The New Orleans Personal Computer Club Newsletter

Mother Board

This Month At NOPCC

VoiceFactor

presented by

Todd Antonietti

W32.Blaster, MSBlast and W32/LuvSan Worm

Editor: This article is based upon data provided by Cox High Speed Internet for it's customers. The NOPCC and the Editor do not endorse this product. This article is present to the club members as a source of information about these viruses/worms, their prevention and removal.

On Monday, August 11th, the Internet, including our Cox High Speed Internet network, experienced a significant virus attack. This virus is called MSBlast, W32BIaster, and/or W32/LuvSan, and is a type of known as a worm. We have taken steps on our network to block further infections by this worm; unfortunately, many of our customers' computers were infected during this attack, and may now be shutting down abruptly displaying unusual error messages.

Removing the Worm

Even if your computer is not shutting down or giving any unusual errors, it may still be infected Cox Communications strongly recommends that you take the following steps to en-

sure your computer is protected.

1. Determine if your computer is vulnerable to the infection

2. Apply the security patch that is now available from Microsoft

3. Make sure your anti-virus software is updated, then run a scan of your system

4. If you don't have anti-virus software, use a virus removal utility to detect and remove the virus.

Got to "STOPPING THE SHUT DOWN" at the end of this article if you are unable to complete the steps because your computer keeps shutting down.

Detailed Instructions For Each step:

1. Determine if your computer is vulnerable to the infection.

NOPCC Meeting Topic

Our speaker for September will be: Todd Antonietti. He represents Voice-Factor. VoiceFactor provides products and solutions for doctors/legal professionals, disabled and average computer users and anyone who wants to make computing more fun and more productive. With the advancements in voice-recognition today, a novice computer user can be a skilled typist at over 160 words per minute with

superb accuracy after only five minutes.

In addition, Todd will be offering us The VoiceFactor Bundle featuring NaturallySpeaking 7 Preferred Plus Text Aloud MP3, upgraded headset. He will also be bringing other products for our raffle.

Be sure to attend on Wednesday, September 3rd. See you there!

(Continued from page 1)

Only the following versions of Windows can be infected: Windows NT, Windows 2000, Windows XP at Windows Server 2003.

To verify which version of Windows you are using:

1.Click the Start button, and then click Run

2. Type **winver** in the dialog box

3. Click the OK button

4. The version of Windows that you are using is now displayed

2.   Apply the security patch that is available from Microsoft

The following links will take you to a Microsoft Web site where you can download and install the security patch for your computer. Please select your operating system from the list below:

- Windows XP
- Windows NT 4.0
- Windows 2000
- Windows Server 2003

3.   Make sure your anti-virus software is updated, then run a scan of your system

- If you subscribe to McAfee Anti-Virus Online, available from Cox, your anti-virus software will update automatically.

- If you are not using the Online version of McAfee Anti-Virus, you may have to download an update. Click here to go to the McAfee Anti-Virus update site.

- If you are using any other anti-virus software please visit the corresponding Web site or consul manual for update instructions.

If you don't have anti-virus software, use a virus removal utility to detect and remove the virus.

McAfee has developed a utility called *Stinger* that can remove the worm from infected computers. Note (however, that this utility is only able to detect and remove a very limited number of viruses and worms! Cox strongly recommends the use of more robust virus and

firewall solutions. Click here to access a McAfee site where you can download *Stinger* and get additional information on the worm.

Protecting Your Computer

Prevention of infection by viruses, worms and other malicious software agents can only be achieved th the use of robust virus scanning software that is regularly updated. Implementation of personal firewall also prevent the unauthorized access and use of your PC to infect others, which is one of the factors that contributed to the rapid spread of the MSBlast worm.

Stopping The Shut Down

To prevent the continued shut down or reboot of your PC, please do the following:

1. Reset your cable modem by unplugging it at the electrical outlet, and then plugging it back in after 10 seconds.

2. Start your PC in Safe Mode

4. Find and delete the file called **msblast.exe** (which should be in the Windows System 32 directory)

5. Restart your PC in Normal Mode

Other Important Links:

Free Microsoft patch

Virus Removal Tools

Securities Update Vault

REMEMBER: Don't open e-mail ttachments that end in in .vbs or other unfamiliar extensions.

