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Clean Your PC

Adware, spyware, beware!!!

Besides the regular malware on the Internet (viruses, spyware, worms) we now have to face more and more another type of malware: phishing. Phishing is practically dealing with stealing passwords, credit card details and PINs, etc... It is in particular a criminal activity by means of which phishers "attempt to fraudulently acquire sensitive information", as Wikipedia describes. But still, the Internet also offers us a protecting software against all that malware. PC-Clean is a Netpia product designed to keep your computer safe from harmful adwares, hacking tools and adult themed advertisements. The application is available for download in 2 versions: Korean and English. I would recommend the Korean version, but I'm afraid that most users would not understand a word. So go for the English version as it will probably make more sense to you. The software "weighs" 3.55MB and once installed, the software will take another 5.38 MB of your disk space. The application will not eat more than 15MB of your computer memory during the scanning process. The interface of the software is easy to use and should not pose too many problems. The tabs are displayed horizontally and when you open the software, the Scan tab will be displayed. In this window, the user can see the eight major cases for which the software should be used. The software brags about the fact that it will make your computer run faster, stop the appearance of popup windows, stop unknown programs from installing themselves, etc. Just press the Scan button and see what the application will find on your machine. The process does not take long and you may be surprised of what it finds. But let's see some of the features of the program. In the Prevent tab, the user can opt for blocking the spyware. After scanning your computer, you can see the number of spyware found and how many of them are blocked. Press Apply and the application will block all of them with the promise that any spyware distributed by ActiveX will be blocked. In the Block programs submenu, the user can prevent harmful codes by blocking ActiveX. The options here are Add, Edit, Delete and Apply. The Advanced tab will display six sub-menus for you to configure. The Clean menu allows the user to check the registries that need to be cleaned (Cookies, Temporary Internet Files, Opened pages list, auto complete form lists, auto complete password lists, URL typed in address bar, trashcan, recent documents, etc.). The Organize registries button will display a dialog box that will detect and remove (at user's request) the registries with no relevant files, in order to increase computer's performance. The Process submenu puts into view the processes currently running on your computer and the user can choose to end any of them (beginners should refrain themselves to fiddling in here). The Browser Helper Objects can be managed in the BHO submenu. This is a DLL module designed as a module for MS Internet Explorer. The startup programs can be handled in the Start Program menu. You can very easily disable the programs that load up when starting Windows. This option will increase the operating system's loading time. If you have unwanted ActiveX components running on your computer, then you can remove them from the ActiveX submenu. It enables the user to manage the installed ActiveX. But be careful to choose between the safe and unsafe ActiveX controls. **The Good** The software is easy to use and provides an efficient cleaning of your computer. The interface is not crowded by all sorts of options that have the role of making you more confused. Amazingly, the scanning process takes a very small amount of time. The best feature of the software is definitely that it is free. **The Bad** The English version has no Help menu and unfortunately, I couldn't make much sense of how the Block programs submenu under Prevent tab works. I wanted to delete some items in there but they were part of the DB which cannot be modified. **The Truth** Apart from that little mischief, the software ran just fine. I even uninstalled it and installed it again to see if it will

find the same malware, but it seemed that it did a good job. The software is unbelievably easy to use, but beginners should pay attention to what they are doing as they could deactivate some programs and their computer may run worse than before installing the software. *Here are some snapshots of the application in action:*