

Spam Activity leaps aboard the World Financial Crisis

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While experts predict potential losses of \$2.8 trillion as a result of the world financial crisis, the spamming industry could end October on profit

The worldwide financial crisis sparked an increase in spam production following the collapse of some big names in global banking, say BitDefender researchers. As the world's stock markets crashed, spammers deployed a number of scams promoting services that claimed to eliminate or leverage debts, mortgages, and other fiscal or loan obligations.

For example, a large spam wave targeting U.S. residents advertised the services of a company that allegedly offered to help stop home foreclosures. The message speculated the latest bailout plan announced by the US President.

Based on a template used before the recession, additional spam campaigns featuring financial ads gained significant volume during the month of October. Usually limited to a single body or subject line, the messages direct users through Web links to various Web sites, most of which were pushing phishing schemes.

Other spam waves used the economic crisis as a simple decoy for advertising drugs, pirated software or replicas. Finally, one of the most recent spam attempts relied on a multiple combination of automatically generated and distributed junk e-mails and social networking profiles directing the targeted recipients to Web sites where they can "leave debt behind."

"It is extremely important for computer users to be cautious about the emails they receive, as well as the advertisements they chose to click on," warns Vlad Valceanu, head of BitDefender's Antispam Research.

"Spammers are using the current economic state and computer users' worries to their advantage by targeting spam campaigns towards those looking for not only more information about the recession but also those looking for how to better their current financial status."

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