

Can Malware be used for Good? Not Really!

June 21, 2021 - Can malware be used for good? Typically, you would have to say no. Just the name malware is short for "malicious software." How can that be good? Well, there is a new piece of malware floating around in the ether that has been dubbed "vigilante malware." And its goal is to stop software piracy. While you may be against people who pirate anything, we've come to the conclusion that there is nothing good about this or any other form of malware.

Tweet

```
(function() {  
var s = document.createElement('SCRIPT'), s1 = document.getElementsByTagName('SCRIPT')[0];
```

```
s.type = 'text/javascript';  
s.src = 'http://widgets.digg.com/buttons.js';  
s1.parentNode.insertBefore(s, s1);  
})();
```

```
(function() {  
var po = document.createElement('script'); po.type = 'text/javascript'; po.async = true;  
po.src = 'https://apis.google.com/js/plusone.js';  
var s = document.getElementsByTagName('script')[0]; s.parentNode.insertBefore(po, s);  
})();
```

Vigilante (as it has been dubbed) was discovered by a researcher who was looking at malware residing on websites that traffic in pirated software. Unlike other malware, Vigilante doesn't really do much harm. It won't encrypt your files and hold them hostage for ransom. And it doesn't flood your computer with endless streams of advertising that you can't stop. It simply modifies the host file on your computer to prevent you from connecting with over 1,000 websites that traffic in pirated software.

Also unlike other forms of malware, Vigilante doesn't appear to do any permanent damage to the computer. To "undo" what Vigilante does, all a computer user needs to do is modify their host file in a text editor. If you aren't technical and don't know what a host file is, that really isn't important here. What matters is the fact that you could easily Google that question and find out how to make this type of modification in about 5 minutes.

So what's the problem? Well, it's malware! And as with any other form of malware, it gets installed on your computer without your permission, and then it makes modifications to your computer which you're not in control of.

There is no doubt that the intent of Vigilante is good. But this is the wrong way to go about solving the software piracy issue. If you can use Vigilante in this way, what's to say that a business couldn't use to prevent someone from accessing a competitor's website? Would that be good too? We don't think so.

The only conclusion that we can come to is that Vigilante isn't a lot different from any other malware floating around. And that means that all malware is bad.

by Jim Malmberg

Note: When posting a comment, please sign-in first if you want a response. If you are not registered, click [here](#). Registration is easy and free.

Follow ACCESS