



The Paper Modem

May 2005 Volume 5 Issue 4

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CoolWebSearch, Dubbed Adware's "Ebola," & Tops Spyware Threat List

Article taken from : TechwebNews

CoolWebSearch, adware that generates more than \$300 million a year for its maker, is the "Ebola" of adware, and easily the most significant spyware threat on the Internet, an anti-spyware security firm said Wednesday.

CoolWebSearch, which comes in multiple forms, can hijack Web search errors, usurp the browser's home page, and modify other Internet Explorer settings. Recent variants have taken to exploiting vulner-

abilities in IE, such as those in the HTML Help system, to install on PCs.

"It's only purpose is to get on a PC, and stay on that PC, even at the cost of killing that machine," said Richard Stiennon, the vice president of threat research for Boulder, Colo.-based Webroot, which publishes the Spy Sweeper line of anti-spyware software.

According to Webroot, nearly half of the PCs it's audited for spyware or adware are infected with CoolWebSearch.

"It's the Ebola of the Internet," said Stiennon. "It's so malicious that it tends to break the ability of a machine to browse effectively, and therefore limits the number of ads and click-throughs that can be generated. Like Ebola, it kills its host before it can be productive."

Webroot's newest Top 10 list -- it releases a list of the ten most significant spyware/

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How do you know you are from B.C. ?
You consider swimming and indoor sport

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adware threats every quarter -- is based on the free [spyware](#) audits it conducts from its own Web site, and those it runs in cooperation with Earth-Link, the Atlanta-based ISP.

"We rank programs on both prevalence and perniciousness," said Stiennon.

Second on Webroot's list is Gator/GAIN, adware that may display banners ads based on Web surfing habits. Gator is a long-time adware package that often gets on systems because it's bundled with free software, most notably the P2P file-sharing program Kazaa. By the SpyAudit scanning results, Gator/GAIN is on about 15 percent of all machines.

"If we take the leap and assume that the sample is representative of the Internet in total, we can estimate how many machines have Gator," said Stiennon. His best guess: 38.4 million PCs. Others on Webroot's list include (in descending order), 180search Assistant, ISTbar/Aupdate, Transponder, Internet Optimizer, Blaze-Find, Hot as Hell, Advance Keylogger, and TIBS Dialer. Most are adware in composition -- not that that means they're benign; they typically hijack search errors and redirect them to another site, and/or blitz the PC with endless [popups](#) -- but some are true spyware.

"We're finding [keyloggers](#) on about 15 percent of the machines audited," said Stiennon, "and Advanced Keylogger is the most prevalent right now. It's on relatively few machines -- about 9,000 that we've found -

- but a keylogger on that many PCs is a scary concept in and of itself.

"Spyware writers are continuing to innovate and find new, more deviant ways to infiltrate systems," said Stiennon. "The increased presence of hijackers, dialers, and keyloggers demonstrates that the new trend for these threats is to go straight for the jugular."

Spyware/adware writers are doing that for one reason: money.

Stiennon, who has analyzed the spyware/adware economy, has come up an average cash flow per "customer installation" per year of \$2.40. For each system infected, then, he estimates that the adware author generates \$2.40 annually in pop-up fees, redirect fees, and other charges.

His cash-flow projection for the creator of CoolWebSearch -- which using his formula may be on more than 127 million machines worldwide -- is thus \$306 million. The company behind Gator/GAIN -- the Redwood City, Calif.-based Claria -- is bringing in around \$92 million a year, while 180search Assistant is raking in \$86 million.

"These guys make spammers look like two-bit back alley operations," said Stiennon. "No wonder there's a gold rush to get in on this."

And no wonder some adware firms are pushing anti-spyware vendors to "de-list" them from their detection and deletion scanners.

Submitted by: Greg Wilson



How do you know you are from B.C. ?

You measure distance in hours.



Tiger Brings Host of Updates to Mac

By Daniel Robinson -
VNUNet.com - 04/24/05

Apple has previously compared Tiger to Microsoft's forthcoming Longhorn version of Windows, and has indicated that this version of Mac OS X will have much of the feature set that Microsoft is promising to deliver in Longhorn by the end of 2006. Apple will officially release the latest version of its OS X operating system for Mac desktops and servers on Friday. The update will add many new features, including full 64 bit application support to take advantage of systems with PowerPC G5 processor chips, and a built-in desktop search capability.

