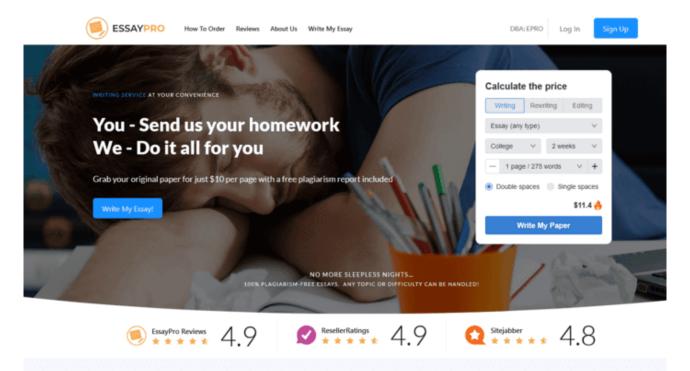
## **Spy Software**



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## Spy Software

## Summary

Spy software, or spyware, is software that records information and or activity on a computer and then sends the information to the person or company that installed it. While these programs have been around since the early days of Windows, there has been a recent wave of newer applications of them. The newer programs far outstrip their predecessors in what they do, who installs them, and how they are used. So what exactly do these programs do, who installs them, and should they be a cause for concern?

The list of spyware programs is long and growing longer by the day. <u>Investigator</u>, Spector, and Cyber Snoop are some of the more well known ones, but there are countless others. Some common features include recording of emails, passwords, chat dialogues, web <u>surfing</u>, and even pictures from the infected computers web cam. Companies often install these programs on the systems in their offices to monitor employee usage. This helps ensure that employees are not surfing the web or writing personal emails when they should be working. Recently these programs have been marketed to parents for

monitoring of computer usage of their children and for monitoring of spouses.

Companies have the right to use these programs in the office; there is no real ethical dispute of their use in the previously mentioned areas. If the usage of spyware remained limited to these areas there would be nothing to worry about. Unfortunately this is not the case. Some file transfer programs include various "buddy" programs that <u>load</u> ads or in some way try to be helpful to the user of the computer. And others, such as AudioGalaxy, have spyware imbedded in them that actively records information much like Investigator and sends the inf...

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