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## **Stop the IT Insects Now!**

### *Ashampoo AntiSpyWare is today's insect cleaner*

Spyware never sleeps. This is not a line from a movie, bed time story or song, but the sad reality. Well, it's not that sad after all...since we have antispyware programs to fight it. Now, which one shall we visit today? My current pick is Ashampoo AntiSpyWare, a program that reached version 1.40 a few months ago but can have its spyware signatures on a regular basis. What I have here is a trial version that can be extended from the initial 10 days to a total of 30 by requesting a free trial code. The full version's price is 29.99\$ and you get a lot for your money, I can tell you that! Of course that you shouldn't believe me, but trust the facts instead. After getting the 12.9MB installation kit from the Internet and setting up the application (there's nothing to be afraid of, it works like a charm), we're ready to start checking Ashampoo AntiSpyWare 1.40. By now, I guess that "Ashampoo" should say it all, when it comes to the interface. AntiSpyWare is skinable and comes with three built in skins, and there are six major areas to check out here - Main Screen, Scan, Quarantine, Logs, Preferences and Tools. Let's start taking them down, shall we? The Main Screen is used to get information about the current state of the program, the activity history and for starting various tasks. Here, you can enable the real time protection called AntiSpy Guard, daily automatic signatures update, start different scanning tasks or access the Preferences area (this may look a bit strange, since you have two buttons in this screen leading to that area). The number of current spyware signatures and the date of the last update can also be found out inside the Main Screen, as well as the program's statistics (scans performed, infections found and removed, quarantined items). Next, we have the Scan area. There are five scanning modes available here, and the first four ones can also be started from the previous area. The items to be scanned are the memory, registry, system areas, all hard drives and custom specified files and folders. The full scan process was a bit long, but it's good to know that your computer is searched all the way up and down. Now, Quarantine and Logs are not something I am crazy about. They are useful and I can't imagine an antispyware solution without them, but I don't get to use them often. There's nothing special to say about these two, just access them and you'll find your way easily. This program's Preferences area has three zones that you should take care of - Scan Preferences, Removing & Reporting and Other Preferences. You can enable archives scanning, heuristic analysis, files scanning and some more. At last, the juiciest part of this program is its Tools area. Why? Just think about having seven additional tools that you would usually have into a system optimization suite here! There's not much to say about them, because all of them are well known to the public already. We have an autostart manager, Internet cleaner, a system processes manager, a file wiper that can use the Gutmann method, IP spam blocker, a taskplaner (this is, in fact, a scheduler for scanning your system with AntiSpyWare) and a rootkit detector. Is this great or what? Since we know all there is to know (well, if you are wondering, the current spyware signatures amount is 500232...and rising), let's draw the conclusions! **The Good** As most Ashampoo programs, AntiSpyWare is good looking, very easy to use and has enough features to help you get the job done. Add a good price into the pot and you get a good recipe for success! **The Bad** can't say that this is bad, but it seems strange...five hundred thousand spyware signatures? Well, the problem that I have with this is that all problems detected in my system were cookies, and two of the registry tracks detected as spyware were left by a previous antispyware program I've used. **The Truth** still don't trust antispyware solutions, but Ashampoo's one was a pleasure to review, and I would use it just to benefit from its real time protection and enjoy its view each time I run it. I suggest you to do the same, especially since the trial period lasts a month and

you get to check out all the features of the full version. *Here are some snapshots of the application in action:*