

BACKUP! BACKUP! BACKUP!

One thing I have learned over that past 25-30+ years in computers is that **Never Never Never** open an E-Mail attachment from anyone unless you are 110% sure that it is expected and verified. Trojans and Virus's sometimes infect some of your unskilled friends computers and the Virus/Trojan depends on you trusting your friends. Do not trust anyone, especially if you are not expecting a file from your friend/relative. The virus/Trojan will use your friends address book to send out copies of the virus/Trojan and if you open it. You will join the ranks of the virus/Trojan spreaders. Not good, I have never opened one of those greeting card type of messages from friends where you have to go to some site to view the "card", I don't recommend doing so.

Caution: Caution: Caution: Caution:

If your screen suddenly pops up and tells you that you have a virus and it tells you to click on the screen to scan your pc now. **Don't do it**, as that will probably ruin your day. These pop-ups most likely came to your computer via some web site that you visited that has been compromised by the bad guys. This can happen to some of the best and more popular ones and is one more reason to make sure that your browser is updated to the latest version. Whether you use Firefox, Internet Explorer or any of the other popular browsers, you can end up with this bad guy. It masquerades as "antivirus 2010" or any one of the other anti virus names. Do not click on anything, I recommend that you pull the power plug on your computer. I have never seen any system that would not recover from a power loss. By clicking on anything on the pop-up, you mostly likely will end up with the virus/Trojan installed on your computer. Of course a good Anti-Virus and firewall is a pre-requisite for safe computing. (If the pop-up is from your known, installed AV program then this of course does not necessarily apply.)

If you do click on the pop-up to purchase their program and end up giving them your credit card information, you can bet that within 15 minutes, someone is South America or Russia will be using your credit card information.

Anti-Virus/Firewall:

I have recommended Sunbelt Software's Anti-Virus/firewall--Viper for a long time. They have a new update version (as of 1 March) called Viper 4.0 (regular and Premium). It is pretty cheap for the warm fuzzy that it gives you when Vipre tells you that it has stopped an intrusion. Viper has a small footprint and is highly rated by most of the computer rags and other industry pundits. They have several different flavors, one being the "all you can eat" version for home use. It allows you to install it on all of your home computers for one price. Businesses can purchase a volume discount for 5 or more copies. I personally have used their products for several years and have been very pleased. Their new Vipre Premium includes a web filter and firewall.

<http://www.sunbeltsoftware.com> is their web site. I also have a link to their site on my home web page. If you happen to receive a virus/Trojan then you can download their FREE Viper rescue program which is available at <http://live.sunbeltsoftware.com>

Image Backup:

Of course you will feel much better if you end up having to reformat your hard disk to finally get rid of a virus or Trojan, if you have an image backup program like Acronis true image backup. CPCUG members can get a discount by purchasing through the User Group store at <http://ugr.com>. I have bought about 6 copies for all of my computers and a couple of friends. It is a versatile image backup program that has saved me a couple of times.

Well worth the investment in that it will really make you feel good when disaster happens, as it will eventually. Besides, The UGR store is run by an old friend of CPCUG, Gene Barlow and his lovely wife, Gene was a presenter at CPCUG meetings way back in the 1980's and always has supported User Groups.

MISC:

One problem that I have had users ask me about was whether to Upgrade or clean install of a new operating system. I almost every time have recommended that you do a clean install. Format a disk and do a complete install. I also recommend that users save their old hard disk, after all huge hard disks are getting pretty cheap and it will make you so happy when your system decides that the new install is all screwed up. Just put the old hard disk back in and you will be back on your old familiar Operating System. Then you can try again by making sure that you have all the device drivers and software for your new operating system. Also, many machines are capable of supporting more than one hard disk. Once you have your new Operating system working. You can install your old hard disk as the second drive and retrieve all the data that you have on it. Of course your applications software will have to be re-installed on your new hard disk. This is another good reason to always archive your program file updates and serial numbers.

I also do not recommend the average user install registry cleaners or programs that claim to make your computer faster by cleaning up the registry. Remember that the registry is the brains of your Microsoft Operating system, and it can get messed up which will ruin your whole day. Good luck!

Rich Schinnell is a long time member of Capital PC User Group Inc., Retired from the USN and Vitro Corporation for quite a few years. He has written his Rich's Ramblings for over 25 years and still does a bit of computer consulting for small business clients in keeping their networks running smoothly. He can be reached via e-mail at schinnel@cpcug.org and his web site is at [HTTP://www.schinnell.org](http://www.schinnell.org)

As a last resort contact Rich via land line (301) 949-9292

*I do not have any financial interest in these sites, outside of being able to purchase Sunbelt products for my clients at a discount. **I have purchased all the programs mentioned in my ramblings.**