First announced last May, Mac OS X 10.4, code-named Tiger, is being touted as a vital upgrade by Apple. The release contains a new version of Apple's QuickTime multimedia player, as well as the new Spotlight desktop search engine and Core Image, a revamped graphics system. Like earlier OS X releases, Tiger is based on a version of Unix.

Tiger Versus Longhorn

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As an example, OS X ships with Spotlight, a new search feature that is probably the most significant new capability in the operating system. It allows fast searching by keyword of documents and other content stored on the Mac.

"Tiger's groundbreaking new features like Spotlight and Dashboard will change the way people use their computers, and drive competitors nuts

trying to copy them," argued Apple Chief Executive Steve Jobs.

The new Dashboard feature in OS X 10.4 is a platform for pop-up information widgets. These are Web-based applets for displaying information on the Mac OS X desktop.

Tiger will ship with 14 pre-built widgets, providing access to information on topics such as flight arrivals, stock quotes and weather forecasts; and a toolkit for developing additional applets. Because the applets are based on standard Web technologies such as HTML and JavaScript, it will be easy for developers to add new ones, according to Apple.

Submitted by: Y. Bulger



How do you know you are from B.C. ? You know all the important Seasons

Almost Winter—Winter—Still Raining—Road Construction & Raining



Know XP

Copy Files and Folders to CD

To copy files and folders to a CD

- Insert a blank, writable CD into the CD recorder.
- Open My Computer.
- Click the files or folders you want to copy to the CD. To select more than one file, hold down the CTRL key while you click the files you want. Then, under File and Folder Tasks, click Copy this file, Copy this folder, or Copy the selected items.
- If the files are located in My Pictures, under Picture Tasks, click Copy to CD or Copy all items to CD, and then skip to step 5.
- In the Copy Items dialog box, click the CD recording drive, and then click Copy.
- In My Computer, double-click the CD recording drive. Windows displays a temporary area where the files are held before they are copied to the CD. Verify that the files and folders that you intend to copy to the CD appear under Files Ready to be Written to the CD.
- Under CD Writing Tasks, click Write these files to CD. Windows displays the CD Writing Wizard. Follow the instructions in the wizard.

Notes:

- Do not copy more files to the CD than it will hold. Standard CDs hold up to 650 megabytes (MB). High-capacity CDs hold up to 850 MB.
 - Be sure that you have enough disk space on your hard disk to store the temporary files that are created during the CD writing process. For a standard CD, Windows reserves up to 700 MB of the available free space. For a high-capacity CD, Windows reserves up to 1 gigabyte (GB) of the available free space.
 - After you copy files or folders to the CD, it is useful to view the CD to confirm that the files are copied. For more information, click Related Topics.
- To stop the CD recorder from automatically ejecting the CD
- Open My Computer.
 - Right-click the CD recording drive, and then click Properties.
 - On the Recording tab, clear the Automatically eject the CD after writing check box.

Submitted By: G. Bulger



Camera phone saves man from deadly spider

April 29, 2005 – Times on Line

If you happen to come across giant spiders in your kitchen every now and then, you might want to pay attention to this one. A

British chef bitten by the world's deadliest arachnid was saved after snapping a photo of it with his camera phone.

According to a story in the Times Online, Matthew Stevens was bitten twice on the hand by a Brazilian Wandering Spider as he cleaned behind the freezer of his pub.

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How do you know you are from B.C. ?

You know how to pronounce Squamish, Osoyoos, Nanaimo & Tsawwassen.

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The creature, not generally associated with life in England, is believed to have arrived as a stowaway in a box of bananas.

Before the swelling and dizziness hit, the 23-year-old snapped a picture of his assailant to prove to friends just how big it was (very big--about 5 inches).

Later, as Stevens' condition deteriorated and doctors fought to save his life, they were able to send the picture to experts at the Bristol Zoo, who identified the spider and told doctors which type of anti-venom was needed.

The Brazilian Wandering Spider, or *Phonetreria fer*, is listed in the Guinness Book of World Records as the world's most poi-

sonous spider, with venom glands up to 10mm long (just under half an inch) containing enough poison to kill 225 mice. Not good news for patients at the Musgrove Park Hospital in Taunton, where Stevens was treated. In a follow-up story, the BBC News reported today that the spider, which had been captured and brought to the hospital, was accidentally released onto the grounds by a staff member who thought it was harmless. However, the freed spider is not thought to pose a health risk as experts say it would have died soon after its release.



