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Subject: The Wiki is being gently probed by spammers.

Posted by [kerryg](#) on Thu, 09 Jul 2009 18:23:03 GMT

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So far they've been pretty benign - no harm done - but I don't like the "smell" of it, and now we're on their radar, so I've taken steps to secure it against auto-signup spambots.

So if you'd like to sign up for the Wiki (either to participate or to simply access current or future "registered user only" features), the registration for the Wiki will now ask for an invitation code. The invitation code is seven lowercase letters and can be seen in the following image (thank you thewitch!).

Once you have that, this link will take you back to the Wiki to register.

Thanks!

- Kerry, admin

#### File Attachments

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1) [duckling.gif](#), downloaded 1056 times



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Subject: Re: The Wiki is being gently probed by spammers.

Posted by [the witcher](#) on Sun, 12 Jul 2009 21:27:49 GMT

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A bot problem you say? Might I suggest that in dealing with bots and other such evil creatures that you use something other than text!

I hear tell they are kind of illiterate that way.

#### File Attachments

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1) [duckling.gif](#), downloaded 1032 times



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Subject: Re: The Wiki is being gently probed by spammers.

Posted by [kerryg](#) on Sun, 12 Jul 2009 22:14:20 GMT

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Thank you very much for that!

Bots are growing more sophisticated, but hopefully not sufficiently so that they'd be able to parse the instructions on the main page of the Wiki, follow the link to a separate site, figure out which word is the key word and click on a link to return and sign up [and if they do, the end is nigh anyway ]

But you know what? I replaced it anyway since what you did just looks so great

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Subject: Re: The Wiki is being gently probed by spammers.

Posted by [the witcher](#) on Mon, 13 Jul 2009 00:35:19 GMT

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Oh I can do better than that!

Point is bots are getting pretty sophisticated, and sometimes they are backed by humans. Yet bots still can't read images so well, and humans generally turn images off when they are up to no good.

So if you are going to pass along a code, phone number, e-mail etc it is a good idea to do it in an image format.

So tell me how do you know you are being probed by spammers? I'm curious.

### File Attachments

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1) [admn.gif](#), downloaded 976 times

**Administrator**

2) [srnbr.gif](#), downloaded 980 times

**Senior Member**

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Subject: Re: The Wiki is being gently probed by spammers.

Posted by [kerryg](#) on Mon, 13 Jul 2009 08:09:50 GMT

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the witcher wrote on Sun, 12 July 2009 17:35Oh I can do better than that!

Point is bots are getting pretty sophisticated, and sometimes they are backed by humans. Yet bots still can't read images so well, and humans generally turn images off when they are up to no good.

So if you are going to pass along a code, phone number, e-mail etc it is a good idea to do it in an image format.

You're right of course, it's better to do it via image. I was rationalizing my own laziness, I suppose .

Quote:So tell me how do you know you are being probed by spammers? I'm curious.

I got some auto signups in the Wiki with improbable names that dumped and then deleted strings of apparently meaningless URLs. I did a quick consult with the guys that coded the Wiki, who had seen this before and had a quick fix. An upgrade that shuts this sort of thing down is in the cards too.

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Subject: Re: The Wiki is being gently probed by spammers.

Posted by [the witcher](#) on Mon, 13 Jul 2009 10:36:29 GMT

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Mere fact that you have Paris up and running is proof that you are not lazy!

Ok strings of meaningless urls's I think I understand. I've seen that url after url one on top of the other in my errors log. The techs said it was an attempt to crash system by overloading the buffers.

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