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A Bad Bagle and More Danger for Citibank Customers

By Jay Munro

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A Bad Bagle and More Danger for Citibank Customers

Week four of the new year and the first potential big threat has hit, w32/Bagle-mm. Bagle is a mass mailing worm that has quickly gained a medium threat rating with McAfee and Symantec, and an epidemic rating with Panda antivirus vendors. Also known as W32/Beagle or w32/bagle.A, it is set to stop working on January 28th, 2004. Though short lived, it is trying hard to spread as far as possible in a short time. See our top threat for more information.

The big news this week was the release of the latest Microsoft Security Updates, MS04-01, MS04-02 and MS04-03. The first two are more of interest to corporate users, fixing portions of Windows Internet Security and Acceleration server, and Windows Exchange (e-mail) server. The last, MS04-03 is both a desktop and a server based update. Windows XP or 2000 users with auto update turned on will get notified on this one. It isn't critical, but if you're on a network and don't fully trust your net mates, you might want to install it.

In conjunction with Microsoft's security update announcement, Jeff Jones, Sr. Director, Trustworthy Computing at Microsoft, told listeners that a patch has been developed for the IE spoof vulnerability, but not fully tested. He did not speculate when that would happen, but said that they wanted to make sure to be ready to "be in distribution to the millions and millions of customers, and all the variations and all the uses, in all the languages", then they will release it. Christopher Budd, Security Program Manager, PSS Security at Microsoft referred users to the Knowledge base article number 833786 for now.

According to Panda Software, headquartered in Spain, the top worldwide virus is currently Downloader.L. Panda doesn't provide much detail on the virus that accounts for 1% of all malware infections. Essentially Downloader.L is a Trojan horse that installs itself on your machine from other programs,

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and downloads programs from the web. McAfee notes that downloader Trojans do not replicate like worms or viruses, and are typically distributed via attachments associated with spam. They also propagate through IRC channels, peer to peer file sharing networks (i.e. Kazaa) or attachments on newsgroup postings.

We mentioned a new phish e-mail last week that uses the Internet Explorer spoofed URL vulnerability that masks the true address on a web site. The e-mail, claiming to be an "Important Fraud Alert from Citibank", uses a little social engineering to get users to log in to check for any suspected fraud activity on their accounts. We compared the spoofed Citibank site with the real Citibank site and found some differences that may help you recognize a fake message. See our Top Threat below for more information.

One of the more common problems new computer users have is downloading programs that hijack their browsers. These "free" programs offer things like search bars, weather alerts, custom skins and animated cursors. Unfortunately there is no such thing as a free lunch. While many users may say yes to an attractive free offer, they actually pay for it with by sharing their web usage (free market research) with the provider, lots of pop-ups and ads, or even degraded system performance. The resulting system behavior can look like a virus attack, though many antivirus programs don't detect or remove these bothersome programs. This week's tip looks at this type of threat and talks about how you get it, and how to get rid of it.

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