

# Radio Days – 2010-02-20

## ***Tip of the Week – Excessive Downloads I***

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A client rang to say that he had noticed that his internet account had downloaded more data than he had expected, especially as some of the download was when he had been in hospital. I had seen this once before with another client but could not find out what had happened. On the earlier occasion her ISP had charged her over \$3,000: she disputed this charge with the Telecommunications Industry Ombudsman (TIO) who managed to get the amount reduced significantly.

This time my client had an internet plan which shaped download speeds rather than charging for excess usage. He became aware of the problem when an email arrived stating that he had used 80% of his monthly allowance. We ran both my suggested anti-malware programs (see last week's sheet on my website), installed Threatfire, updated his anti-virus to AVG Free (he had been using Avast) and ran a full scan with each of these programs. None of them found any problems (only cookies) so I changed the password on his ADSL modem and crossed my fingers.

The reason that I am no longer suggesting Avast is that it stops downloading updates after 18 months. This is not what an anti-virus program needs so now I am converting all my Avast clients to AVG Free for better protection.

## ***Online Safety 6 – Clean Emails***

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I have noticed a great increase in spam emails over the last few weeks. My spam emails have gone from about 5 spam emails each week to about 8 spam emails a day. This has meant that I have really relished my favourite spam removal program: MailWasher. I use the commercial version because I have more than one email address, but for those of you who have only one email address the free version will be all that you need.

The main reason for using a program like MailWasher is to reduce the chance of getting an email-borne virus. The best way to do this is to delete the email before it reaches your inbox. Many programs promise to place all unwanted emails into a special *spam* inbox, but the email is now on your computer. This means that you will have to read it on your computer to see if it really is spam as these programs both need training and can never be 100% accurate. In my book the only way to deal effectively with spam is to deny it access to your computer.

MailWasher does this by showing you emails in a way which can't damage your computer. At this stage you get enough information (often just from the email's subject) to enable you to bounce the email. Bouncing an email is like writing on a normal envelope *Please return to sender* then posting it. Hopefully the person sending the email will realise that your address is not valid so remove your address from their database.

Just using this one step will help you to keep many spam emails out of your inbox (or spam box) and help you keep your computer free from the viruses which are now taking over the computers of less careful users.

## ***Websites***

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AVG Free	<a href="http://free.avg.com">http://free.avg.com</a>
TIO	<a href="http://www.tio.com.au">www.tio.com.au</a>
MailWasher Free	<a href="http://www.mailwasher.net">www.mailwasher.net</a>
MailWasher Pro	<a href="http://www.firetrust.com/en/products/mailwasher-pro">www.firetrust.com/en/products/mailwasher-pro</a>