

March 4, 2004

## Furtive Surfers Find a Way to Keep Their Travels Secret

By HOWARD MILLMAN

**A** new thumb-size U.S.B. drive from a company called StealthSurfer aims to guard your privacy by keeping the records of your Web activity close to the vest. When you plug in the StealthSurfer and use its customized version of the Netscape browser, the device stores the cookies, U.R.L. history, cache files and other traces of your Web browsing that would ordinarily accumulate on your computer's hard drive. When you're done surfing, you unplug the drive and take the records of your travels with you.

StealthSurfer's name is a bit of an overstatement. It does keep your Web-hopping and file-sharing activities away from prying eyes after the fact. But since it uses your computer's Internet connection, the Web sites you visit can still track your Internet protocol address as you move around online.

The StealthSurfer comes in four capacities, ranging from 64 megabytes (\$70) to 512 megabytes (\$299). You may experience a slight reduction in performance when you use the device because its flash memory writes data at slower speeds than a full-size hard drive does.

On the other hand, installation is a breeze - computers running Windows Me, 2000 and XP recognize the StealthSurfer as a drive when it is plugged in. (If you're running Windows 98, you must download a driver

from [www](http://www.stealthsurfer.com)

[.stealthsurfer](http://www.stealthsurfer.com)

[.biz](http://www.stealthsurfer.com).) For an additional layer of privacy, Windows users can select a password to protect the drive's files. Howard Millman