

**For Immediate Release**

**Industry, Public Interest Groups Unite to Tackle Spyware**

**Anti-Spyware Coalition Announces Spyware Definitions Along with Prevention Tips for Consumers; Invites Public Commentary**

**Washington, D.C. – July 12, 2005** – The Anti-Spyware Coalition (ASC), an alliance of technology companies and public interest groups, today took a major step toward giving users more power to control the unwanted spyware clogging their computers.

For the first time, the ASC, which includes some of the largest software developers, technology companies and anti-spyware companies working alongside public interest groups, has drafted a uniform definition of "spyware." The definition will ultimately help all users -- from individuals to large enterprises -- understand why some programs on their computers may be identified as unwanted and help them make educated decisions about removing or blocking those programs. The ASC is now asking the public for help in refining the draft definitions to meet the needs of the entire Internet community.

Spyware is a global scourge that's reached epidemic proportions. A May 2005 survey by the Ponemon Institute found that 85% of frequent Internet users believe that they have had spyware on their computer and of those 86% said that the spyware caused a direct monetary or productivity loss.

Although companies have individually developed numerous effective tools for combating spyware, the overall effort to address the problem has been hampered by a lack of agreement and clarity over how to distinguish good programs from those that raise concerns.

"One of the biggest challenges we've had with spyware has been agreeing on what it is," said Ari Schwartz, Associate Director of the Center for Democracy and Technology, which has led the work of the group. "The anti-spyware community needs a way to quickly and decisively categorize the new programs spawning at exponential rates across the Internet. The definitions will serve as a foundation for all future efforts to help users make more informed decisions about which programs to keep and which to delete."

Since a big part of the goal in defining spyware is to make the practices of anti-spyware companies more transparent, the ASC has also outlined common procedures for dispute resolution for vendors who believe their software has been unfairly flagged by an anti-spyware company.

The ASC describes "spyware and other potentially unwanted technologies," as those that "impair users' control over material changes that affect their user experience, privacy, or system security; use of their system resources, including what programs are installed on their computers; or collection, use, and distribution of their personal or otherwise sensitive information." ASC members agree that this accurately characterizes the practices of concern at the core of the spyware debate. To further aid consumers, the coalition has drafted an extensive glossary of terms like "adware," "port scanner,"

"screen scraper", and others commonly associated with unwanted programs. That glossary, along with a list of tips intended to help computer users both avoid downloading unwanted programs and defend themselves against malicious spyware already on their computers, is available at the ASC's Web site <http://www.antispywarecoalition.org>

The ASC has will hold a public comment period on the draft definitions through August 12. The forum is open to all. Information on how to post a comment is available on the ASC Web site. Once the comment period ends ASC members will incorporate the best recommendations into the group's final definition.

That final document will be the cornerstone of a more sophisticated approach to dealing with an increasingly sophisticated problem.

"The definitions alone represent a huge leap in how we communicate with our customers and each other about the spyware problem," Schwartz said. "Even more exciting, is the collaborative effort as we work together, and communicate with a common language. Together we can really begin to tip the balance of this fight in favor of consumers and legitimate businesses." Details about the next steps in the coalition's ongoing effort are available on the ASC site.

Current members of the Coalition include: Aluria; AOL; Computer Associates; EarthLink; HP; Lavasoft; McAfee Inc.; Microsoft; PC Tools; Safer-Networking Ltd.; Symantec; Tenebril; Trend Micro; Webroot Software; Yahoo! Inc.; Samuelson Law, Technology & Public Policy Clinic at Boalt Hall School of Law, UC Berkeley; the Canadian Internet Policy and Public Interest Clinic; and the Cyber Security Industry Alliance. The Coalition has also consulted with the National Consumer Law Center and Consumers Union.

**About the Anti-Spyware Coalition:** The ASC is a group dedicated to building a consensus about definitions and best practices in the debate surrounding spyware and other potentially unwanted technologies. Composed of anti-spyware software companies, academics, and consumer groups, the ASC seeks to bring together a diverse array of perspective on the problem of controlling spyware and other potentially unwanted technologies.

For More Information:

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## Quotes and Contact Information of Anti-Spyware Coalition Members

### **Aluria**

"Spyware is becoming an ever-growing concern to consumers and enterprise customers every day and we believe the Anti-Spyware industry has to come together if we are to deal with spyware effectively. This is why Aluria is pleased to be a part of an organization that represents this philosophy."

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### **AOL**

"By bringing clarity to the debate, the Anti-Spyware Coalition definitions will help AOL and others who are fighting the scourge of spyware better target the practices that consumers find abhorrent." said Jules Polonetsky, Vice President, Integrity Assurance, America Online Inc

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### **Canadian Internet Policy and Public Interest Clinic (CIPPIC)**

"CIPPIC advocates on behalf of Canada's public interest on matters at the intersection of law and policy. Canada has long been a global leader in deploying broadband technology, and has implemented a national innovation strategy to capitalize on the promise of those technologies. No issue currently presents a greater challenge to that strategy than spyware. CIPPIC is delighted to be a part of the ASC, and to contribute its uniquely Canadian perspective to this effort to address the problem of spyware and other potentially unwanted technologies."

