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Global Newsletter July 2009

Choosing the best anti-virus software



We often get asked "what's the best anti-virus software?" however that's like asking a group of people what the best car is. Raise the subject of anti-virus software with a group of computer experts and you will get many different opinions. Here are some things to consider when selecting security software for your computer:

Retail box or download - Many good software products are not sold in retail chain stores but are available for secure purchase and download from the internet. This sometimes makes it harder to ask questions about the product, but remember that the retail sales person has a vested interest in recommending the product that they stock. Just because a large chain store stocks the software doesn't mean it's the best software for your needs.

Impact on PC performance – This can be a tough area to gauge just by looking at the software description. Check out the 'Minimum System Requirements' to see which software needs more resources (e.g. memory). Also, consider installing a time-limited trial version of the software (if available) to test it for yourself before parting with your money.

Updates & upgrades – All anti-virus software should entitle you to download the latest information (updates) about any new viruses for free, for the duration of your license subscription. Some software products also entitle you to upgrade for free if a newer version of the software is released, whilst others make you pay an upgrade fee.

Price – Software licensing comes in many different configurations, so make sure you are comparing the same kind of software license when you are comparing prices. Factors that influence the price include how long your subscription is for (allowing you to download those free anti-virus information updates), how many PCs can use the one license and whether the software is being installed in a student/academic environment, home, business or not-for-profit entity.

Management – If you run a business with more than one PC, a 'network edition' may be right for you. This allows the updates to be downloaded by one of your computers and distributed to the rest of them, instead of each PC downloading the update. It also provides an overall view of whether the software is working on each PC and if any infections have been found. These features reduce the time (and cost) it takes to manage your anti-virus software across multiple computers.

Additional features – Many anti-virus software vendors now also produce 'security suites', which include firewalls and protection against spyware, malware and spam. It may be more cost effective and resource effective to run one product to handle all of these security aspects.

Trusted recommendation – There are many independent testing laboratories and software review websites that publish the results of their anti-virus software comparisons. Your local Computer Troubleshooter also deals with a significant number of computers every year and will have developed a preference for the software they believe does the best job with the least amount of problems. Find out what software your CTer recommends – chances are they know it well and use it in their own business.

Talk to your local Computer Troubleshooter about the best anti-virus solution for your specific requirements.



Contact your local Computer
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