



A Quarterly Publication From Your Friends At **FAST RHINO**

Fraudware

Avoiding the Deception



Scams over the Internet are abundant. Even if you have passed up the opportunity to help the late dictator of Nigeria (General Sanni Abacha, who recently died and now his widow wants your help getting his USD \$80 million out of the country), you might be more inclined to become a victim of fraudware.

Fraudware, also known as Scareware, is a misleading application that invades your PC and tricks you into thinking that your computer is infected with viruses. Often times these programs are downloaded to your computer through an infected codec (a piece of software that is required to watch an online video). Be on guard for programs like BrainCodec, PCodec or VideoKeyCodec. These are rogue codecs tied to fraudware.

Recently, we've seen systems infected by fraudware spread through emails purporting to come from UPS, FedEx, Reunion.com, and various online greeting card companies. As for UPS emails, these bogus messages inform users about packages that can not be delivered and directs them to open an attachment in order to claim the undelivered package(s). Once the user opens the attachment, the fraudware infects their system. It's easy to fall for such a scam because more and more companies are streamlining their communication processes over the Internet.

Fraudware creates registry entries for fake, non-existent malware that it then "detects" when it scans your PC. This tactic is used to scare you into purchasing their software. Ironically, even if you buy it, the fraudware doesn't go away.

A system infected with fraudware can cause extreme frustration for the user, since these programs are constantly running on the desktop and make it almost impossible to get anything done. Although many of these programs come with a removal option, if you attempt to uninstall them, they simply start back up again.

Many fraudware programs use viruses that are self-replicating, while others attach themselves to key system files, forcing a repair to the operating system, manual registry changes, or in some cases, reformatting the hard drive.

The criminals who create this garbage are quite intelligent and good at marketing. They name their products to sound legitimate. Below is a list of known fraudware programs to steer clear of:

WinFixer, WinAntiVirus, WinAntiVirusPro, ErrorSafe, SystemDoctor, DriveCleaner, WinAntiSpyware, AVSystemCare, WinAntiSpy, XPantivirus2008, Performance Optimizer, StorageProtector, PrivacyProtector, WinReanimator & PCTurboPro.

The best way to keep fraudware off your system is to avoid certain online behavior:

- Never click on banner ads that claim your system is infected or that offer free virus removal or scans.
- Only open e-mails from trusted sources. Think twice before opening attachments.
- Keep your antivirus subscription up to date.
- If you download a file, use your antivirus software to scan it before opening or executing.
- Keep your Windows Updates current.
- Avoid file-sharing programs.
- Back up your hard drive files on a regular basis.

If you have questions about fraudware, or if you think your system may be infected, call Fast Rhino at (520) 818-9650 or email us at info@fastrhino.com.

What's Inside!!!

Hasta La Vista

Extending Battery Life

Making Strong Passwords

Web Development

Tech Product Review



Hasta La Vista

There's a New Operating System In Town

Just when you thought it was safe to upgrade to Vista, Microsoft is at it again. The company's major focus is on their next generation of Windows, not at all creatively named "Windows 7". Originally, they slated their ship date for January 2010, but Microsoft's internal calendar has June 3, 2009 as the planned release date. Next year's promise doesn't necessarily mean anything, though; Vista was originally expected to ship in 2003. In reality, it took Microsoft four years to finally release it. What makes the 2009 release date of Windows 7 more believable however, is that the beta version is set to release later this month at the MS Professional Developers Conference in Los Angeles.

Inside sources at Microsoft confirm that pre-beta versions have already been made available to partners for hardware and software certification. Windows 7 is not a whole new operating system but an evolution of Vista, reusing the kernel (core code) and device driver model. This means that existing devices that work under Vista will also work on Windows 7.

What exactly can we expect from Windows 7, apart from it having several similarities to Vista? For one, Microsoft claims that it will load much faster. Company representatives claim that the efforts put into the development of Windows 7 were focused on making the operating system smaller by isolating the central binaries into a bootable, usable core that, today, occupies just 25 MB of disk space. That's pretty impressive when you consider that Vista's install image is over 4 GB in size. Of course, as we mentioned above, the final product has yet to ship, so a lot could change before then.

Probably, the most exciting feature of Windows 7 is what Microsoft refers to as "multi-touch", part of their 'Natural User

Experience' (NUE) vision of delivering intuitive, seamless experiences that unfold through natural human input. You may be familiar with one aspect of this technology known as "touchscreen". If you've ever used an iPhone or a self-checkout kiosk at a grocery store, you're already familiar with the idea. Currently, the specific touchscreen technology that Microsoft will be designing Windows 7 around is called DuoSense™ and it belongs to an Israeli-based company founded in 1999 called N-Trig.

Windows 7 will also include Microsoft's classic built-in applications like Paint, Wordpad and Calculator. The upgrades for these programs have been long overdue, since their features haven't really changed in the last 10 years.