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### **Computer Associates**

"CA is committed to helping develop the standards, best practices and common definitions essential for strengthening the user community's overall defense against spyware and other intrusive cyber-phenomena. Clear definitions of spyware will level the playing field and provide end-users, publishers, anti-spyware vendors and legislators with the ability to clearly determine what is bad and why -- freeing the industry to aggressively develop technologies that ensure the safety and privacy of the desktop."  
Tori Case, CA Director, eTrust Security Management

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### **Cyber Security Industry Alliance**

"Spyware is a serious and complex problem. Consumers and enterprises are losing control of their computers from spyware masquerading as adware. Spyware is leading to ID theft, lost productivity and a loss in confidence in our information systems. The ASC is critical to addressing the scourge of spyware as it brings together the stakeholders dealing with this problem on a daily basis," said Paul Kurtz, executive director of the Cyber Security Industry Alliance. "The ASC has defined a lexicon for potentially unwanted software and proposed a transparent dispute resolution process, which are critical to ensuring we have a common foundation for moving ahead. The Center for Democracy and Technology should be commended for leading the Coalition, which demonstrates to the Congress that the private sector is capable of coming together to address a common problem."

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### **EarthLink**

"Working together as an industry to refine our definitions for spyware will help protect all consumers from unwanted software," said Liza Barry-Kessler, EarthLink senior product manager. "Participating in industry coalitions supports consumer protection and enhances the value that EarthLink provides to our security technology, including Spyware Blocker, ScamBlocker™, spamBlocker and related products. Working with groups like the Anti-Spyware Coalition will continue to play a key role in our efforts to provide the best possible Internet experience."

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### **HP**

"To be given notice and choice is a consumer privacy right. Spyware violates this basic right. It's not technology itself that's the problem with spyware, it's the misuse of technology. Policymakers need to target intentionally fraudulent and deceptive behavior like spyware, not the technologies themselves. There are many legitimate uses for software that collects and uses data, such as remote diagnostics and automatic updates that benefit consumers."

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### **Lavasoft**

Lavasoft believes that ACS will finally bring the antispymware industry, the public, and consumer groups together to create standards that will bring clarity to the spyware debate. We are confident that the right mix of industry providers and consumer groups have been assembled and that together we will be able to provide a strong and cohesive force for positive change.

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**McAfee, Inc.**

"McAfee is pleased that the anti-spyware industry is beginning to develop the cooperation and maturity that customers have come to expect in the anti-virus industry. As a member of the ASC, we look forward to playing an instrumental role in the development of consistent and defensible detection, naming, reporting and testing criteria for this relatively new industry. We believe this effort will benefit consumers, enterprises and software publishers." --Joe Telafici, Director of Operations, McAfee®AVERT™

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**Microsoft:**

"Our customers and partners have made it clear that spyware and other potentially unwanted technologies have a negative impact on the security and safety of their PCs, as well as the stability and performance of their computing experience," said Mike Nash, Corporate Vice President of the Security Business & Technology Unit at Microsoft Corporation. "The establishment of the Anti-Spyware Coalition is an important step in deterring malicious software. As a founding member, we are excited to be part of the coalition because clarifying definitions and setting best practices in this space will help software developers avoid the risk of writing deceptive software, and will help Microsoft and our partners enable customers to identify and stop spyware and other unwanted technologies."

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**PC Tools**

"PC Tools has a longstanding commitment to protecting the privacy and security of computer users worldwide through our spyware removal and real-time protection software and we commend the Anti-Spyware Coalition for fostering an environment of collaboration in fighting this malicious threat," said Simon Clausen, CEO of PC Tools. "We are looking forward to working with the Coalition in its efforts to create a common definition of spyware."

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**Symantec**

"Our mission in joining the Anti-Spyware Coalition (ASC) was to help shape the industry's consensus on what constitutes spyware and other security risks," said Vincent Weafer, senior director of development, Symantec. "The necessary clarity these

standard definitions provide along with the establishment of industry-wide best practices will give people improved protection and control of their computers and networks.”

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### **Tenebril**

“While spyware distributors accelerate their rate of technological innovation, their business practices remain constant; compromised privacy and security is the result,” said Frederick Felman, senior vice president of marketing and products at Tenebril, Inc. “As a technology community, we have the opportunity to forge a common understanding of this threat, freeing anti-spyware vendors to compete and innovate in protecting both enterprises and consumers from the most pernicious forms of spyware such as hyper-mutating spyware strains.”

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### **Trend Micro**

“Public awareness is paramount in combating Internet-borne threats like spyware. Trend Micro has always embraced its social responsibility to educate and protect the public against spyware and other security threats, and we are proud that we can participate in this collaborative effort. Like the Anti-Spyware Coalition as a whole, we take this responsibility seriously. We look forward to furthering the understanding – and solutions – for protecting users against unwanted spyware and the disruptions they cause.”

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### **UC Berkeley - Samuelson Law, Technology & Public Policy Clinic**

"Spyware, in its broad sense, is a complicated problem for consumers and industry because it includes a range of activities from the clearly malicious to the potentially legitimate. While regulation can help in weeding out the obviously bad actors, there remains a substantial "gray area" that requires the development of best practices, educating consumers, and developing good user interfaces for these tasks. The collaborative efforts of the Anti-Spyware coalition are an important step in accomplishing these goals. The common language and definitions the ASC is developing will serve as a foundation for consumers and companies to communicate effectively with one another and for the development of good law and policy."

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**Webroot Software**

"There is great value in the anti-spyware industry and consumer groups working together to fight the serious threats consumers and businesses face from spyware. We are very supportive of these efforts, and look forward to continuing our work with the Coalition over the months ahead."

-Richard Steinnon, Vice President of Threat Research, Webroot Software.

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**Yahoo!**

"Yahoo! is committed to creating the best Internet experience possible for users, and a large part of that means helping users make informed decisions about what they download to their computers," said Doug Leeds, Chief of Product Justice, Yahoo!, Inc. "We strongly believe that to enable users to effectively combat malicious programs and manage the programs they find useful, the industry must provide them with standard definitions of these applications. We look forward to working with our fellow ASC members to develop these standards and foster additional consumer dialogue about the complex issue of spyware."

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