

Computer Bytes – November 2018 – Caution With Downloads

Provided By: Harv Oliver, HANDS-ON Consultations

Happy Holidays Friends & Associates! The **HOC** Team wishes you excellent days ahead to you and yours!

There are a number of valid applications on the Internet we download for our daily use. One of the more common is *Adobe Reader*. This is a FREE application download that allows us to read PDF files (files created with Adobe Standard – one of the purchased portions of Adobe, or another valid PDF creator application). PDF files exchange, via email, etc., are used primarily as they can reflect a picture, which makes it smaller in ‘computer size’ than a picture JPEG format, or as a document generated say from Microsoft Word that does not allow the recipient to edit – it’s an exact replica of what you sent. These are all valid, common practices for PDF file use.

Having said that, when you go to download what you truly want, there are often options already with a checkmark placed to download **ALONG WITH** the *Adobe Reader*. In previous releases, years back, they were NOT checked. Now you really have to pay attention, or you will download other feature(s) you don’t want, along with the ones you do.

One of those that commonly occurs, with the *Adobe Reader* install, is the install of *McAfee Security Scan*. More than likely, this desktop icon and program looks familiar to you. Chances are that you’ve had this installed on your computer once or twice and wondered where it came from...

Please keep in mind it’s not that this specific download is necessarily bad. That said, McAfee Security Scan is not antivirus. Its official purpose is to “analyze” your defenses and tell you if your computer is vulnerable. It checks the status of your firewall, antivirus, and scans your web history and objects currently running in memory for malware. Windows performs most of these functions already. Again, it’s not antivirus, nor does it really protect your computer from anything. It won’t even remove any malware should it find any.

It’s a halfhearted pseudo-security solution that’s used as an excuse to put McAfee products in front of you so perhaps you look into their products you will then BUY. While not what we’d term ‘vicious’, it really is just a malware item. Yes – you can remove it! Simply go to the control panel and remove from Programs. Keep in mind if you do a different download, it might have this tool and you will **AGAIN** download.

This reiterates our point of paying attention to the specifics of each site, the downloads, and links you’re directed to. This is just one example of how things you do not want get downloaded. I’m not picking on *Adobe*, it occurs with many valid applications. It’s just part of the game. Anyway, this reminds us to always practice “Safe Browsing”.

NOTE: Our sharing of information within articles includes suggestions and tips. USE AND/OR APPLY AT YOUR OWN RISK. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact our offices for professional service/guidance.

Until next time, don’t forget your backups! For more information, contact Harv Oliver, HANDS-ON Consultations, (805) 524-5278, www.hocsupport.com