



THE RHODENIZER REPORT

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IS YOUR MOBILE PHONE SPYING ON YOU?

Almost everyone these days carries a mobile phone. Most modern phones also have text messaging and speakerphone capabilities. Many of us even have "smartphones" (iPhone, BlackBerry, etc.) with built-in GPS, e-mail, and web browsing.

Would it surprise you to know that there are tiny programs available for download from the Internet that would allow someone to eavesdrop on your conversations, read your text messages, even use your phone's GPS to track your movements?

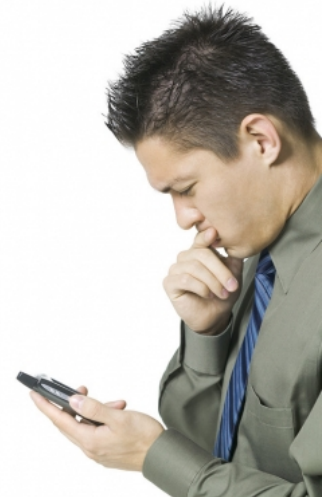
Would it shock you to learn that your phone doesn't even have to be in use for the microphone to be turned on remotely and

used to monitor the sounds in your room?

If you haven't seen it yet, you should check out this video news report. Just go to www.youtube.com and search for "tapping your cell phone".

The stalker in this story was not a CIA operative. He didn't need any special knowledge. He only had to visit one of the spyware sites like mobile-spy.com or flexispy.com to download the software and instructions.

Spy programs like these can run undetected on Windows Mobile and Symbian OS smartphones, as well as many Nokia and Samsung models. Even my



BlackBerry could be infiltrated and used against me by the Pro-X version of Flexi-Spy without my knowledge.

Fortunately, Symantec, McAfee, and F-Secure have (cont. P2)

THE TAKE-AWAY POINTS:

- **Spy programs can turn mobile phones into bugging devices.**
- **Save hundreds on a good refurbished PC.**
- **Wireless Broadband now in Atlanta area.**
- **My BlackBerry Bold review & comments.**

DELL GX520 FOR ONLY \$350

The Optiplex is Dell's line of business PC's. Quiet, cool running, and reliable, the GX520 was one of my favorite models. MicroCenter in Duluth now has 13 of these refurbished units in stock (as of this writing) priced at \$349.99.

Corporate trade-ins are a great value for someone that doesn't need the latest bells and whistles. These also come with XP Pro installed - no Vista head-

aches to worry about. In an environment where consistency and compatibility with legacy applications is a must, this is just the ticket.

These machines also have plenty of power for the average business user: P4 - 3.0GHz CPU; 4GB RAM; 500GB HD; DVD-RW; integrated video, sound, and Gigabit Ethernet; Windows XP Pro w/ Recovery CD; 60 day trial version of Of-

fice (doesn't say which version). Also includes a new USB keyboard & mouse. And, it's backed by a 90-day limited warranty.

Just ask for [SKU# 051698](#), but call first before you go to make sure they still have some left.

MicroCenter
2340 Pleasant Hill Rd.,
Duluth, GA 30096
(770) 689-2540

WI-MAX COMES TO ATLANTA

Wi-Max, simply put, is like a large scale Wi-Fi network. While the wireless router in your home can provide Internet access to about 300 ft., the Wi-Max transmitter on a cell tower can cover an area of a few miles.

Also, Wi-Fi speed, or throughput, can only be as fast as the DSL or Cable service it's plugged into. The connection still has to be carried over wires from your router to your ISP (Internet Service Provider) before it gets to the Internet. With Wi-Max, the wireless signal connects you directly to the ISP's "backbone", and then to the Internet. A more direct route with fewer "hops" results in a more robust Internet connection.

ClearWire is the fastest growing Wi-Max (or sometimes called 4G) provider in the

U.S. With network coverage in Portland, Las Vegas, and now here in Metro-Atlanta. You will soon see advertising for their new "Clear" Wi-Max service beginning this month. Their top tier plan claims to provide up to 6.0 Mbps download speeds.

