

Teenage creator of virus faces trial

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A criminal trial against a teenager responsible for one of the worst computer viruses in history opened Tuesday in Verden, Germany.

The 19-year-old had sent his homemade worm "Sasser" around the world in May, 2004. The virus shut down computer systems all over the globe, causing airplanes and trains to stand still, the German daily "Sueddeutsche Zeitung" reported.

Because of the complexity and ferociousness of the virus, investigators believed the Mafia or a gang of criminal hackers lurked behind the scam. Instead, they traced "Sasser" to a teenager, Sven Jaschan, who operated out of the basement of his parents' house in a sleepy town in Lower Saxony.

The worm terrorized the world for about a week before security experts managed to contain the virus.

Jaschan faces charges of computer sabotage, data manipulation and company disruption. Because he was still a minor when the crime was committed, a prison term is not expected, the newspaper reported.

Today Jaschan continues to work with viruses -- as a trainee for a German anti-virus software company.

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