

STUDENT LIFE

Wireless network has new client | Grimm Outcome

By Jeremy Korwek
technical correspondent

Well, it's that time of year again - time for long lectures, Bruno's breakfasts and surfing the web from the comfort of the Reed Wintergarden chairs. "Hey, wait a minute, I can't get on-line and my wireless doesn't work! My computer must be broken; stupid Best Buy Nerd Patrol."

Well you can just relax, drop the lawsuit and listen. The Behrend computer staff has implemented a new policy, requiring all the people who want to use the wireless connection here at Behrend to download a program called Cisco VPN (Virtual Private Network) Client.

What is a Cisco VPN Client, you might ask? Well, it's a

very simple program that is supposed to secure all Internet communications between the client's computer - that's you - and a server connected to the Internet.

Some of the students that were here prior to the change will recall that the wireless mobility network was wide open and if you had a student or faculty user ID you could access the network with no trouble.

Unfortunately, there are many ways to easily bypass this simple security, but that's another matter. With the VPN connection in place, it may make tapping into the schools network or intercepting information transmitted from students computer, extremely difficult if not impossible.

"You still haven't answered my question! What the

heck does a VPN do anyways?" Well, that's a simple question to answer. A Virtual Private Network attempts to simulate the kind of connection you get when you connect two computers directly to each other.

This means that the data you send from your computer to the other computer is hidden from the prying eyes of that creepy guy that lives across the hall or that strange foreign guy named "Titan Rain." The program does this by encrypting all of the information passed to and from the client - that's you - and the server on the other end.

Now you know how the wonderful world of technology works and the reason why your new wireless computer doesn't work at Behrend yet.

By Chris Hvizdak
opinion editor

Terry Gilliam is widely known for his direction of epic point A-to-point-B pictures such as "The Adventures of Baron Munchausen," "Time Bandits," "Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas" and his co-direction of the immortal classic "Monty Python and the Holy Grail." Gilliam's most recent picture, "The Brothers Grimm," is, at first, a bit of a shock because it does not follow the course of an epic quest through innumerable fantastic locales. That's fine if you haven't any Gilliam experience and just go because you think Matt Damon is dreamy; however, it took a bit of adjustment for me as that's not what I had bargained for. No matter - Gilliam is a competent director and manages to weave a fascinating tale around, primarily, one location.

The story follows the exploits of the brothers Grimm, with Matt Damon as the overbearing type and Ledger as the shy type, as they investigate and eliminate supernatural nuisances in Eastern Europe during the French occupation. Soon, however, it is revealed to the audience that they themselves are staging the supernatural nuisances in a fashion that is strikingly reminiscent of what the Ghostbusters were long ago accused of by Walter Peck. The Grimms are subsequently exposed to the authorities and threatened with death if they do not hunt down and eliminate another supposed trickster that is making little girls disappear in a remote village. Of course, events unfold which illustrate that their prey isn't a trickster at all, but is rather the real supernatural deal.

The rest of the film plays out around Damon's unwillingness to accept the supernatural and Ledger's opposite persuasion as the two work to solve the mystery of the disappearing little girls with the help of a local woman, Lena Headey, who is tossed in for a bit of intrigue, and Peter Stormare, who delivers a fair amount of Italian-accented antagonism as well as the film's most compelling performance.

Is it worth your time? If you're out for a mild romp with frequent suggestions toward the works of the historical Brothers Grimm or if you're a Gilliam completist, certainly. If you're out for a gripping narrative and thrilling action - I'd say look elsewhere.



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