Contributed by Sherrie Hennee
Web Lab Monitor

Review of eBay University

Recently I had the opportunity to attend a training seminar for eBay, or "eBay University" as it is referred to. As one who uses eBay quite frequently, I would like to share my thoughts and opinions on it, after attending it one Saturday morning in Baton Rouge.

As almost everyone in the internet community is aware, eBay is the premier online auction powerhouse, assisting in helping individuals and vendors move several billion dollars worth of merchandise every year. eBay has several million registered users, many of which are happy to receive some training on how to use it effectively. There are message boards, tutorial articles, and the University which takes a tour throughout several cities across the US each year. It is available in a few different configurations; the one that made stops to New Orleans and Baton Rouge was a four hour session that was geared towards beginning sellers, but had enough info for eBay users of all skill levels. It is also value priced at $25.

The program was hosted mostly by Jim Griffith, who has the job title of "Dean of eBay Education". He is a very pleasant and entertaining speaker who uses a combination of PowerPoint slides and the eBay site itself to demonstrate what features are available and how to make the most from them. Many examples of past and currently running auctions were used as examples of what to do and what not to do when composing and submitting an auction.

As one who regularly buys but has not sold anything on eBay over the past year, I was pleasantly surprised to see the changes in the navigation pages for placing a listing. Most eBay users are aware that every listing is converted into HTML in order to display on current web browsers. Instead of requiring the users to either type in the proper tags when composing their auction description or using an HTML generator program (which is still available if wanted), eBay now has a text box with most of the formatting options of current email programs. This makes it very easy to create bulleted lists, individual lines, boldface text, and other enhancements to description text, allowing a potential buyer to more easily understand what and how an item is being sold. Also new is a free customizable USPS/UPS shipping calculator that can be inserted into an auction listing which gives a reasonable idea of the final amount that a bidder can be expected to pay.

One thing that I also noticed was that since eBay has acquired PayPal, that is now the company-preferred electronic payment option present in most auctions (just as Billpoint was a few short years ago). It is very easy to use and although it duplicates many of the functions of a bank, it does not offer the protections of one as evidenced by third party sites that are critical of it. You won't learn of that from the seminars, or other eBay promotional items.

A minimal amount of time was also spent promoting the new book "The Official eBay Bible" authored by "Uncle Griff", the aforementioned host. It goes into much further detail than what is possible at time-limited seminars and does a nice job of explaining how to navigate eBay, both as a buyer and a seller. It is reasonably priced and is available both from eBay's store eBayorama and at bookstores.

Final conclusion: If you have an interest in eBay either as a buyer or seller, you should definitely attend eBay University if you have the chance to- it is well worth the time.

Submitted by Ray Paternostro
President, NOPCC

SERENE COMPUTER MESSAGES
Aren't these better than "your computer has performed an illegal operation"?

- The Web site you seek cannot be located, but countless more exist.
- Chaos reigns within. Reflect, repent, and reboot. Order shall return.
- Program aborting: Close all that you have worked on. You ask far too much.
- Yesterday it worked. Today it is not working. Windows is like that.
- Your file was so big. It might be very useful. But now it is gone.
- Stay the patient course. Of little worth is your ire. The network is down.
- A crash reduces your expensive computer to a simple stone.

Submitted by John Souvestre

Feedback on the Music Dinosaur Article

The following letter was sent to the music writer for the local newspaper after a recent article in which file sharing was given most of the blame for the fact that all the stores of the Wherehouse music chain recently closed.

As an avid music fan, I thought NOPC members might be interested in my thoughts on this. I read with a fairly high level of interest today's article in the newspaper concerning the woes of the music retailing business and I feel that while it was very well written, it does not tell all sides of the story. Yes, sales of the music CD are dwindling but your article, like the spin from the music labels and the RIAA, places most of the blame on Peer to Peer file sharing networks and not on other aspects present in the industry. Facts and opinions:

1) As your article points out, the average retail on a new single CD is $18 and above. As one who distinctly remembers the days of new retail $12 CDs this absolutely sucks, especially when the actual cost to manufacture a CD is less than $2. People are tired of spending this kind of money and getting a lot of filler with very few decent songs. Even the singles (when available) have 2-6 versions of mostly the same song and cost more than what albums used to cost in their heyday.

