

# Report: Fake Anti-Virus “Scareware” Programs on the Decline

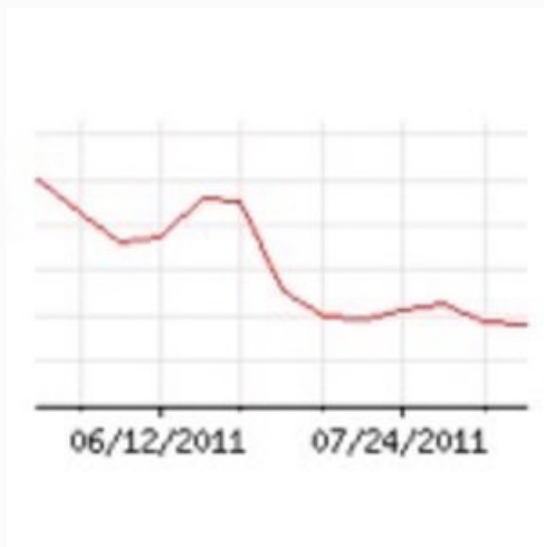
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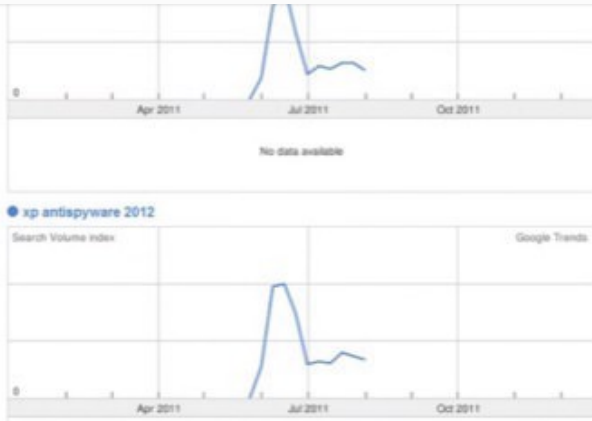


One of the most insidious ways that malware scammers infect users’ computers is through fake anti-virus programs. For years Internet denizens have seen pop-ups in their browsers claiming that “your computer is infected, click here to get rid of this virus.” If users clicked, they would download a virus that the scammers would offer to eradicate, for a fee. This was a favorite practice of “Spam King” [Sanford Wallace in the early 2000s](#). In recent months, the Federal Bureau of Investigation has raided the “scareware” spammers and as such, fake anti-virus malware on the Web has decreased by 60% in the last several months.



You may recognize the programs. They go by names like “Vista Security 2012,” “XP Antispyware 2012” and “Mac Defender.” Yet, [according to Enigma Software](#), these scareware programs are on the decline. In June, the [FBI raided malicious programmers 12 countries](#) including the U.S. and arrested [ChronoPay’s CEO Pavel Vrublevsky](#), whose Russian payments company was believed to be behind many of the applications.

Enigma Software has seen a “drastic drop in scan logs from new users, support logs, detections and support tickers from new customers” amounting to the 60% drop in fake anti-virus and scareware programs.



Enigma does not make mention of Mac Defender, but the malicious program was [one of the first widespread Trojans to target Apple computers](#). Apple moved quickly to fix the problem with a series of security updates earlier this year. Apple is not known to issue weekly patches but the existence of these type of malware applications may force it in the future to be more proactive about security.

The way the FBI raids effectively cut down on scareware programs was to go after their payments systems.

“The FBI raids cut off the ability for the scareware makers and distributors to get paid and when they can’t get paid by their victims, they shrivel up and go away,” Enigma wrote.

Enigma is prudent in saying that, while the instances of these programs are down, it is likely a temporary cycle in the war against malware.

“Sadly, cybercriminals and scareware makers are smart. They’re very good at what they do. And we have no doubt that sometime soon, they’ll be back. They’ll figure out another way to get their scareware out and to get paid by their victims. We expect that another cyber gang is going to step in and fill that void,” the company wrote.

Image Sources: Enigma Software

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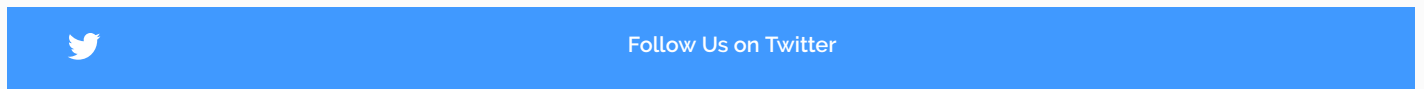
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Your Pipeline

Total: \$720,000

Qualifying

12 Opportunitites

\$410,000

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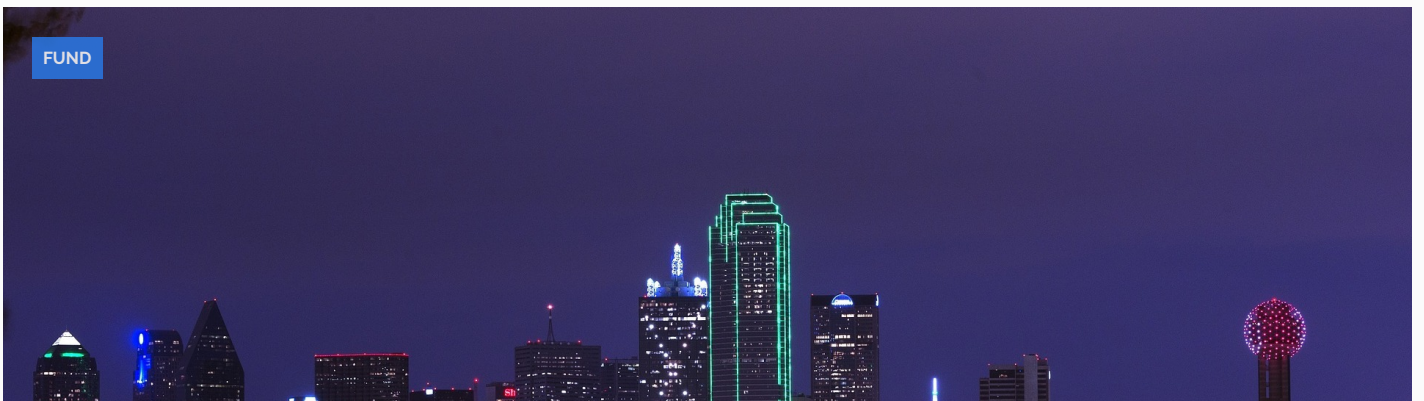
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