

Mon 5/17/2004

I wanted to add my comments on spyware and adware as it impacts user. It is gratifying to see the FTC taking a concerned interest in this problem. Personally, I think spyware and adware that loads itself with no approval from the user should be completely illegal. I believe this to be a perfectly legitimate action for the government to take in this matter. Consider, I paid for the computer system which I use; I also paid for the software, and I pay for internet access. In addition, when I travel to a website, I am bombarded by advertisements which are how the sites generally pay for themselves. Now, since I have paid for my equipment, software, and internet access, by what imagined right can a spyware or adware manufacturer claim any legitimacy in placing programs onto this system without my express permission? None. When I go to Wal-Mart to peruse their aisles, I do not have their personnel planting hidden cameras and recorders on my person to follow my activities and collect information about me. There are laws to prevent such an event from occurring. I therefore find it quite proper to extend this same protection to individuals while using their computers. Even my family members do not place anything onto my computer without my express permission to do so. If I will not let my family do this, I certainly have absolutely no interest in allowing someone else to do so. I find that I have to clear out 60+ adware and spyware programs on a daily basis. The programs cause poor system performance and often interfere with the operation of the software which I have placed on my computer. It is beyond time to stop this outright violation of our privacy rights and our property rights. It is trespassing just as surely as if they came onto my physical property and placed advertisements without obtaining my permission. The difference being if they came onto my physical property, I would call the local police and have them arrested. The time is well past that something **MUST** be done about these people. The power to accomplish action is in the hands of the FTC. Please use it swiftly and well.

Sincerely,

E.W. Newlin