2) Music CDs now cost equal or greater than many DVDs, especially when the longbox was (mostly) eliminated. Why buy the soundtrack to a movie when the movie itself can be bought for the same or less?

3) One of the ways that the music industry has tried, and is still trying, is copy protection on CDs. Unfortunately, this not only stops CDs from playing in CD-ROM drives on computers (which many people use as their CD player), but also many recent players that can read CD-Rs and CD-RWs including many recent DVD and car CD players. This wipes out the segment of consumers who want to shift the music over to another form of media, be it a computer hard drive or a portable MP3 or other format music player. (I for instance like to rip the audio tracks from my recent CDs to my computer so that I can load them onto the Compact Flash memory cards to use in my Frontier Labs NEX II MP3 player. This worked great on my recent trip to Houston to see the Boston concert.)

4) File sharing can expose many consumers to artists that they wouldn't normally get a chance to hear. It has been frequently quoted on Slashdot and other message boards that during Napster's heyday, music sales went up, not down as the RIAA claims. As MTV and VH1 concentrate more on playing the same Top 40 "music" over and over and Clear Channel dominates more radio and media options, artists who are not part of the "mainstream" get left out. There are only so many "boy bands", pop princesses, and "hip-hop" that consumers can stomach.

5) More entertainment options plus an economy that is still in the crapper = less dollars to spend on CDs.

6) It's not the artists who are withholding their catalog of music from places like iTunes, it's the actual owners of the artists' music output: the labels. As you point out, the labels under the RIAA umbrella have fought against track selling services instead of embracing them, losing (and having no way of accounting for) potentially thousands of dollars.

7) That's the Electronic Frontier Foundation.

Check out these sites:
http://dontbuycds.org/: Urges consumers to boycott music CDs from mainstream labels (i.e., those under the RIAA) because of high prices, lawsuit-happy RIAA, and copy-protected CDs.

http://janisian.com/articles.html: Read the one titled THE INTERNET DEBACLE - AN ALTERNATIVE VIEW and its follow-up to get one artist's view on why file sharing is good for artists. (Both of these were Slashdot stories over the past year.)

These comments were submitted by Ray Paternostro

- Three things are certain—Death.. Taxes.. and Lost Data. Guess which has occurred?

- You step in the stream, but the water has moved on. This is page is not there.

TODAY'S WORD: spamhaus

1) A spamhaus (haus is the German word for house) is an Internet service provider (ISP) or other business that allows the distribution of unsolicited commercial e-mail (UCE). One of the most infamous spamhauses was Cyber Promotions, an organization run by Sanford Wallace in the mid-1990s. In 1997, Cyber Promotions became one of the first such enterprises taken to court. Ordered to desist from sending unsolicited e-mails, Wallace now reportedly runs an anti-spam discussion forum.

2) The Spamhaus Project is an organization dedicated to stemming the distribution of spam. To this end, the organization publishes a list of offenders and advocates anti-spam legislation. According to an estimate from the Spamhaus Project, 200 identified servers distribute about 90% of all the spam delivered worldwide.

TODAY'S WORD: Murkogram

A Murkogram is spam (unsolicited commercial e-mail) that includes a disclaimer to the effect that the message cannot be considered spam because it is in compliance with Bill S.1618 Title III, known as the Inbox Privacy Act. In 1999, U. S. Senator Frank Murkowski, for whom the Murkogram is named, proposed a law requiring that unsolicited commercial e-mail (UCE) messages include the sender's correct name, physical address, Internet address and telephone number, as well as an option for recipients to remove themselves from the sender's list of addresses. The proposal failed to be enacted because it was opposed by Internet service providers who said it would present them with a heavy administrative burden. Nevertheless, many spammers began to cite the proposed law as a way of legitimizing their spam. A typical boilerplate statement in the e-mail would suggest (1) that the e-mail, even though not requested, was in conformance with the (actually non-existent) law since it identified the sender, and, in some statements, (2) that the recipient had no grounds for taking action against the sender. People who send such spam are sometimes said to be Murking.

