Russian antivirus service tops the tables in independent German study

5th March 2004 – A recent report from a research group at Magdeburg University has placed Kaspersky Lab as the fastest anti-virus company to respond to new virus threats.

Virus threats on the Internet are steadily increasing. Given this, the speed at which antivirus developers react to new viruses is a crucial factor in the effectiveness of any information security system. There have been several massive virus attacks since the start of 2004, each more destructive than any seen before.

In connection with this, a well-known research group from Magdeburg University, http://www.av-test.org/index.php3?lang=en conducted independent research to establish the reaction time of antivirus developers to new malicious code. As reported in http://itmanagement.earthweb.com/columns/executive_tech/article.php/3316511 this was designed to discover the average time taken to release an anti-virus database update from the moment a new virus is first detected. The recent notorious viruses, Dumaru.y, Mydoom.a, Bagle.a and Bagle.b, which are all detected using heuristics, were used as controls.

This analysis is more objective than traditional comparative testing carried out by IT publications and research centres. Such tests use collections of older viruses, detected over a month prior to the start of testing, to determine the efficacy of antivirus products. This means that the most important factor in the quality of an anti-virus solution is overlooked: reaction time. It is this specific feature which determines the reliability of protection against new threats. The research carried out by the group from Magdeburg University clearly illustrates the actual quality of antivirus systems, which in turn determines the level of information security as a whole.

For maximum accuracy in analysing the speed at which antivirus database updates are released, the researchers used dedicated script programs. These scanned the developers' servers every 5 minutes for new updates. The mean results of all data received showed that Kaspersky Labs was the quickest in responding to new virus threats.

The results of the experiment ranked antivirus developers as follows:

1. Kaspersky Labs
2. Bitdefender
3. Virusbuster
4. F-Secure
5. F-Prot
6. RAV
7. AntiVir
8. Quickheal
9. InoculateIT-CA
10. Ikarus
11. AVG

12. Avast
13. Sophos
14. Dr. Web
15. Trend Micro
16. Norman
17. Command
18. Panda
19. Esafe
20. A2
21. McAfee
22. Symantec
23. InoculateIT-VET

In addition to the above, Kaspersky Labs was also praised for the frequency with which standard antivirus database updates are released. Users of Kaspersky Anti-Virus can automatically receive updates via the Internet every three hours, round the clock, thereby providing them with greater security.

Kaspersky Labs' leadership is significantly strengthened by the introduction of Rapid Virus Response, a new antivirus database update release technology. This was launched in December 2003, and since then Kaspersky Anti-Virus users have had access to 56 regular updates a week. This figure does not include urgent updates which contain a cure for new viruses judged to be of maximum danger. It should be noted that all Kaspersky Labs antivirus database updates undergo complex testing for compatibility with a wide range of operating systems and configurations prior to release.

Many antivirus developers provide their users with beta-versions of antivirus database updates, which have not been tested for compatibility and which can seriously damage system performance. All in all, Kaspersky Labs is not only the fastest when it comes to reacting to new viruses, but users are also offered maximum protection.

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About Kaspersky Labs
Kaspersky Labs is an international software-development company offering advanced products that protect a wide spectrum of customers, from home users to enterprise-wide networks, against viruses, hackers and spam. For fourteen straight years the company has waged a battle against computer viruses, and in doing so has gained unique knowledge and skills that have led to Kaspersky Labs becoming a technology leader and acknowledged expert in the development of virus defences.
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