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MicroWorld Software Services, eScan Internet Security Suite 8.0

eScan Internet Security Suite is an integrated security solution with e.g. anti-virus and anti-spyware functionality, as well as content filtering.

Its support of platforms and languages is summarised in the table below:

Type	Client	Server	Service						
Platforms	Win95	Win98	WinME	Win2k	Win03	WinNT	WinXP	Linux	MacOS
Protocols / Applications	browser	instant msg	chat	e-mail	news	file transfer	peer2peer	VoIP	Stream
Languages User Interface	Czech	Danish	Dutch	English	Estonian	Finnish	French		
	German	Greek	Hungarian	Italian	Latvian	Lithuanian	Maltese		
	Polish	Portuguese	Slovak	Slovenian	Spanish	Swedish			
Languages Filtering Criteria	Czech	Danish	Dutch	English	Estonian	Finnish	French		
	German	Greek	Hungarian	Italian	Latvian	Lithuanian	Maltese		
	Polish	Portuguese	Slovak	Slovenian	Spanish	Swedish			

The feedback given by the User Reference Group is summarised as follows:

Test domain	Score	Actual score	Average all tools	Best tool
(Un)installing and updating the tool	●●○○	2,3	2,3	2,8
Tailoring and monitoring the filtering	●●○○	2,2	2,5	3,2

The scores of the Lab tests are summarised as follows:

Test domain	Score	Actual score	Average all tools	Best tool
Local language support	●●●●	4,0	2,6	4,0
Effectiveness for kids	●●●○	2,5	2,0	4,0
Effectiveness for adolescents	●●○○	2,0	1,8	2,5
Effectiveness for kids (porn only)	●●●○	2,5	2,6	4,0
Effectiveness for adolescents (porn only)	●●●○	2,5	2,5	4,0
Speed of filtering	●●○○	2,0	3,2	4,0
Security Integrity	●○○○	1,0	2,7	4,0
Legal Compliance	●●○○	2,0	2,4	3,5

1. Configurability

eScan Internet Security Suite provides a few default harmful content categories, and it is possible to fine-tune the policy. The child carer can easily create a new filter category and add websites, words and phrases to these categories.

It is not possible to manage different users in the tool: all settings apply to all users.

The tool provides the option to look for harmful content in site names, html-tags and in the title of the website. eScan Internet Security Suite also provides the option to enable filtering on several ratings like RSACi, ICRA and SafeSurf.

The tool can be updated both manually and automatically.

2. Usability

eScan Internet Security Suite is available in several languages. The terms used in the English user interface are quite clear and easy to understand.

It is possible to control the user interface without a mouse, but this is rather difficult.

Help information is easily accessible. The manuals are user friendly and to-the-point.

3. Filtering Algorithm & Effectiveness

The scores of the Lab tests for the individual effectiveness tests are:

Content Type	Score
Web ICRA filtering	4
Instant Messaging	N/A
Chat	N/A
Email	1
Newsgroup	N/A
File Transfer Protocol	N/A
Voice over IP	N/A
Streaming media	N/A
Peer-to-peer	N/A

Web filtering: URL based filtering

eScan Internet Security Suite provides the option to maintain a list of websites that can not be accessed. The program also includes a list of objectionable words that should not appear in the website or the URL.

Based on the tests performed, we noted that there is significant underblocking, no overblocking

Web filtering: Content filtering

eScan Internet Security Suite provides the option to maintain the list of words that block websites if the words appear in the content. ICRA labels are taken into account.

Instant messaging MSN

eScan Internet Security Suite does not provide instant messaging blocking or filtering. However, the IM application can be added to a list of blocked programs, so it cannot connect to the Internet.

Chat IRC filtering

eScan Internet Security Suite does not provide IRC filtering or blocking.

Email filtering

eScan Internet Security Suite provides an option to filter the content of email messages. Emails that contain certain words can be deleted automatically, quarantined or tagged as spam. When trying to download email messages with objectionable or potentially harmful content, they are intercepted by eScan ISS and put in quarantine. Warning messages are shown and potentially harmful attachments are deleted.

Newsgroup filtering

eScan Internet Security does not provide an option to block or filter newsgroup messages.

File Transfer (FTP) filtering

eScan Internet Security Suite does not provide an option to block or filter File Transferring. However, it is possible to block FTP websites by using the web filtering word list.

Voice over IP, streaming media, peer-to-peer blocking

eScan Internet Security Suite does not provide VoIP blocking or filtering.

eScan Internet Security Suite does not provide streaming media blocking or filtering.

eScan Internet Security Suite does not provide peer-to-peer blocking or filtering.

4. Performance

The CPU and memory consumption tests were not performed on this system, since its filtering mechanism was causing technical issues to our testing method.

Based on the HTTP loading tests for this tool, it scored a 2, meaning that there was a relevant delay that could be noticed by the user.

5. Transparency

When logging in, the user is not informed that Internet filtering, blocking or monitoring software is running.

When trying to access a prohibited website, eScan Internet Security Suite shows a webpage with the URL of the site and the reason why it has been blocked. This page does not provide the possibility to override the blocking by using a password.

eScan Internet Security Suite keeps track of all violations in a log file. The logs contain information about the user, the date and time of the violation, the website, the reason for the blocking and if applicable the keyword that was found. The application does not provide summarised reporting.

6. Security Integrity

Network tests

We noted that a module of the eScan suite activated a service available to the network. This service could potentially represent a vulnerability.

Local tests

The log files containing for example all URLs blocked can be viewed and even modified.

By configuring the browsers to use a proxy, we were able to surf the Internet without restriction (access to all harmful sites is granted).

7. Legal Compliance

The information provided by the vendor aligns almost fully with the requirements of EU e-commerce/distance selling law, including communication to the users of their right to cancel the electronic order. The terms and conditions of sales are also well balanced (rational warranty disclaimers and limitation of vendor's liability). We appreciated the fact that the vendor provides step-by-step explanations to parties interested in buying the solution on the way they should place an electronic order, as required by EU distance selling/e-commerce rules.

On the contrary, the vendor's privacy statement contains only basic information. A number of important elements users should be aware of (e.g. whether personal data are transferred and to whom, location and duration of their storage, etc.) are missing.