Windows 7 Paint - Initial screenshots of this program reflect photo editing features like resize, rotate, stroke, brushes and the ability to create shapes all from within the ribbon interface. Windows 7 Paint is also expected to provide translucent/transparent .PNG support. For those users who haven't invested in expensive photo editing software, this new version should deliver an easy interface with better than basic functionality.

Windows 7 Wordpad - Interestingly enough, this version of Wordpad seems more like a slimmed-down version of Word 2007. While not as functional, it looks to be much easier to perform tasks such as adding a picture, editing text, and even creating your own drawings within a document. It is not yet known whether the new Wordpad supports Word 2007's .docx file format.

Stay tuned, as we will most certainly keep you informed about Windows 7 in future issues of The Download.

Holiday Hours

Fast Rhino will be closed for Thanksgiving,
November 27 - 29, 2008.

We will also be closed from December 24,
2008 to January 1, 2009 and will reopen on
Friday January 2, 2009.

We wish you and yours a wonderful holiday
season!



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Extending Your Notebook's Battery Life

Battery technology used in consumer electronics has come a long way in the past 20 years. This article covers Lithium-ion (Li-ion) technology, which is predominantly used in newer model notebooks.

Unlike Nickel-cadmium (Ni-Cd) batteries, Lithium-ion batteries should be charged early and often. If they are not used for a long time, they should be brought to a charge level of around 40%–60% and kept cool. Ideally, if they are going to be stored, put them in a sealed plastic storage bag and place them in the refrigerator. Do not put them in your freezer. Aging takes its toll much faster at high temperatures. Keeping your notebook in a hot car can cause Lithium-ion batteries to degrade rapidly. In fact, short battery life in a laptop is mainly caused by heat rather than charge / discharge patterns.

Temperature / Depletion Table

Temperature	40% charge level (recommended storage charge level)	100% charge level (typical user charge level)
32° F	2% after 1 year	6% after 1 year
77° F	4% after 1 year	20% after 1 year
104° F	15% after 1 year	35% after 1 year
140° F	25% after 1 year	40% after 3 months

About every 30th recharge, you should fully discharge and recharge ("deep-cycle") the batteries to recalibrate the notebook's "fuel gauge". Buy new batteries only when needed because the aging process begins as soon as the battery is manufactured. When buying batteries, observe manufacturing dates. Do not buy old stock, even if it is sold at clearance prices. Be wary of inexpensive batteries, since quality can be questionable.

When using a notebook computer running from fixed power over extended periods, the battery should be removed, and stored in a cool place so that it is not affected by the heat produced by the computer. (Some manufacturers are concerned about dust and moisture accumulating inside the battery casing.) Keep in mind, however, that some notebook models require the battery to be inserted in order to run. You can check yours by removing the battery and then plugging in the AC adapter and turning it on.

Spending a small amount of time to extend the life of your laptop battery is well worth the investment. By following these simple rules, we've seen notebook batteries last a year or two longer, which can mean the difference between an affordable laptop and one that requires a constant expense to keep it running.

Confirm new password:

* * * * *



Making Strong Passwords

The first rule when making a password is to make it lengthy. Each character that you add to your password increases the protection that it provides many times over. Your passwords should be 8 or more characters in length; 14 characters or longer is ideal. Combine letters, numbers, and symbols. The greater variety of characters that you have in your password, the harder it is to guess. Other important specifics include:

- The fewer types of characters in your password, the longer it must be. A 15-character password composed only of random letters and numbers is about 33,000 times stronger than an 8-character password composed of characters from the entire keyboard. If you cannot create a password that contains symbols, you need to make it considerably longer to get the same degree of protection. An ideal password combines both length and different types of symbols.
- Use the entire keyboard, not just the most common characters. Symbols typed by holding down the “Shift” key and typing a number are very common in passwords. Your password will be much stronger if you choose from all the symbols on the keyboard, including punctuation marks not on the upper row of the keyboard, and any symbols unique to your language.

Use words and phrases that are easy for you to remember, but difficult for others to guess. The easiest way to remember your passwords and passphrases is to write them down. Contrary to popular belief, there is nothing wrong with writing passwords down, but they need to be adequately protected in order to remain secure and effective. In general, passwords written on a piece of paper are more difficult to compromise across the Internet than a password manager, web site, or other software-based storage tool, such as password managers.

