

<http://www.pocket-lint.com/review/3265/zone-alarm-force-field-software>

ZoneAlarm ForceField - PC

Offering internet security

by Stephen Patrick published on 3 July 2008

Online security is big business and if you've ever been on the receiving end of phishing, keyloggers and even the increasingly diverse range of spyware, you'll know that it can cost you more than simply time and money to be rid of it.

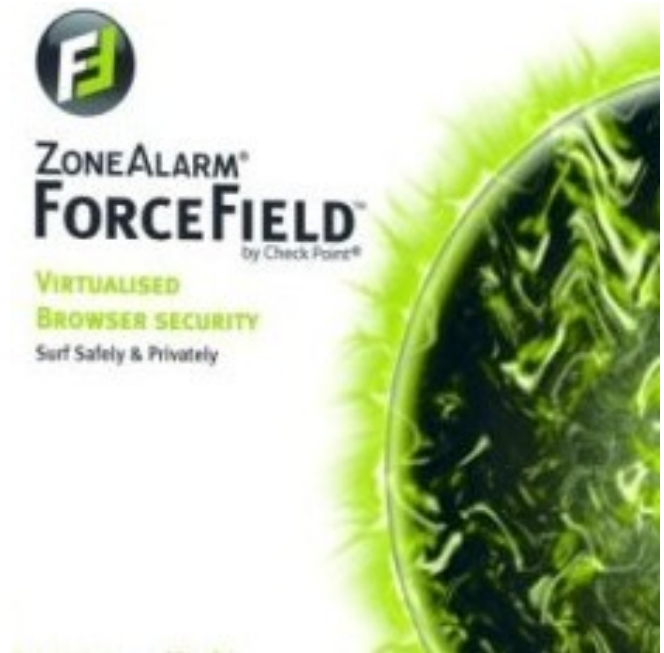
To combat such attacks there are an ever-increasing number of security tools and any suite worth the asking price offers protection against these threats. ForceField offers the same protection but in a slightly different way.

It has a unique selling proposition, as ForceField is the first piece of software that "surrounds your browser in a bubble of security". What this means in the real world is ZoneAlarm has developed a virtual browser that allows you to surf in the way you prefer but any changes made happen to a "virtual" system instead of directly to your machine.

It creates a virtual zone on your PC, in which temporary internet files and similarly cached files are stored, instead of placing them in to your Temp folders. This virtual folder can then be independently scanned to detect any malicious code, such as spyware.

When it comes to preventing changes to your PC, this virtual bubble prevents your internet browser from making changes to either your settings or your Registry. This is the best way to stop spyware and keyloggers from tracking your online activity.

The program itself is a quick install and runs with both Firefox and Internet Explorer and sits on the toolbar quietly protecting your system. We found that it didn't slow down browsing, which can be a potential concern for those who hop from site to site. However, we did find that it did very quickly start to stop a great deal of information from getting through. There was no real explanation of



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what this data was simply that it was prevented from entering our test PC.

In practise, you actually have to do very little to run ForceField as it quietly ticks away in the background. There are three buttons across the top of your browser but the main one you'll need is the Site Status button. Any site you visit will be rated either as Safe (Green), Caution (Amber), or Dangerous (Red). If you click on Site Status you can get more information on the site and whether you should proceed or leave it immediately.

VERDICT

ZoneAlarm Forcefield is a simple and trouble-free way of adding an extra layer of protection to your system. You'll still need to have a fully-fledged anti-virus suite running in the background but as a sure-fire way of stopping phishing and spyware sites from attaching themselves to your PC, we like it.

At a glance

What is it?

Internet security tools

Good

Quick and easy to install, works automatically

Bad

Information is a little thin on the ground

Verdict

If you surf a large number of unproven sites, this is a great way of protecting your PC from potential online threats

Price £20

Our score

7/10

Your score

?/10