

LANsultants Times

Your Official Source for LANsultants News

Vol. 9 No.4

215-546-3124

July/August 2007

SPAM ALERT

With 120 shopping days left till Christmas, security experts are anticipating more spam due to a Grinch called the Storm e-mail virus. Storm continues to rumble and roll across the Internet. "We did not expect the volume to be so consistently high for so long," according to Adam Swidler, a senior manager at messaging security firm Postini, "We expect Storm will continue to grow and set record volumes and then accelerate even further during the holidays." Before Storm hit last January, Postini typically blocked about a million tainted e-mail messages a day; it now routinely blocks more than 40 million copies of Storm a day, including half a billion since mid-July. Storm uses slick data-correlation techniques to spam out e-Cards that appear to be sent from the recipient's classmates, neighbors, colleagues and relatives. Clicking on the e-Card converts the victim's PC into a "bot", part of a spamming network. Storm bot networks blast out spam hyping the purchase of cheap stocks as part of pump-and-dump stock scams. If and when that scam wears thin, Storm's bot network could easily be tweaked to blast-out Christmas-theme scams to hundreds of millions email accounts.

"There does not seem to be any letup in sight," says Swidler, who describes the software generating Storm as "sophisticated and commercial-grade." Swidler says Storm is "perfectly capable of virtually unlimited mutations."

LABOR DAY WEEKEND SCHEDULE

LANsultants will be closed on Monday, September 3rd in celebration of Labor Day and to enjoy the last weekend of summer! We will have technicians on call for Saturday, September 1st and Sunday, September 2nd, but no one will be accessible on Monday, September 3rd.

CLEANING LCD MONITORS

LCD monitors are not glass and glass cleaning solutions must not be used on them. The official word on LCD cleaning is to use a solution of diluted isopropyl alcohol, no more than a 50% solution. Usually the rubbing alcohol you buy at a drugstore is 90% to 98% pure. Mix 1 part water and 1 part 90% isopropyl alcohol, which works out to just under a 50% solution, and is perfect for LCD cleaning.

Be absolutely sure to use a very, VERY soft cloth such as a piece of soft flannel. Do NOT use paper towels or anything more abrasive than an old worn out cotton T-shirt. Absolutely do NOT use Windex or anything with ammonia in it as it can etch the screen surface and can cause the plastic to go cloudy.

SYSTEM MONITORING 24X7

As of the end of June our automated client system's monitoring program, Digital Watchtower, went from testing and evaluation to implementation. Using Level Platforms Managed Workplace Technology we brought 49 client sites up in June with an additional 28 in July. In August and September we are on schedule to deploy this service at a further 23 client sites which are compatible with this technology. Almost immediately we are seeing an improvement in client's system reliability as we are warned of problems before they impact accessibility of the monitored networks. Clients are realizing lower costs as this automated technology is replacing the time consuming manual methods we relied upon before. When this program is implemented on your network you will be informed via email with monthly costs, typically \$50 to \$100 per month, and provided the opportunity to opt out.

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