

Another virus worms its way into computers



MIKE WENDLAND

This is becoming a habit. Another serious computer virus is making the rounds this weekend, a variant of the "Love Bug" germ that hit earlier this month. But this one is more insidious.

It, too, targets users of the popular Microsoft Outlook or Outlook Express e-mail programs and spreads by sending itself to all entries in the users address book.

The virus arrives with a subject line, "FW," and contains an attached file with the VBS extension in the body of the e-mail. The tricky part of this virus is that the attached file name is likely to change each time a new e-mail is sent.

Once that attached file is opened, it sends itself out to

address entries then does massive damage to the infected machine. The worm will rename all files on the local hard drive and network drives with a .VBS extension and set the file size to zero. According to Computer Associates (<http://www.cal.com/pres/2000/05/epammer.htm>), the first to sound the alarm, this will make the computer system and the network inoperable.

Meanwhile, the suspected Philippines hackers who wrote and distributed the so-called "Love Bug" virus will likely avoid any significant prosecution. US cybercrime experts say, as with many other nations, there's nothing on the books in the Philippines that provides a basis for prosecution.

While I think some media estimates that it did \$10 billion in damage are wildly inflated, there's no disputing the massive problems caused by the virus.

Consider what the IT manager for one Detroit-area firm says it did to his company of 450

employees: He tells me the "Love Bug":

■ Generated some 35,000 e-mails.

■ Damaged 5,000 files that had to be restored from backups.

■ Consumed 400 man-hours of IS/technical staff time to clean up, and they're not completely finished yet.

■ Left the company without e-mail for five days.

That Detroit-area company is one of many thousands similarly hit. With the new virus making the rounds this weekend, the problem shows no signs of going away.

Viruses aren't pranks. They aren't inconveniences. And the world Internet community needs to make sure adequate laws exist to treat those responsible as the criminals they are.

Internet hoax

Then again, there is such a thing as over-reacting. If over there was doubt about how powerful a lie can be, look

no further than a hard-to-kill hoax that has been flooding the Internet.

The hoax was spread by e-mail, warning of a soon-to-be-enacted FCC regulation that would tax Internet access by modem. The e-mail even said the bill was being introduced by a congressman named Tony Schnell.

There is no congressman by that name. Never has been. The Internet tax e-mail was fake. False. Totally bogus. An urban myth. But so many people fell for it that they've been deluged with election-year legislators with tons of thousands of protests.

So, the United States House of Representatives passed a law this week making such a tax illegal. I think Rep. John Dingell, D-Trenton, got it right when, in disgust at his lemming-like, law-making cohorts, said: "What we have is a fabricated solution to an imaginary problem. We have here a bill that solves a problem

that doesn't really exist." Gives us all a lot of confidence in our elected officials, huh?

No loners

Forget all that nonsense about Internet users being socially isolated losers who ignore family and friends to pursue solitary lives online. A new study by the Pew Internet and American Trust Project (<http://www.pewinternet.org/reports/toc.asp?Report=11>) finds just the opposite.

In fact, it says that 72 percent of Internet users had visited a relative or friend in the past day. Only 61 percent of non-Net users had done the same. Further, Internet users are also more likely than non-users to say they call family and friends just to talk, and they have many people they can turn to for help if they are worried or in trouble. Two-thirds of users say e-mail has brought them closer to friends, and almost half say they would miss e-mail considerably if they could no longer use it.

PC Mike seminar

Meet me next Saturday, June 3, from 9:30 a.m. to noon for the next PC Mike Internet 101 seminar. Sponsored by TalkRadio 1270, WXYT, the free seminar will teach you what you need to know to use the Internet successfully. It will be at The Community House of Birmingham, 380 S. Bates, in Birmingham. The seminar is totally free but you need to get a reservation. Call (248) 455-7343.

Till next week everybody ...

73. Mike Wendland covers the Internet for NBC-TV NewsChannel stations across the country. He is the author of a series of Internet books. You can reach him through his Web site at <http://www.pcimike.com> and hear him Monday through Friday at 6:25 p.m. on NewsRadio 950, WWJ, and on Saturdays and Sundays from 4-6 p.m. on TalkRadio 1270, WXYT.

