Banner year for cybercrime

December 27 2006

This was a year for the record books for computer crime with 2007 likely even more dire, Wednesday's Washington Post reported.

Computer security experts said next year could be worse than 2006 as computer criminals get better at sending spam and launching Internet attacks on consumers' personal information.

More than 90 percent of all e-mail sent in October was junk and there was a 73-percent increase in the computer-clogging junk in the last two months, officials at the e-mail security firm Postini told The Washington Post. Junk e-mail volume is considered a good indicator of computer crime.

Cybercriminals also grew more sophisticated in 2006 in their attacks on software and Web sites.

"Rustock.B" is a new malicious Trojan horse program designed to evade detection.

"This is about the nastiest piece of malware we've ever seen and we're going to be seeing more of it," Alex Eckelberry, president of the security vendor Sunbelt Software in Clearwater, Fla., told the Post. "The new threats that we saw in 2006 have shown us that the malware authors are ingenious and creative in their methods."

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