Similar legislation by a different name and bill number was proposed in the U. S. House of Representatives. Some Murkers occasionally cite the House of Representatives bill number or other legislative pro-posals, none of which were ever enacted. As of mid-2003, several new pieces of legislation aimed at **curbing** spam were being considered.

Submitted by TomW00

Bite the IPv6 Bullet

Spreadsheet co-inventor and networking guru Bob Frankston says we've patched, propped up, and wringed all we can out of IPv4--the version of the Internet Protocol that most computers currently use. By avoiding its successor, IPv6, we're not only preventing the growth of the Internet, but we're also shortchanging ourselves when it comes to security and access. According to Frankston, we're so close, yet so far away. But now is the time to cross the chasm.

http://ct.com.com/click?q=7c-7NCZIZWrNNqoZh1sWBEg191tBOdR

zdnet tech update 08/08/03
Submitted by Viriginia Kieran

NOPCC Recyling Program

The NOPCC is now set-up to participate in the recycling of printer consumables. This accomplishes two goals: 1) helping to keep spent cartridges out of the waste stream, and 2) having another source of funds coming in to the club.
Don't forget to bring your spent printer inkjet printer cartridges, laser jet printer cartridges, and even cell-phones to the next meeting.

SECRET GUIDES STILL AVAILABLE

If you haven't gotten your copy of "The Secret Guide To Computers" yet, it's not too late. We are continuing to make them available, and at the same low price of $15.00 each. Many of our members who have taken advantage of these books are repeatedly echoing the ratings.To get your copy, see Carl Henderson at any Membership Meeting or Special Interest Group Meeting (he attends most of them). If that doesn't work for you, drop him a note at
secretary@nopc.org <mailto:secretary@nopc.org>
and you can place an order and work out delivery details.

Submitted by
Carl Henderson

Enjoy Computing

Windows XP NJ Edition

Dear Consumas:

It has come ta our attention dat a cupola copies of the Windows XP New Joisey Edition may have been shipped outsida Joisey. If ya got one a deeze, you's may need some help unnerstanin da commands.

Da Joisey edition may be recognized by da unique openin' screen. It reads: "Windas XP", wit a background pitcha a Hoboken. When you's start da program, instead a da usual stringy like music, you hear a little Springsteen. It's also shipped wit a Sopranos screen sava.

- Recycle bin is labeled "Newark"
- My Computer is called "My Friggin' Computa"
- The Inbox is referred to as "Da Trunk"
- Deeted items are referred to as "Wacked", "Erased" or "Rubbed Out"
- Control Panel is known as "The Bosses"
- Performing an "illegal operation" is known as "Enhancin' da Family
- Business" and will actually maximize da program instead a shuttin' it down
- Hard Drive is referred to as "Da Turnpike on Da Way to Da Shore"
- Instead of an error message, "You Ain't Gonna Friggin Believe Dis" pops up.
- Changes in Terminology in Da Joisey Edition:
- OK . . . . Sure ting
- Cancel . . . . Fugetabouit
- Reset . . . . Start ova
- Yes . . . . Yeah
- No . . . . Nah
- Find . . . . Put a Contract Out On
- Browse . . . . Get a Looksee
- Back . . . . U-Toin
- Help . . . . Get Your Own Friggin Ansa
- Stop . . . . Knock it Off
- Start . . . . Move it
- Settings . . . . Here's da Rules

We regret any inconvenience it may have caused if you mistakenly got a copy of the Joisey Edition . You ca sendit back ta Microsoft for anudda ver-sion.(Yea right!)

You gotta problem wit dat?

Submitted by Jeanne Okamoto

The Way A Computer Should Behave!

