



# HELP ME, DOC!!

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## MigMaf Virus

*Is your computer sending out porn?*

Could your computer be secretly sending out porn? Sadly, yes. What's worse is, you could also be unknowingly helping to send massive spam emails for these same sites.

The latest aberration in the virus world is a trojan nicknamed "Migmaf" which quietly slides into your computer and uses your personal address on the web to hide itself and route people to pornographic content in the Internet.

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The Migmaf virus was discovered only recently and infection appears to come about by the usual means - opening unexpected email attachments. It is possible that this code is also "piggybacking" along with other viruses - such Palyh or SoBig. Once the code is downloaded and activated, it uses your personal address on the web (called an "IP" (Internet Protocol) address - think of it like your phone number on the Internet) to disguise the true source of emails and adult-content web sites. When authorities tried to trace the source of this problem, they discovered the web sites are being routed through unsuspecting home and office computers - such as your own. In order to avoid being caught, the program utilizes your internet connection for only 10 minutes at a time then rotates to itself to another victim - thereby creating a "ring" of pcs to work from.

### What's a " MigMaf " ?

I'm probably not the only person out there who has wondered "Where the hell do these virus names come from"? Well, *MigMaf* was coined by the person who discovered this virus - Joe Stewart, from Internet security firm LURHQ. It stands for "Migrating Mafia", a metaphor for this concept of a roving and organized criminal element (virus) secretly manipulating your computer. Catchy, eh?

### Newest Malware Evolution

This form of pc infection is the newest in a rapidly progressing evolution in malware - malicious software. As computer technology becomes more and more sophisticated, those malcontents bent on harm with viruses are also raising their level of savvy. Migmaf's methods of deception have made it extraordinarily difficult to track back the source of the problem and have even confounded specialists on how this malicious software is being distributed.

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## The Root of this Evil

Clients have often asked me "why do people make these viruses"? Previously, my answer was something to the effect of "because they have no real life of their own".

Unfortunately, there's a new reason for hackers and virus-mongers to devote their time to this black art - money. New Anti-spam legislation, software and filtering by services has made it more and more difficult for spammers to sell their wares. The basic economics of this opens the door to big money for ethically challenged programmers who can generate a covert means of promoting illicit yet profitable web content.

## Credit Card Theft

According to security consultant Richard Smith, some of the computers that are hosting websites related to this scam are also receiving stolen credit card information. While the correlation between this and Migmaf have not been fully established, the possibility that this code may progress into identity theft distribution is very, very real.

According to Jim Koellegger of BBX Technologies "This new form of malware can turn virtually any computer user into an unsuspecting accomplice of crime."

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