



Web Security and Maintenance Services

McAfee Security



Privacy, Security & Virus Information

How to Stay Safe on the Web

You have good reason to be wary of the Web these days. Hardly a week goes by without some new horror story about adware, spyware, or other sneaky scam making its way onto unsuspecting users' computers and wreaking havoc. Many companies—especially smaller businesses who value running their business, put restrictive Internet policies in place to protect their company and their employees. The downside of stopping employees in their tracks before they venture out onto the Internet is that employees can not use what has become a valuable resource. Such a restriction may actually be hampering business growth.

However, there is a security solution that gives your business the best of both worlds—the freedom to use safe sites and protection from hidden Web-based threats. McAfee® SiteAdvisor™, a free Web security solution aimed at small and mid-sized businesses and notifies users about risky Web sites.

How McAfee SiteAdvisor Works

McAfee SiteAdvisor rates the world's most popular Web sites using a simple color-coded system. As soon as you visit a Web site, SiteAdvisor rates the site's safety with respect to potential dangers like spyware, spam, and online scams. SiteAdvisor has a special button on the browser toolbar that turns green, yellow, or red—or grey for unrated sites. You make the judgment call as to whether you want to view that Web site or go elsewhere.

On Alert

SiteAdvisor keeps you ahead of Web predators. Hackers are increasingly motivated by profit rather than fame or intellectual challenge. Criminal hackers must make a Web site or an e-mail appealing and realistic to successfully attract unsuspecting victims. "On the Web, everything looks like a five-star restaurant," Keats says. "It is very easy for a conman to make a Web site look legitimate."

SiteAdvisor continually crawls the Web with 'bots—virtual computers—that click "yes" to everything they find. If a site offers a file, the 'bot downloads it, and then checks to determine if it has picked up a virus or spyware. If the site offers a registration form, the 'bot fills it out and then watches to see if the sign-up results in any spam. If the answer is yes, SiteAdvisor marks the site red, or risky.

You can easily spot potential threats with this color-coded scheme. If you want to know more about why a site is rated as dangerous, you click on the SiteAdvisor button in your browser toolbar. You will get details like e-mail tests, download tests, online affiliations, and annoyances like excessive pop-up windows or requests to change your home page. SiteAdvisor is free and works with Microsoft Internet Explorer and Mozilla Firefox browsers.

SiteAdvisor gives you a trustworthy, reliable guideline about the safety of particular Web sites. SiteAdvisor has tested the 6.4 million most popular domains on the Web, which represents more than 95 percent of global Web traffic. SiteAdvisor rates about five percent of Web traffic as risky, with another two percent earning the cautionary yellow rating. Based on this rating system, seven percent of Web traffic is going toward sites that are at the very best questionable.



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Permit, But Protect

Neither a too-restrictive nor a too-permissive approach works when it comes to Internet security. Throwing caution to the wind when it comes to Web security is extremely risky for small and mid-sized businesses that lack the budget or IT security infrastructure to protect themselves from unseen threats. But many small business owners concerned about the Web's potential dangers take the opposite approach and stop employees from using the Internet altogether. McAfee SiteAdvisor gives you the tools to protect your business, without limiting your employees from accessing valuable information on the Web.

Resources:

[Learn more about SiteAdvisor](#)