

# The Rise of Fake Antivirus

For nearly the first 20 years of the antivirus industry a product claiming to be antivirus was virtually certain to be a legitimate company. In recent times the bad guys have figured out that they can claim to have an antivirus product that you need to clean up



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some threat on your computer. Often the threat might not have existed until you visited the web site that said you need their product. Sometimes all they do is detect cookies and try to scare users into buying their product.

There are some guidelines you can use to avoid the scams. One of the "tests" is affiliation with industry groups. Is the company a member of an organization that includes their competitors? Are their products independently tested and certified? Do you know where the company is? Can you contact the company? Verify the information is accurate.

If you look at <http://www.antispywarecoalition.org/about/index.htm> you will find that ESET and many of our competitors are members of this organization that fights malicious software. In 2006 ESET hosted the AVAR conference. AVAR is the Association of AntiVirus Asia Researchers. AVAR Membership includes many of our competitors. ESET is also a member of the Microsoft Virus Information Alliance, as are many of our competitors.

When it comes to testing antivirus products Virus Bulletin is the 800 pound gorilla. VB, as the industry calls them, has been testing antivirus products for more than 15 years. Not only is ESET tested by VB, but we have the record for the most VB100 awards. ICSA Labs and West Coast labs are respected companies that certify antivirus products. Of course you'll find ESET's NOD32 is certified by those companies as well.

Finally, if you go to <http://www.eset.com/company/contact.php> our address and phone number is prominently displayed.

My attention was recently drawn to an "antivirus" company I had never heard of before. The company listed no affiliations, no tests or certifications, and provided no contact information. A quick test with about 10,000 viruses indicated that all the product could detect were cookies.

I didn't really need to test the product. The lack of contact information, industry affiliation, and independent testing were enough to tell me that they weren't a company to place my trust in without significantly more research.

There are far too many small businesses with terrific products and services to be afraid to try any of them. With a few simple checks it is easy to find out if you are dealing with a fly-by-night or a reputable company.

**If you wish to submit questions or comments to "Ask the Expert" please feel free to send them to [askeset@eset.com](mailto:askeset@ eset.com).**



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