Sports from page D4

Identifying a concussion

So what, exactly, is a concussion? In general, Wojtya said, it's an "alteration in brain function usually caused by trauma, and it can be anything from dizziness to nausea, to a headache or even loss of consciousness."

How can you tell if you or someone else has suffered a concussion? "If an athlete is acting a little bit dazed, if their balance is obviously affected, if they're not walking or talking right, or responding properly, all of those things are very important. If these are combined with

headache, nausea, vomiting or inability to sleep, that could be very significant," Wojtya said.

Most commonly, a "routine" head trauma presents a mild headache that gradually disappears. However, before returning to sports, anyone who experiences a concussion, no matter what the severity, should be checked by a physician.

It is especially important when symptoms persist, such as a headache that continues more than 15 minutes after the incident, that the injury be evaluated. "Anyone who shows deterioration after the initial event,

who has a headache for awhile and an hour later is nauseated or is vomiting, should be taken to the emergency room," Wojtya warns. "That's someone we can't take a chance with."

Warning

Wojtya says neurological research indicates the brain sustains lasting "bruises" even after symptoms, even the subtlest

ones, have disappeared. In order for the brain to fully heal, it requires rest, sleep, protection from subsequent impact and abstinence from alcohol.

Wojtya stresses the need for parents, coaches and trainers to know the basic signs of concussion.

There's a simple sideline evaluation that tests an injured athlete's memory, which is a good

indicator because memory is particularly sensitive to alterations in brain function. If the player cannot pass the evaluation, he should be sidelined.

The form is available on the American Orthopedic Society for Sports Medicine Web site, www.sportsmed.org, along with an

article on concussion management. After going to the Web site, click on Products and Publications. Then click on Patient Education Materials. Then click on Concussion in Sports Monograph. Call TeleCare (800)742-2300, www.med.umich.edu/1libr/topics/f118.htm



CITY OF FARMINGTON NOTICE OF INTENT TO AWARD ELECTRICAL SUPPLY FRANCHISES

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that the City Council of the City of Farmington has introduced Ordinances C-669-2000, C-670-2000 and C-671-2000 to award electrical supply franchises to JTE Energy Marketing, Inc., Engage Energy US, L.P., and Nordic Electric, L.L.C.

These Ordinances are on file for public inspection in the office of the City Clerk at 23600 Liberty St., Farmington, Michigan, during normal business hours for at least four weeks from the date of this notice, after which they may be enacted.

This Notice is given pursuant to Chapter 14 of the City Charter of the City of Farmington.

PATSY K. CANTRELL, City Clerk/Treasurer

Published May 31, 2000

FARMINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING ON THE BUDGET FOR 2000-01

The Farmington Public School District will hold a public hearing on its proposed budget for the 2000-01 school year at a special meeting of the Board of Education for the Farmington Public School District at the Lewis Schulman Administration Center, 32500 Shilawasee, beginning at 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday, May 30, 2000.

Copies of the proposed budget will be available for inspection at the Farmington Public Elementary Schools and Farmington Public Libraries from 10:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, after May 17, 2000.

THE PROPERTY TAX MILLAGE RATE PROPOSED TO BE LEVIED TO SUPPORT THE PROPOSED BUDGET WILL BE A SUBJECT OF THIS HEARING.

BORRIBE D. FELDMAN
Secretary, Board of Education

Published May 21, 2000

STORAGE USA

Notice is hereby given that on June 13, 2000, LeRoy Elfrank Auctioneers, Executive Administrator for Storage USA, will be offering for sale under the Judicial Lien process, by public auction, the following storage units:

UNITS #	NAME	ITEMS FOR SALE
D349	Master Medical	File Boxes

The terms of the sale will be cash only. Storage USA reserves the right to refuse any and all bids. The sale will be held at the following location, 38875 Grand River, Farmington Hills, MI 48335 and will begin at 1:00 P.M. and continue until all units are sold.

Published: May 14 and 21, 2000

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