I recently had the opportunity to borrow a demo unit for a day to check it out. The device is about the size of a disposable cigarette lighter and plugs into any available USB port on the laptop. My test results were mixed. At my house, the signal was too low to maintain a connection, but 300 yards away the signal was strong enough to work very well. Measured speeds fluctuated around 3.0 Mbps there. I also took it to another part of town where I used it to give a presentation of shared web-based tools. It

maintained a steady 1.4 Mbps there. I also noticed the device gets rather warm to the touch while in use.

While the advantage over similar 3G devices is speed potential, the drawbacks are inconsistency and operation only inside coverage areas. While 3G devices only reach a max 3.0 Mbps on a good day, at least they can drop down to use lower speed cell phone technology when no 3G signal is available. The Wi-Max device I tested only works on a Wi-Max signal.

Rumor has it ClearWire is working on "dual-band" devices for release later this year that will address this issue.

For more info on Wi-Max devices, data plans, and coverage map, check out their website at: www.clear.com



WiMAX

Worldwide Interoperability
of Microwave Access

IS YOUR MOBILE PHONE SPYING ON YOU? (CONT.)

(cont. from P. 1) developed anti-spyware programs that can detect and remove such programs from phones with Windows Mobile or Symbian OS. However, nothing is commercially available for the BlackBerry... at least not yet. Rumor has it the NSA developed a custom written security application for President Obama's highly modified BlackBerry to protect against this kind of threat. The rest of

us, however, will have to wait.

In the meantime, there are precautions you can take:

#1. Never leave your phone lying where someone could access it without your knowledge. These programs must be installed deliberately by human hands, but it only takes a few minutes.

#2. Password protect your phone so that a code is required to unlock it. Most

smartphones today have this capability.

#3. If you hear a continuous buzzing noise from your computer speakers when the phone is very close (not the occasional tower-check sounds, but the constant hum it makes when a call is in progress), it could mean that someone is eavesdropping. Remove the battery and seek further assistance from your IT Pro. — C. R.

"If you hear a continuous buzzing noise from your computer speakers when the phone is very close, it could mean that someone is eavesdropping."

QUESTIONS FROM THE INBOX

Q- “I need a way to share huge digital video files in my office. Is it time to break down and buy a server?”

A- Not necessarily. A server configured for about 6 terabytes (that’s 6 TB) will cost you nearly \$4000 before any setup and installation costs. Plus, you’ll have to pay for monitoring and maintenance costs going forward.

If all you want to do is put these files in a shared location for co-workers to access, you could save big bucks by using a network appliance or NAS (network attached storage) device like the Buffalo TeraStation III. It runs on a Linux-based operating system so antivirus software is not necessary in your case. It’s also very simple to setup and requires no maintenance. You can get an eight terabyte unit (that’s 8TB) the size of a shoebox for about \$2500 from my friends over at www.techonweb.com

Q- “My PC has been infected with a virus again. We are running a corporate version of McAfee that keeps alerting me and “deleting threats” each time I scan, but they keep coming back. What can I do?”

A- First, your current anti-virus software doesn’t seem to be able to neutralize the virus on it’s own, so let’s give it some help. Go to the

“Cliff’s Pick’s” page of my website and install the free MalwareBytes program. McAfee will likely object to the presence of this new program and pop up a notification asking if you want to allow it to run. Answer “yes” and let it run. It should remove most common malware and give McAfee some relief.

Next, you’ll need to decide whether you’ll leave the McAfee product in charge of your system’s security, or replace it with something else. It’s been my experience that once an antivirus program has been infiltrated and compromised by a virus, it’s best to remove it completely and clean the PC with something else.