Click on the link below and then type in your first name...

http://www.cse.unsw.edu.au/~geoffo/humour/flattery.html

Submitted by Don Herrmann
for your enjoyment

Cajun Computer Terms

Log on: Making the wood stove hotter
Log off: Don't add more wood
Monitor: Keeping an eye on the stove or on the Babe
Download: Getting the wood off the pick-up
Mega Hertz: When yer not careful downloading
Floppy disk: Whatcha git from pilin' too much firewood
Ram: The hydraulic thingy that splits the firewood
Chip: Whatcha munch on
Hard Drive: Gettin' home in the winter season
Screen: Whtcha need for skeeter season
Micro Chip: What's left on the botton of the bag
Modem: Whtcha did to the hayfields
Dot Matrix: Farmer Matrix's wife
Port: Fancy wine
Random access memory: You can't remember whatcha paid for that new rifle when your wife asks.

Wise commentary
Only two kinds of computers exist:
the prototype and the obsolete!

Both submitted by Jeanne Okamoto

NOPCC Directory

Elected Officers

President	Ray Paternostro	president@nopc.org	737-9099
Vice President	Ashton C. Mouton, Jr.	vp@nopc.org	246-7759
Secretary	Carl Henderson	secretary@nopc.org	466-3954
Treasurer	Don Herrmann	treasurer@nopc.org	831-1284
Director At Large	Louis G. Dutel, Jr.	director1@nopc.org	831-0055
Director At Large	Clarke Kissel	director2@nopc.org	828-5678
Director At Large	Albert Fox	director3@nopc.org	269-5786

Standing Committees

BBS SysOp	Lanny Goldfinch	sysop@nopc.org	482-5066
Newsletter Editor	Edward Jahncke	editor@nopc.org	897-1205
Public Relations	Jeannie Okamoto	pr@nopc.org	455-0977
Publicity	Jackie Elliott	publicity@nopc.org	455-6203
Webmaster	Manuel Dennis III	webmaster@nopc.org	835-7656

Special Interest Groups

Digital Media	Ray Paternostro	dm@nopc.org	737-9099
Genealogy	Bob Gordon	gene-m@nopc.org	469-4686
Internet	Ray Paternostro	internet-m@nopc.org	737-9099
New Users	Don Herrmann	new-user-m@nopc.org	831-1284
VBLG	Manuel Dennis III	vblg-owner@listbot.com	835-7656
Web Development	Ashton C. Mouton, Jr.	web@nopc.org	246-7759
WADSIG	Manuel Dennis III	wadsig-owner@listbot.com	835-7656
Web Lab	Sherrie K. Henne		913-5638

Other Important Numbers / Addresses

Club Hotline	Recorded messages. Meeting Information. Open 24 Hours	887-5746
NOPCC BBS	Bulletin Board System for members. The original way to PC communicate.	486-7249
NOPCC Web Site	On the World Wide Web. Our own home page and club information.	*www.nopc.org*

September 2003

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 VBLG SIG McCann's 6:30p-8:30p	*2*	*3 NOPCC MTG J.D. Meisler 6:30p-9:00p*	*4 Web SIG 6:00p-9:00p McCann's*	*5*	*6 Living with Home Electronics 10a-11a WTIX 690*
7 Computer Solutions 11a-12p WSMB 1350	*8 VBLG SIG McCann's 6:30p-8:30p*	*9 Genealogy SIG McCann's 7:00p-8:30p*	*10 NOPCC BOD 6:30p-8:30p McCann's'*	*11 Web Lab SIG 6:30p-8:30p McCann's*	*12*	*13 Living with Home Electronics 10a-11a WTIX 690*
14 Computer Solutions 11a-12p WSMB 1350	*15 VBLG SIG McCann's 6:30p-8:30p*	*16*	*17*	*18 New User's SIG McCann's 6:30p-8:30p*	*19*	*20 Living with Home Electronics 10a-11a WTIX 690*
21 Computer Solutions 11a-12p WSMB 1350	*22 VBLG SIG McCann's 6:30p-8:30p*	*23*	*24 Digital Media SIG 7p-9p McCanns*	*25 Internet SIG 7:00p-9:00p McCann's*	*26*	*27 Living with Home Electronics 10a-11a WTIX 690*
28 Computer Solutions 11a-12p WSMB 1350	*29 VBLG SIG McCann's 6:30p-8:30p*	*30*				

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