

# Cry for Help

## Computer Tips & Tricks

### **RansomWare**

A new type of malware that we have seen recently is RansomWare. It comes in several forms; either demanding a ransom before it disables your computer, or requiring you to pay a fine because you have been allegedly caught using the system for illegal activities. Or in its worst version, by the time you see the ransom message it is too late. What has happened is that the malware has secretly disabled your computer or zipped all your documents with a password – so that you cannot access them. They claim that the only way to get your files back and to get your computer working again is to pay the ransom.

There is of course no guarantee that paying the ransom will give you access to your computer and files.

This is yet another reason why regular computer maintenance and good file backups are essential.

Sometimes these bugs come via eMails, maybe purporting to be from the tax office or a bank or other reputable authority, and sometimes they have a .ZIP file attachment. Never, never CLICK on the eMail or open their attachments. This is how they gain the authority to make changes to your computer.

But it can still happen to the most careful of users, and in the worst cases we have to completely wipe the computer and reload everything from scratch. This is why good backups are essential. You may not have documents that are irreplaceable, but how about those five year old photos of a new family member that cannot be replaced.

**Jonathan Harris**  
**JNH Software P/L**  
**5259 2304**

