into your mail when you forward messages. You can delete it, but it's extra work to do so.

Sooo, the question is, are you willing to put up with all the extra gobbeldygook just to report a Spammer?

Your email service provider's Help should tell you where to report Spammers, but usually it will be "abuse@" followed by the provider's name. For example, abuse@yahoo.com.

You need to forward the Spam message to the "abuse@" address, making sure that you have the full header showing. Now the problem with that is that you had to open the Spam to forward it. Guess what? The Spammer may now know that you read the message and you will again be inundated.

Maybe it's worth it to you just to report. However, I have reported Spammers numerous times and all it got me was some very nice automatic responses and an increase in Spam mail.

Now, you can use certain tools to try and trace the Spammers yourself and report them.

For example, Whois (<http://www.cix.co.uk/~net-services/spam/whois.htm>) from Net Services is supposed to show information on the originator of the mail. You can then send a complaint to their provider.

Another program from Net Services is Spam Hater (http://www.cix.co.uk/~net-services/spam/spam_hater.htm). This program is supposed to help you trace and report Spammers as well.

I haven't tried either (Whois is freeware by the way), but they may be worth a look.

Accept Fate, But Reduce the Pain

As you may have noticed by now, I'm a bit of a fatalist. Then too, I don't have time to go chasing Spammers and I'll bet you don't either. Of course, if you're truly committed to going after the vermin, I applaud you. If I were retired or even just single, I would certainly take a shot at them now and then.

All I do is delete any and all messages that I do not recognize.

That's it. The whole Tamale.

Spammers have a way to get notices that you opened their mail. I'll say it again, whenever you open a Spam message, the Spammer knows it. Now you have just verified that your address is valid. Your address will be sold. You will get more Spam. End of story.

Whenever I forwarded Spam from Hotmail accounts to abuse@hotmail to report them, I got replies that there was nothing that could be done because the addresses in the message were fake. Within days, I was flooded with Spam from hotmail addresses. The same results from Yahoo and Netscape. On and on.

When I started simply deleting the Spam, the volume slowly decreased.

Well, on my Hotmail account there is one other thing I do; perhaps your account has a similar feature. In Options go to Inbox Protector under Mail Handling. In the Level of Protection, select Custom and then check only—Your address appears on the "To:" or "Cc" line and The sender's address is in your Hotmail Address Book. This seems to have cut down on my Spam somewhat, but it's not certain.

Well, that's it. The sites listed next can give you much more information. If you really want to fight, check them out.

More Info and Help

Here are links to some sites that will give you more information and help on fighting Spam

- JMHO on Spam (<http://home.att.net/~marjie1/index.htm>): Great information site.
- Spam Cop (<http://spamcop.net/>): Spam free e-mail and reporting assistance along with more info.
- Fight Spam on the Internet (<http://spam.abuse.net/>): More info and some tools!
- Spam FAQ (www.mall-net.com/spamfaq.html): Some good resources, redundant info, a stirring call to arms!

Brian has worked in Tech Writing, Training, Quality Testing and Help Desk, as well as some Web Development. He is a regular at the Internet SIG.

CAEUG
P. O. Box 2727
Glen Ellyn, IL 60138

FIRST CLASS MAIL

Meeting place and date information:

The next REGULAR meeting will be held at the Glen Ellyn Library in Glen Ellyn at 9:45 am on
Saturday, PICNIC August 25, 2001

The library is located 1 block west of Citibank at the corner of Prospect & Duane FREE PARKING
Directions: Park to Duane; go west on Duane to Prospect Street. Please park at the West end of the
lot, away from the building. Thank you.

The meeting(s) are not library sponsored and all inquiries should be directed to Rick Scalzo at .
Individuals with disabilities who plan to attend this program and who require certain accommodations
in order to observe and/or participate in the program are requested to contact CAEUG president, Rick
Scalzo at , at least five (5) days prior to the program, so that reasonable accommodation can be made
for them.

Confirmed Meeting dates for 2001: August 25 CAEUG annual picnic Saturday,
September 22, October 27,
November (no meeting),
December 1 (Nov/Dec meeting),

Confirmed Meeting dates for 2002: January 26, February 23, March 23, April 27, May 25

Program for Saturday August 25
Annual CAEUG Picnic
See map and directions
on page 4