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Trojan directs computers to porn sites and drugs stores.

Posted on Thursday, November 29 2007 - 15:50:03 EST

-- Contributed by [microworld](#)

Half part pesky and half part sleazy. That's how you can describe this malware that takes over your browser and redirects it to pornography and diverts online searches to salacious websites or drug stores. Security experts at MicroWorld Technologies caution computer users against probable infection of a Trojan named 'Win32.StartPage.jo' while visiting dubious websites or downloading freebies from untrustworthy sources on the net.



Win32.StartPage.jo changes Internet settings on the affected computer. The default home page in Internet Explorer is changed to www.find-online.net. It also adds a range of porn sites and bogus drug sites in the favorites folder and makes changes in the Windows registry to activate the Trojan at the system start-up.

"This Trojan can impede your Internet activity by popping up pornographic content every now and then," says Vikas Vishwasrao, Assistant Manager - R&D, MicroWorld. "Some of these sites offer to the user Codecs and other downloads which potentially pave way for more malware to enter the computer. A couple of them are also seen exploiting browser vulnerabilities to slither into unprotected PCs."

Porno-Trojans can lead an infected computer to child pornographic sites, accessing which is a criminal offense in many countries. Court may indict an under-trial for no fault of his, based on the evidence of websites prompted by the malware, found in the browsing history.

A case in point is the incident in which substitute teacher Julie Amero from a Connecticut school faced several years of imprisonment as her computer displayed X rated content to impressionable kids. A fresh trial has been granted to her after security experts pointed towards the probable presence of a Trojan in the computer.

"Browser hijackers can pose yet another threat when used in Pharming attacks. Pharming is an advanced form of Phishing where users are redirected to phony look-alikes of bank and credit card websites even when you key in the actual URL of the site directly into the address bar of the browser. Next, all confidential information you've entered into the website in good faith can reach straight to the malware author, who would use that information in whichever way he wants," says Sunil Kripalani, Vice President, Global Sales and Marketing, MicroWorld.

MicroWorld's security software, eScan, protects computers from threats like this with its advanced malware detection technologies. Using MWL technology, eScan blocks malware on-the-fly while being downloaded from the Internet. MicroWorld advises users to protect their computers with a competent security software and keep it regularly updated.

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