Submitted By: Y. Bulger



Skype Smartphone VoIP Beta Leaves Out The 'V'

April 29, 2005 –Taken from “The Mobile PipeLine”

Voice-over-IP (VoIP) vendor Skype this week released a beta of a version of client software for Windows Mobile smartphones but left out the voice capabilities.

The capabilities were left out of the early beta because the devices that use the Windows Mobile smartphone platform

don't have enough processing power, according to a forum posting by a Skype staff member. In addition, "network connectivity of currently available phones is not sufficient to enable Skype voice calls," according to the posting.

Instead of voice, users of the beta will be able to log in and participate in instant messaging, according to the vendor. It indicated that voice capabilities would eventually be available.

"Skype is built on peer-to-peer platform

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How do you know you are from B.C. ?

You know that Dawson Creek is a town, not a TV show



Firefox passes 50 million download Mark

By John Borland CNET News.com -
Published on [ZDNet News](#): April 29, 2005

The Mozilla Foundation's Firefox Web browser passed a significant milestone in adoption on Friday, with more than 50 million copies of the program downloaded, according to its distributors.

To commemorate the moment, the foundation said on its Web site that it would create 50 limited-edition coins, to be distributed to people with stories of spreading the browser online. An additional, a still-unnamed prize will be given to the owner of the Web site responsible for the 50 millionth download.

"It's funny how the counter just blows by 50 million without a care in the world, isn't it?" Mozilla developer Blake Ross wrote on the foundation's Web site. "But it's not just a number to us. It's a validation of half a decade of work, and the beginning of half a decade more."

With its first full-fledged release full-fledged release last November, Firefox has shaken

up a Web browser market that most analysts had deemed almost wholly mature. For the first time in years, the market share of Microsoft's Internet Explorer has begun inching downwards as Firefox adoption rises.

Much of the interest in Firefox has been driven by repeated security holes found in Internet Explorer. Some prominent security researchers have even recommended against using IE if possible, a criticism that has stung in Microsoft executive suites. Indeed, after years of saying that Internet Explorer was inextricably tied to new releases of Windows, Microsoft executives said in February that they would release a new version of IE before the due date of Longhorn, the next planned operating system release. That new version would focus on creating a secure browsing environment, the company said.

However, Firefox itself has begun to show the wear of popularity, with the emergence of several critical security flaws over the past few months. Open-source developers have contended that the browser's architecture is still safer than IE, however.

Firefox Download URL:

<http://www.mozilla.org/products/firefox/all.html>

Submitted By: *Y. Bulger*



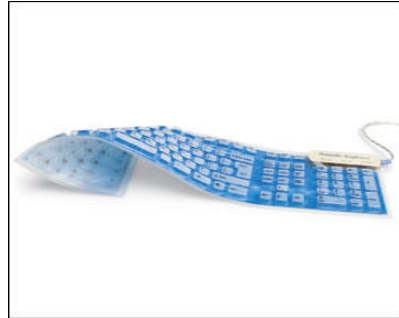
How do you know you are from B.C. ?

You think people who use umbrellas are either wimps or tourists,

Gizmos & Gadgets



When you compute with this stunning PC mouse embellished all-over with hand-applied crystal rhinestones. Approx. 2 1/2" x 4 1/2" ; PS/2 connector. Makes an exceptional Mother's Day, graduation, or bridesmaids gift!



Fun blue keyboard with the standard layout of 104 keys rolls-up for easy storage and portability. Dust and moisture proof, too. USB connection



You will be prepared for anything with this world-famous Swiss Army knife featuring a 256MB USB memory drive and LED mini light. Additional features include: screwdriver, scissors, retractable ballpoint pen, key ring, nail file, replaceable button battery (included) and USB extension cable. Approx.

2 1/4" long. System requirements: Win 98 or higher, Mac OS X and higher, Linux kernel 2.4 and higher and available USB port.

All the above items are available at www.computergear.com

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and by nature it requires more communication with other peers than simple server-based messaging," according to the posting. "We are working to lower network usage in future versions."

The vendor has already released a voice-capable version of its client for Windows Mobile PDAs.

Submitted By: Y. Bulger

Where to download Skype:
<http://www.skype.com/download/>



The End