My preference is Kaspersky AntiVirus. I’ve never encountered a virus that Kaspersky couldn’t remove. I’ve also never seen a PC running Kaspersky become defeated by any malware. It doesn’t slow my system down, and it doesn’t cost any more than the other name-brands. If you would like to try it out, just look for the “Kaspersky” link on the Cliff’s Pick’s webpage under - www.rhodenizer.com

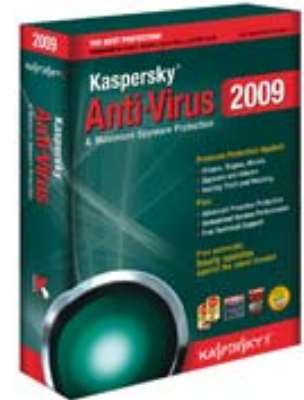
Q- “I thought that a T1 line was supposed to be faster than a DSL line for Internet access to my office. Am I wrong?”

A- First, it depends upon

whether you mean “download” speed, or “upload” speed.

If most of your Internet activity is downloading e-mail, website info, video, music, etc., then you want the fastest **download** speed. Upload speed is not as important. In this case, DSL is better for you. DSL service is typically available in plans that give up to 1.5, 3.0, or 6.0 Mbps download speeds with upload speeds at only a fraction of that.

However, if you have a VoIP phone system, or your business uploads large amounts of data to the Internet on a regular basis, or if you host your own servers and make shared files available for others outside your office, **upload** speeds are just as important to you as download speeds. In this case, a T1 line is the better choice. While a full T1 line is about four to five times more expensive, and is only 1.4 Mbps on the download side, it provides the same speed in the upload direction as well. Also, the bandwidth is supposed to be dedicated and more consistent than DSL. End results may vary with service providers, but there you have the general idea.



“I’ve never encountered a virus that Kaspersky couldn’t remove.” - C. R.



Eugene Kaspersky

E-mail your questions to:
questions@rhodenizer.com

BLACKBERRY CORNER

AT&T's advertising led me to expect significantly faster performance from the BlackBerry Bold 9000 than my older Curve 8310. The specs certainly seemed impressive enough. And, while I admit that it performs with fewer periods of hesitation, and the 3G capability improves download speeds, the speed difference alone is not worth upgrading for. Nevertheless, I set out to explore the other new capabilities with an open mind.

The Bold runs the same basic software and has essentially the same menus as the

Curve. New features include a full-motion video camera, HTML capable e-mails, improved quality speakerphone (when resting it over the cup holder in my truck, sound quality is amazing!), and side-slot access for the MicroSD card instead of having to remove the battery.

The Wi-Fi ability can also be useful, but only as a faster data connection. Talk minutes are still counted regardless of which network you connect through. For those areas where Wi-Fi is not available but 3G signal is strong, you can not only download e-

mails and web content at up to 3Mbps, but you can also "tether", the BlackBerry (connect via USB cable) to a laptop PC and use it as a wireless modem to connect your PC to the Internet. Using this feature requires a BlackBerry Data with Tethering Plan (about \$30 more) versus the regular BlackBerry Personal Data Plan. But, it beats \$55–\$70 a month for a wireless broadband card.

After testing all the above options, I think the overall design and performance of the Bold is a nice improvement over the Curve.—C. R.



ABOUT RHODENIZER IT

We are a different kind of IT service provider. We don't resell any hardware or software. We find the best deals on what you need and pass the savings along to you.

Our mission is to help small businesses reduce expenses, increase productivity, and safeguard private information.

It's about more than just fixing computers. We also

provide IT consulting and services that include finding the best solutions to your business problems.

We work with clients to prepare disaster recovery plans that ensure their critical data remains safe, yet easily accessible. Additional benefits include money-saving ideas for managing your computer resources and planning for future business expansion.

We have the training, experience, and know-how to provide the right solutions for your needs, and your budget.

Just call to schedule your **free initial consultation with no risk, and no obligation.**

Tell me about your computer needs or IT issues. I'll recommend a course of action that makes sense for your situation at no cost to you. What have you got to lose?

Rhodenizer IT
Information Technology Services

P. O. Box 768122
Roswell, Georgia 30076

(404) 202-8657

www.rhodenizer.com

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