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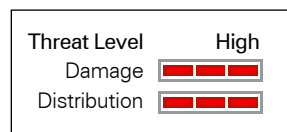
NETWORKING THE
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NEWSLETTER AUGUST 2009
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Conficker Virus Still Lurking Damage and distribution threat levels are high

This is a general repeat and reinforcement of an article from our May 2009 newsletter, mainly because OCS network engineers report that a number of Conficker-infected systems are still being found on unprotected client computers and business networks.

The best solution is to prevent this stealthy sleeper virus from taking hold in the first place, and then to maintain an active detection practice. For existing systems where Conficker or other viruses are found, they must be removed immediately.



The challenge is that new variations of Conficker are increasingly subtle. They can be difficult to detect and challenging to remove, and they can spread through business office networks quickly. They appear to be dormant for now, perhaps

awaiting instructions from remote Internet control servers, and their ultimate purpose remains unknown.

Regardless, all we need to know is that we don't want our computers hijacked or used without our knowledge or permission for any reason or purpose. The original Conficker virus was programmed to launch in April 2009 and start spreading its payload worldwide. That didn't happen, but the threat remains very real and serious.

- *Current OCS OfficeScan (Version 8) subscribers should be protected, since updates are managed automatically and transparently.*
- *If you're using an anti-virus product like Symantec or McAfee, you should be protected as long as you are methodical about keeping your updates current.*

There are several symptoms of a possible Conficker infection, which include an unusual new slowness when browsing to various websites that you use normally.

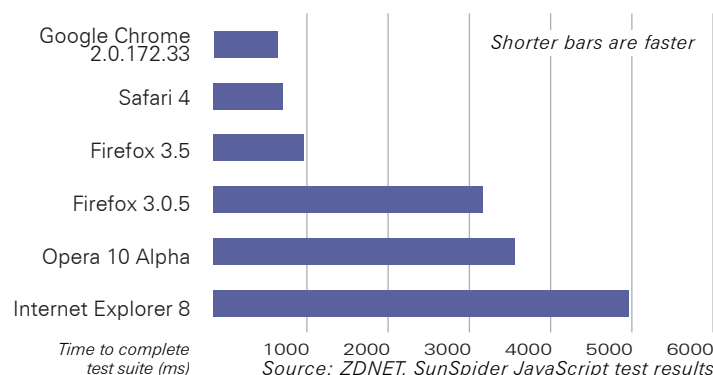
If you see a problem like this or suspect an infection, a good test to help determine whether your computer might be infected with Conficker is to try browsing to trendmicro.com (antivirus.com), mcafee.com, or symantec.com ... this virus is known to block access to common anti-virus websites that might be trying to detect it.

So if you can browse successfully to any of these websites, you probably don't have a Conficker infection. You can also monitor confickerworkinggroup.org for other news.

For more information about OCS OfficeScan or OCS technical and consulting services, please call us at 559.781.4123 or email CustomerService@ocsnet.net.

Which Browser is Fastest?

A current benchmark test rated Google Chrome the fastest browser, followed closely by Safari 4 and the latest version of Firefox – everything else fell far behind.



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Handy Windows Shortcuts and Tips

Here are two of my top favorites. If you tend to keep several applications going at the same time, these are almost indispensable!

Minimize All Applications: If you have several application tabs open on your task bar, it is annoying to have to minimize each one separately if you need to get to your desktop.

Windows+D
 *Minimizes all open windows and displays the desktop*

When you're finished, touch **Windows+D** again to reopen (maximize) all windows just as they were.

Rearrange Task Bar Icons: Most current browsers can rearrange tabs into a more convenient order with a simple click+drag. Wouldn't it be nice if you could do that on the task bar too? Several utilities are available that can do this ... I'm using "Taskbar Shuffle," just Google that name and you'll find many download sources (works in XP and Vista).

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Windows 7 General Release Date Set

October 22nd is Microsoft's announced general release date for Windows 7, which will succeed Vista. Ed Bott at ZDNET says "it is greatly improved over its predecessors in many ways." Leo Laporte, "The Tech Guy" on the radio for nearly 20 years, thinks that "Win7 is the best Microsoft operating system in years." He advises that if you can hold off until late summer to get a new machine, you'll not only have an upgraded processor but Windows 7 as well.

Can you upgrade your existing computer to Win7? Details from Microsoft are still incomplete, but the general consensus is that Vista users will have a direct upgrade option.

Those thinking about upgrading from XP (bypassing Vista) will require a "clean" Win7 install that essentially reformats your hard drive. All of your existing data files will need to be backed up to an external storage device, and then copied back after the Win7 installation.

Older program applications will then need to be reinstalled, and if they won't run natively under Win7 they may be able to use "compatibility mode" in Pro and higher versions.

Those with larger networks will as always have more significant system-wide upgrade issues to deal with. But for individual users with aging machines, the safest bet will be to purchase a new desktop or laptop that includes Win7, then reinstall your existing application software (or upgrade as required), and then restore your data files from backup.

At OCS that's the way we've been doing it for many years. Each time it's "come time" to upgrade we've set the new laptop beside the old and connected them with a cable. Then while beginning to use the new computer, as items are needed or forgotten from the old we just copy them over, and eventually the old machine can be handed down or retired.



"We are so happy since your technicians came out for a service call, our system is working better than ever. Thank you!" -VP

OACYS INTERNET SERVICE PLANS

Plan Name	Average Speeds			B-M-W ¹	One-Time Fees			Monthly Service
	Min	Typ	Max		Service Activation	Install/Configure	Equipment Deposit	
1 Bandwidth-Mailboxes-Webpace (see notes)								
DIALUP	26K	40K	53K	1-5-5	25.00	-	-	24.95
Accelerator	Typically 2-5X faster			-	-	-	-	+5.00
WIRELESS STANDARD 2.4 GHz								
24 Basic	125K	500K	750K	10-5-5	25.00	100.00	100.00	49.95 ^{2,3}
24 Premium	250K	1M	1.5M	15-5-5	25.00	100.00	100.00	79.95 ^{2,3}
24 Business	375K	1.5M	2M	20-10-10	25.00	100.00	100.00	129.95 ^{2,3}
WIRELESS SPECIAL CASES 900 MHz (where available)								
900 Basic	125K	375K	750K	5-5-5	25.00	100.00	100.00	59.95 ^{4,5}
WIRELESS MISSION CRITICAL 5.8 GHz (where available)								
58 Premium	250K	1M	1.5M	15-5-5	25.00	100.00	100.00	99.95
58 Business	375K	1.5M	2M	20-10-10	25.00	100.00	100.00	129.95
58 Professional	500K	2M	3M	25-25-25	25.00	100.00	100.00	159.95
58 Corporate	750K	3M	4M	30-30-30	25.00	100.00	100.00	199.95
58 Enterprise	1M	4M	5M	40-40-40	25.00	100.00	100.00	249.95

All plans include automated central email virus scanning, email spam filtering, and website parental controls. Some plan types permit webpace for personal use only. Wireless installation and deposit package may be paid in installments upon request. All speeds are symmetrical (same for upload and download) within the OACYS network only. All plans terminate at OACYS Porterville headquarters and transport to the Internet via dual T3s over dedicated OC12 fiber optic circuit. All plans subject to change without notice. Pricing and terms are current at the date of this newsletter and supersede previous versions. For footnotes 2,3,4,5 surcharges may apply. Please check with our office for additional details.

I Didn't Know That!

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