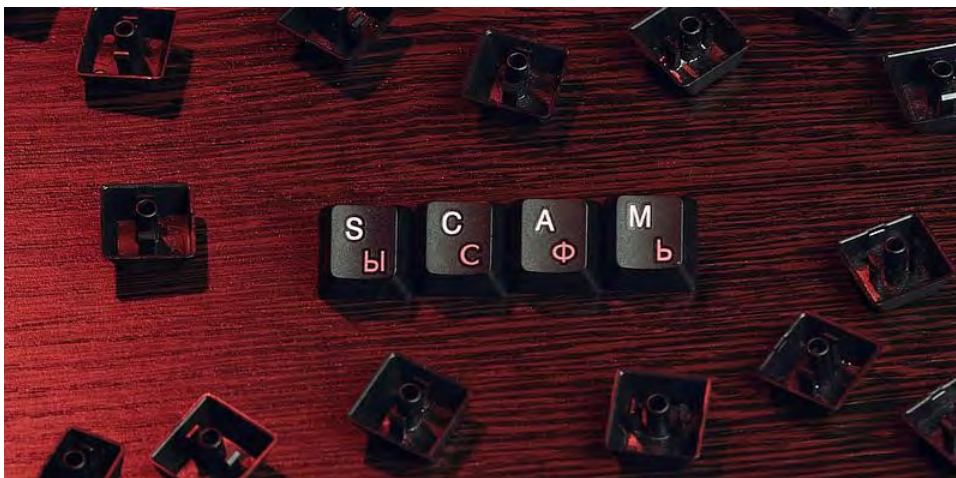




Who Do You Pay for That?



You have to know where your stuff comes from. In the world of computer software, and software (acting) as a service, or SAAS, you might not be buying it directly from the publisher, for a lot of reasons. Buying from a distributor, or a local service (like me, but not just me), means that you may have better terms, like different renewals or the ability to pay for company expenses with an actual company payment, like a check, instead of being forced into annual credit-card autopay.

Or buying local may mean there's an additional layer of support, generally based closer to home than what the publisher purchases overseas: read a screen of directions, badly, as-a-service.

So knowing who sells you anything with repeat billing is important. There are fake renewal messages showing up in email now, asking for you to log in and renew either a product you don't use, or a product that you buy elsewhere. These are hoaxes, and they're not trying to sell software.

From: Notify. Alert <notify.alertjoe@gettheupdateanyti.shop> ☆ Reply Reply All Forward More

Subject: **Fwd: Your Subscription Update-Alert** 6/4/2021, 8:28 AM

To: undisclosed-recipients@missing-domain ☆, missing-domain <> ☆

From: "Notify. Alert" <notify.alertjoe@gettheupdateanyti.shop>
 To: undisclosed-recipients@missing-domain, missing-domain
 Date: 06/04/2021 8:28 AM
 Subject: Your Subscription Update-Alert
Thank You For Choosing NLifeLock.!

Here is a summary of your recent Subscription Update. If you have any questions or want to cancel your order, please contact us **+1-888-___-0932.**

The following are the details of your order:

| | |
|----------------|-------------------------------|
| Product | Home Assist-NOR237654 |
| Date | 06/04/21 |
| Billed | Checking Account (Auto Debit) |
| Amount | USD 379.99 |
| Expire | 06/04/22 |

If you didn't request this renewal, you can call us **+1-888-___-0932.**

Regards, Team Support

Slightly redacted. Note the domains, which are NOT Norton.

As usual, there's the fake urgency, something in their message that has to be done right now. Call the number NOW because there's a checking account debit pending. And there's that 'NLifeLock.!' mention, similar to a real trademark of a well-known product, but not the kind of spelling or punctuation that the actual Norton LifeLock would use. 'Home Assist' is not an actual Norton product name, either.

The sending email address is clearly not Norton, and sending anything to 'undisclosed recipients' implies bulk mail, not something that goes with that customized product name and specific expiration date. And even if I put all that aside: Norton autobills your credit card and then sometimes sends a receipt; they never ask permission first.

What the sender of these messages are looking to do could be any of these things:

- Collect your credit card information for sale.
- Lead into a bigger sale, probably the usual \$400 payment for a free product that's normally included and built into Windows, like Defender.
- Remote control into your computer to 'remove' the product, and then take it over for ransomware, crypto mining, and bulk email sending.

