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Wednesday, Jul 09, 2003

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Posted on Thu, Jun. 26, 2003

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TECH NEWS ROUNDUP

COMPUTER VIRUSES

New utility flushes out trouble

Writing about computer virus-detection software is admittedly about as exciting as discussing the need to check the tire pressure on your car.

But just as a blowout has a way of capturing your attention, a new online anti-virus utility, Panda ActiveScan, caught our eye for doing what Norton AntiVirus Corporate Edition failed to do -- detect a computer virus that had been lurking in a temporary file folder for more than a year.

The utility runs from Panda's Web site (www.pandasoftware.com), detecting and eliminating any of 60,000 viruses and Trojans on your computer. You can try a scan for free. Then you get pop-up ads peddling Panda Antivirus Titanium for \$39.95.

In our test, it inspected some 75,000 files and detected and quarantined Klez.H.

This virus, widely infecting computers last spring, overwrites executable computer files and modifies some system controllers, preventing the system from starting up correctly. Like many other viruses, it's intended to hijack e-mail addresses in the Microsoft Outlook.

Panda CTO, Patrick Hinojosa, said the company's technology is particularly adept at scanning for viruses in hard-to-detect places.

-- Dawn Chmielewski

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- [Personal](#)
- [Technology](#)
- [Personal Finance](#)
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- [Drive](#)
- [Sports](#)
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- [Oakland Raiders](#)
- [San Francisco Giants](#)
- [Oakland Athletics](#)
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- [San Jose Sharks](#)
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- [Golf](#)
- [Motorsports](#)
- [Other sports](#)
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- [Celebrities](#)
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ONLINE

List compiles the best sites

If you've ever scanned a best-of or Top 10 list of movies and mentally checked off those you've seen, or want to see, <http://listsofbests.com> is for you. This new site collects best-of lists and award winners for movies, books and music. The lists are fun to browse, but what makes the site unique is what you can do with them.

Once you register -- it's free -- you can personalize any list by checking off the books you've read, the movies you've seen and so on. The site saves your lists so you can update them and keep track of your media consumption. There's even a list of those who have checked off the most items over all.

Bill Turner, a Web programmer in Dallas, said he started the site after repeatedly printing out and marking up lists of books and movies, only to lose them and have to start over. Lists of Bests is full of neat, nerdy features, such as the ability to rate any list item and to create a personalized collection culled from the lists.

Another list-crazed site is The Listology (<http://listology.com>). Here the focus is not on published lists but on user opinion. More than 1,800 members have created 4,500 pop-culture lists, ranging from the 10 most overrated films to the best Stephen King novels. "People love lists because they are the easiest way to package up a small portion of one's character and opinions," said the founder of the site, Jim Biancolo, a programmer in Lee, Mass.

-- *New York Times*

SEARCHING

Google, MapQuest team up

Google is getting local as it deepens its relationships with one of AOL Time Warner's Web properties. The search company said Monday it had signed MapQuest, AOL Time Warner's online map service.

The deal means that when consumers search for maps or directions on MapQuest.com, they'll see an accompanying list of restaurants, lodging and events. MapQuest has 28 million monthly users around the world and has more than 300 million MapQuest maps and directions printed each month. AOL is Google's first major distribution partner and one of search engine's largest.

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-- *CBS Marketwatch*



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