

Verey I and PhoneBak

Security/tracking software

Not all stories about stolen gadgets have unhappy endings – some recent news stories have featured technology that has “phoned home” from the hideouts of various scumbags who’ve eventually helped the authorities with their enquiries.

While these tales usually feature state-of-the-art laptops equipped with technology that effectively provides a traceable online location, most other gadgets do not sport such clever features – but they can.

Local security software supplier Antitheft.net.nz markets several applications that, once installed on to your technogadgetry, detect any unexpected activity and then activate track-and-trace features that send out alerts containing enough information for the gadget and its new “owner” to be found.

By fair means or foul, mobile phones are possibly the most mislaid piece of technology today, but with PhoneBAK Mobilephone you can get any SIM card-capable device that runs the Symbian OS to call a pre-defined number if an unexpected SIM card is detected. Set to run every time the phone is turned on, the PhoneBAK software is kind on local resources because it actually terminates itself if the correct SIM card is detected. However, if things aren’t as they should be, the cellphone broadcasts the phone number and IMEI number from the resident SIM card. This should be enough information to let the mobile phone company, or even the police, start searching for the missing phone. At the very least, you could call the newly disclosed phone number and inform the blagger that the game is up.

The application is also available for Blackberry devices and Windows Mobile-based PDAs, and since both can hold large amounts of personal and private data, additional features have been included in PhoneBAK BB and PhoneBAK PDA. To ensure private data is kept from prying eyes, the software can be configured to immediately delete data if the alert is activated.

Personal computers, both Windows and Mac-based systems, can be empowered with the Verey I security

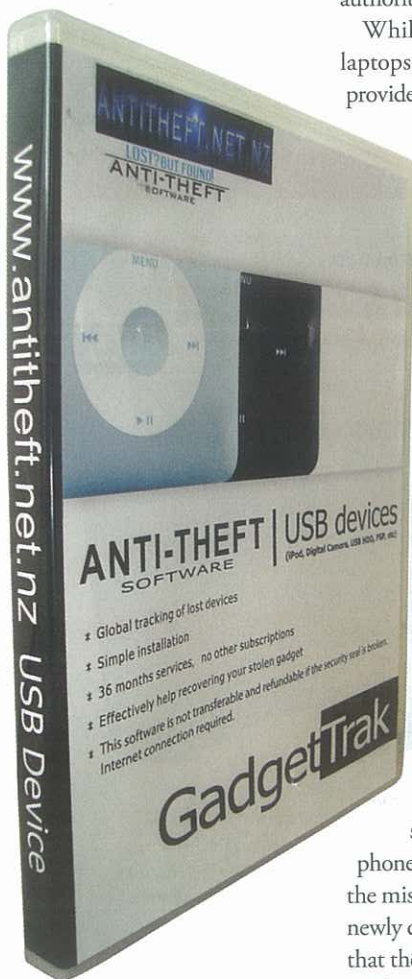
application that prompts the user to enter a password if the system detects any internet activity. If the correct credentials are not entered, Verey I deactivates the computer, but not before it uses the internet and SMS services to disclose the primary IP address of the current internet connection. This should help any internet service provider trace the computer’s current location. The information is sent as a background task, and there is no indication that the computer has broadcast anything at all.

Yet another security application, Gadgettrak, protects smaller electronic devices, including digital cameras, Playstation Portable consoles, iPods, USB memory sticks and even external hard drives.

Once installed, GadgetTrack features a clandestine program that runs each time the device is connected to a computer via the USB interface. If an internet connection is also present, the software discloses the current IP address to a central server. It’s important to register each device with the GadgetTrak server beforehand, so that if it goes AWOL you can flag it as missing-in-action with the database. From that point on, keep watching the server, and with luck the IP address will pop up.

While the GadgetTrack application itself is password protected on the device, one flaw in the crime-fighting master plan did become apparent as we tested the various applications provided by Antitheft.net.nz; formatting memory sticks and hard drives, or even performing full system resets on many of the devices before introducing them to a network of any type may erase the security software before it has the chance to fight the good fight. However, it cannot be denied, any attempt to thwart the underhand actions of the less than honest must be a good thing.

Doug Griffiths



IPHONE PINCHED? No problem, new tracking software can phone home and let you, and the police, know where your stolen gadget has ended up.

ANTITHEFT.NET.NZ APPLICATIONS

RRP incl GST : From \$25

Contact: antitheft.net.nz

Though not totally infallible, these crime-busting applications are a whole heap cheaper than contracting in the Dark Knight.

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