Delete emails like that. If in doubt, forward them to me and I'll confirm if they're fake.

Some of these messages arrive as actual paper, as mailed invoices for services you don't have, or domains that will be up for renewal within 6 months, but are NOT from the companies you buy from; those messages are either trying to transfer your domain elsewhere at a high price, or selling directory listing service subscriptions of no value. The mailed invoices from unknown domain registrars have been around for a decade now; shred them.

More Updates for Windows Update

Updates to Windows will be a big deal all year. Windows 11 is due out in October, and it's still not totally clear if computers built as recently as 2019 will be able to run it. More on that later in the year, and in the [July newsletter](#). For now, computers I'm building are pre-tested for Windows 11 compatibility. Soon, laptops and notebook systems will show up as 'ready for Windows 11.' The upgrades will be free, for computers that can handle it.

In the meantime, a large group of computers is stuck at the Windows 10 release dates in 2019 and 2020. That's a problem; these releases are only updated with security patches for 18 months. After that, Microsoft stops providing fixes and security patches, and so far, has not popped any notices that they're turned off the fixes.

The '1909' version of Windows 10, from October 2019, reached the end of patching on May 11th of this year. The '2004' version, from April 2020, will reach the end of patches on December 13th. The current version of Windows 10 is '21H1', for 'first half of 2021', and it will be supported to December 13th of 2022.

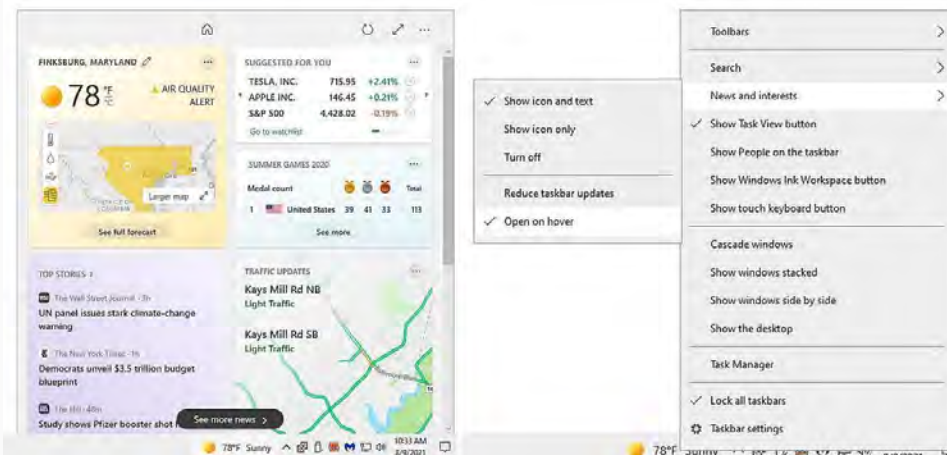
You can check what version of Windows 10 is installed on the RAM page, or by running the WinVer program. To run it, click the Windows logo ('Start') button, type 'winver', and click the search result that appears. It will look something like this:



Any version older that reads '2004' or a lower number should be updated now. Run Windows Update from the start menu, or call me for help. For those of you with remote services set up, I can remotely update multiple systems during hours that your office is closed.

And finally, Windows 7 should be gone now, or completely disconnected from the internet. If you're still running Windows 7 or Windows 8.0, there are major security issues that have no available fixes. Windows 8.1 will still be patched until January 2023. Call for upgrade options if you have any of these systems still online.

The Weather PopUp from Microsoft



There's a new popup in Windows 10, courtesy of Microsoft, but not announced or explained. It's not as if we needed a news and weather popup, or gave

permission for it, but there it is suddenly, and it's an interruption of what we use computers for, because it pops up whenever the mouse gets near it. It's not even labeled as Microsoft, but all the links open in Edge and go to MSN and Bing, all Microsoft properties.

If you like it, there's nothing to do. If not, it's easy to either kill it off or to stop it from reacting to a mouse-over movement. Right-click the weather area, and the menu above will appear. Place the mouse over 'News and Interests' and the second menu will appear. Click (add a checkmark) on 'Turn off' to remove the taskbar gadget entirely, or UN-check the item 'Open on hover' to just turn off the automatic popup on mouse-over.

These steps don't remove the gadget permanently; you can turn it back on from the same menu.



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