SUMMARY OF WSJ ARTICLE

Seeking a Safer Internet
New Tools Flag Site with Spyware, Spam
But the Technology is Far From Perfect.

In *Seeking a Safer Internet*, David Kesmodel, writer for *The Wall Street Journal*, investigates the accuracy and difficulties of on-line internet security tools and services. These security rating services notify websurfers and on-line consumers of websites which may be associated with spyware, spam, phishing schemes and other threats. Internet tools rated and reviewed were Scandoo, TrustWatch, and SiteAdvisor. All of the services reviewed are currently free, but Kesmodel reports that some of the companies are considering selling premium versions of the tools. Each service uses different methods and techniques to rate threats. Some set up test accounts at websites and monitor how many email messages are received from the site (i.e. spam regarding dating services, get rich quick offers, etc), others crawl the web and analyze downloads for threats, flags sites that show sex or nudity or “express hate and discrimination.” All either color code warnings with icons next to search results or buttons appear in the browser indicating ratings or warnings. Overall, Kesmodel points out that each are lacking in different respects and there are many instances in which each has missed the mark. Fortunately, all three services reviewed accept challenges and investigate complaints from website owners and third parties on the ratings they provide. All reported that they changed and corrected ratings following complaints and review of the new information. Overall, the tone of the article conveys a general skepticism of the accuracy of the services, but as with any new and developing technology, it will be refined in time.