Memory Stick Malware Gathers Pace

Submitted by: Marylebone Media Relations

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March detection statistics from ESET

Bournemouth, UK (1st April 2008) – ESET (http://www.eset.co.uk) announced today that INF/Autorun, a generic identification for malware that tries to use the file autorun.inf as a way of compromising a PC, has retained its number one spot and increased its share of detected malware during March.

ESET's ThreatSence.Net, which reports on the threats detected by over ten million systems worldwide, shows that 10.30% of malware detections last month were identified as files containing information on programs to be run automatically when removable media, typically a USB memory stick, was inserted into a computer.

"Portable storage media started to become a noticeable threat last summer," comments Paul Brook, Managing Director of ESET UK. "Since then it has gathered pace and continues to grow as a popular infection vector with malware writers and it's easy to see why. It's been drummed into users for so long now that email is the main source of infection that users have forgotten the threats from yesteryear when media such as floppy disks were the main concern. Consequently, basic desktop protection is now often overlooked, particularly by home users."

Adware still features prominently in the top ten detected threats in March, with variations of the pernicious Virtumonde steadfastly refusing to budge. More than just a nuisance, Virtumonde is causing misery to computer users that have had their machines compromised because of inadequate protection.

"Some PC users report instances where this program has taken over a system to such an extent, displaying so many unwanted advertising windows, that the PC becomes all but unusable," continues Paul Brook. "The problem is exacerbated by the fact that if the malware is not fully removed, it will try to replace registry keys and malicious DLLS. There are generic tools available that can help, but they need some knowledge to use safely."

Top 10 Threats for March 2008

1 INF/Autorun – 10.30%
2 Win32/Adware.SearchAid – 4.42%
3 Win32/Adware.Virtumonde – 2.81%
4 WIN32/Toolbar.MyWebSearch – 2.07%
5 Win32/TrojanDownloader.Agent.KGV – 1.74%
6 Win32/IRCBot.AAH – 1.67%
7 Win32/Adware.Virtumonde.FP – 1.55%
8 Win32/Agent.NHE – 1.32%
9 Win32/Agent – 1.26%
10 Win32/Pacex.Gen – 1.23%

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About ThreatSense.Net

ThreatSense.Net includes data about all types of threats seen attacking user systems. This (anonymised) statistical information is collected from those users of ESET security software who choose to enable the reporting service in the product and gives a comprehensive view of the behaviour and spread of malware in the real world. Data is currently collected from more than 10 million systems.

About ESET

ESET develops software solutions that deliver comprehensive protection against evolving computer security threats. ESET pioneered and continues to lead the industry in proactive threat detection. ESET NOD32 Antivirus, its flagship product, consistently achieves the highest accolades in all types of comparative testing and is the foundational product that extends the ESET product line to include ESET Smart Security. Both products have an extremely efficient code base that eliminates the unnecessary large size found in some solutions. This means faster scanning that doesn't slow down computers or networks. Sold in more than 110 countries, ESET has worldwide production headquarters in Bratislava, SK and worldwide distribution headquarters in San Diego, U.S. ESET also has offices in UK, Argentina and Czech Republic and is globally represented by an extensive partner network. For more information, visit www.eset.co.uk or call 0845 838 0832.

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