



LIFE IN THE BUFFER ZONE

For your security, Buffer Zone creates a virtual folder on the computer, to which all files, disconnected from the operating system and which arrive from the internet, are stored.

The threats and dangers, which computer users are faced with, grow and multiply, and many new protective and more sophisticated means are developed to counter them. After the anti-virus and firewall became almost essential for every computer, it is now the turn of the programs designed to protect the computer through virtualization. TrustWare offers BufferZone Pro, which works similarly to ForceField and SafeSpace, which have been analyzed here in the past.

The idea can be understood from the name – creation of a buffer zone between the computer and the internet. The program creates a new, virtual folder where files which reach the computer from the net, are stored and opened. In this way, say the programmers of BufferZone, one can open programs and files without concern, since they are being opened in a virtual environment that is disconnected from the operating system. The advantage here over regular anti-virus and firewall “only” protection is, that the user does not need to wait for software updates in order to fix flaws or fill in the holes.

BufferZone is not satisfied with this separation, and automatically inserts the entire “My Documents” folder under a special protective umbrella, so that personal files saved there won’t reach undesired users. After installation you will find a lock

symbol on the folder and on every file inside of it (and on future files saved there). This protection is local, for the computer only, and will not prevent you from sending the files through email or uploading them to different internet sites.

The software default is to insert the browsers, the mail programs, instant messaging and file sharing programs into the protected area. A red border will appear around the browser to signal that surfing the web from it is protected. This means that files downloaded during the connection – programs, pictures or songs for instance – will not be saved on the computer, but rather to a virtual folder only. Every protected file, including the browser and the mail applications, can be opened and operated outside of the buffer zone, if that is desired. The system works in the opposite way as well – one can transfer an unprotected file into the buffer zone and determine that it shall only be opened from there.

The whole system sounds a little complicated and scary however, BufferZone attempts to simplify it. After installation a short and friendly presentation appears (in English) and clearly explains the system and how to work with it. The options screen is also not too complicated and allows good control of the system.

BufferZone offers protection, which may seem exaggerated however, as long as it doesn’t interfere with the work – one can never be too protected.

BufferZone Pro

Price: Free for 30 days, 40 dollars a year.

System demands: Windows XP SP2 (a beta version exists for Vista).

Download at www.trustware.com