



### Beware of Sharing Viruses

#### USB's, Disks and Downloads can carry destructive data

Transferring data from one computer system to another is commonplace and usually quite safe. USB sticks are handy for this, enabling users to take information from a PC to a laptop and vice versa in a matter of seconds. Downloading from the Internet may take a little longer, depending on the total size of the files. Then there is game-swapping which, although illegal, means friends can install a program from someone else's unit to their own; or maybe they just borrow the actual disk, all at no expense; hopefully. The problems come when there is something hiding among the right stuff, just waiting to infect another machine.

For reasons known only to themselves, certain individuals take pleasure in adding scripting and even complete programs to existing data sources that will corrupt any device they are introduced to. So, a simple innocuous sharing task like copying a few photo images from your Mum's PC library to your own via a USB stick seems hardly likely to cause problems. But what if Mum's computer was already infected when she clicked on a link in one of those bogus emails we've already mentioned? Then, whatever had infiltrated her system will jump straight into yours.

Can't be, you might say – her PC's working fine. That could be because the suspect bug was designed not to affect the host machine, but to activate only when transferred to another, and another, and another... In this instance, Mum's computer has become something akin to a digital Typhoid Mary.

No matter that you trust the source of information about to be loaded onto your system, check it with your **Security Manager**. USB's, Disks and even external Hard Drives and storage devices can be run through a **Virus Scan BEFORE** transferring the contained data. Be as cautious with this as you would be with your bath water. Jump in without thinking and you could get scalded, maybe badly.

**So, always, always run a Safety Scan up front and don't let unwanted pests through the side door!**

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