Virus or Malware—what's the difference?

Virus or Malware?

You can't own a computer for long these days without having heard the terms malware, spyware, or virus. Malware is a commonly used term, but viruses are actually a particular type of malware, as are Trojans, spyware, and many other types of attacks.

Viruses can attack through several points of entry such as an email attachment, or a file on a USB drive, or an infected file on a network. Each of those vectors involves running an application on your local machine; you have to download a file and run it, open the email attachment, or run a file from a flash drive. Once it is executed by the computer, you are infected. Then the virus tries to spread to other computers connected to the infected one. Some search your email for contacts and set up a way to send email to everyone on your list. Some are network-aware, meaning they can look at any shared folders on your network and place copies of the virus in the folders, hoping someone will open them and get infected.

Other types of Malware can infect your computer through a number of different routes, most often a link sent to you in an email, or banner ad on a website. The link points to a webserver that has been taken over by a hacker, or built to spread the malware. Malware doesn't spread itself like a virus; you have to follow a link rather than running a file on your computer. Often malware will infect your system, then use various methods to install more malware. One piece of malware can create a tangle of malware applications, all trying to do different things and slowing down your computer. These attacks are often looking for credit card information and passwords; they can create a network of 'zombies' for a larger scale attack; they may want to increase traffic to a specific website resulting in pop-up ads and site redirection. Ever try to go to Google and end up at 'SomeWebSiteYouNever HeardOf.com'?

There is a raging battle between the hackers and the products trying to protect you. The best defense is a good offense. Be sure you have a good anti-virus (see Nov/Dec 2014 newsletter) and do NOT click on links, even from people you know. Educate your staff, be prepared, and be diligent!

Sage 100 Contractor Year End Planning

Thank you to those who attended our webinar regarding the yearend closing changes in version 19. All attendees were provided a checklist to help with the timing and planning of the yearend process, which is **very** different than in previous years.

Some things to know and update **after** Closing the Payroll for 2014

- FICA base wage is now $118,500; be sure to update the Employer and Employee calcs
- Check with your local State Unemployment offices for new base wages and rates
- Simple IRA Maximum deduction increases to $12,500
- 401K Maximum deduction increases to $18,000

NOTE: No need to Reset 1099 balances as of S100C version 19

Not on S100C version 19 yet? Call to schedule your upgrade right away. Sage will only release 2015 tax tables in version 19.
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Updates and Tips from Syscon

Windows XP Machines

Replace ASAP—these now pose a security threat to your network. No longer supported as of April 2014

Windows Server 2003 O.S.

Microsoft will end support as of 7/14/2015; plan to replace or ask about our **Hosting Solutions**

Did You Know?

Computer memory comes in different speeds, really!

When comparing hardware specifications and pricing, make sure you know why there is a price difference, as well as the difference between the products and what you can expect in your day-to-day experience.

Syscon Hosting Improvements

- We added more, and faster memory
- Both Internet Service Providers (ISP's) have been upgraded to faster service
- Additional MSA Storage is now available and will minimize, and in some cases even avoid downtime during maintenance