Here are 5 easy steps to create a strong, memorable password:

1. Think of a sentence that you can remember. This will be the basis of your strong password or passphrase. Use a memorable sentence, such as “My son Aiden is three years old.”
2. Check if the computer or online system supports the passphrase directly. If you can use a passphrase (with spaces between characters) on your computer or online system, do so.
3. If the computer or online system does not support passphrases, convert it to a password. Take the first letter of each word of the sentence that you’ve created to create a new, nonsensical word. Using the example above, you’d get: “msaityo”.
4. Add complexity by mixing uppercase and lowercase letters and numbers. It is valuable to use some letter swapping or misspellings as well. For instance, in the passphrase above, consider misspelling Aiden’s name, or substituting the word “three” for the number 3. There are many possible substitutions, and the longer the sentence, the more complex your password can be. Your passphrase might become “My SoN Ayd3N is 3 yeeRs old.” If the computer or online system will not support a passphrase, use the same technique on the shorter password. This might yield a password like “MsAy3yo”.
5. Finally, substitute some special characters. You can use symbols that look like letters, combine words (remove spaces) and other ways to make the password more complex. Using these tricks, we create a passphrase of “MySoN 8N i\$ 3 yeeR\$ old” or a password (using the first letter of each word) “M\$8ni3y0”.

In closing, keep your passwords secret and protect them if recorded somewhere. Never provide your password over e-mail or based on an e-mail request. Change your passwords regularly and avoid typing them on computers that you do not control.

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➡ www.KrystalMiles.com

Krystal Miles DDS, MS provides quality periodontal services in Tucson, specializing in dental implants, surgical and non-surgical treatments. Her offices are located on the Northwest corner of N. Oracle Rd. & Ina Rd. For a healthy and attractive smile, call Krystal Miles.

➡ www.ConstableLester.com

Pima County Constable David Lester is a peace officer for the county's Judicial Precinct 1. His site offers a comprehensive list of "Need to Know" links and allows citizens an electronic way to contact the constable's office. You can also see the latest Amber Alert and find links to various local volunteer sites.

➡ www.DRSchoon.com

Darryl Robert Schoon is considered by many as an economist with uncommon views, yet his book is extremely popular. His approach to the US economy is both educational and for many people, straight to the point. Darryl's book, "*How to Survive the Crisis and Prosper in the Process*" is available in hard copy or you can download it directly from his web site.

➡ www.BakehouseBreadCompany.com

Bakehouse Bread Company is a wholesale bakery located right here in Tucson. They specialize in a wide selection of artisan breads and they sell them to various grocery stores, restaurants, the Tucson Airport and the University of Arizona. Their web site provides a dynamic list of various breads, ingredients and product shapes.

➡ www.ThePredatorDonFrye.com

Don "The Predator" Frye is a former world champion MMA (mixed martial arts) fighter who lives in Tucson and is currently filming a movie (Public Enemies) with Johnny Depp. As a student, Don earned a collegiate wrestling scholarship and he eventually entered worldwide events to become an Ultimate Fighting Champion. To cater to his huge fan base, Don uses this site to sell T-shirts and collectible items.

➡ www.TaeKwonDoMan.com

Tae Kwon Do Man is a book about how adults and children gain better self esteem through Tae Kwon Do and martial arts. The author, Master Rory Kyle, currently lives in Alexandria, Virginia, where he remains a devoted martial artist and holds the rank of seventh degree black belt.

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TECH Product Review

Sony's KDL-40ZX1 40-inch LCD HDTV



Thin is in! Although Sharp and Philips have presented some concept prototypes of their thin model televisions (not to be released to the public until 2010), Sony has actually made this 9.9mm ultra-thin beauty available to anyone who has the bank account to afford it. The screen quality is amazingly crisp and clear. The design, while it's not OLED thin, is the best we've seen on any TV so far. It is sleek, yet simple.

Sony managed to get it this thin thanks to a new LED lighting technology that is not behind the actual LCD, but on the four corners. Using an optical device, the powerful light from the corners gets distributed evenly through the whole screen. This model is less than half as thin of current competing sets.

One of the most interesting aspects of this television, aside from the incredible slim profile, is the inclusion of a wireless HD base station that goes with this device. Sony has not listed the maximum range for this particular model's wireless HD, but we are assuming that it is WHDI, and based on previous Sony products with this functionality it should be about 20 meters (this is unconfirmed).

The downside for most people however, is the price tag. Sony is asking roughly \$4500 for this puppy. Availability will initially be limited to Europe and Japan starting in November.



Panasonic
Lumix G1

Panasonic Lumix DMC-G1 DSLR Camera

For people who have been hesitant about moving up to a Digital SLR camera, the G1 is a perfect fit. It is a small, sophisticated, easy-to-use camera that will greatly expand any user's photographic capabilities. The Lumix G1 uses an innovative mirror-less structure that dramatically downsizes the camera body and achieves dramatic portability and ease of use by the adoption of an electronic full-time live viewfinder instead of the conventional optical viewfinder.

In addition to accepting Micro Four Thirds lenses, the G1 can be fitted with a mount adapter that allows the use of standard Four Thirds lenses. This greatly expands the assortment of lenses you can use and means that you can continue to use Four Thirds lenses you already own.

Slated to hit stores in October, the G1 will be priced around \$800.

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