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FIRST SYMBIAN MMS VIRUS

Symbian anti-virus specialist SimWorks announced today that it has identified the first Symbian virus capable of spreading itself via MMS messages. Using MMS the CommWarrior.a virus, as SimWorks have named it, can instantaneously send itself to any mobile phone in the world. Multimedia Message Service (MMS) is a more advanced version of the text message service (TXT) familiar to millions of phone users, and allows rich content such as pictures, sounds, video, and applications to be sent as well as text.

Unlike many recent “proof of concept” mobile viruses SimWorks has already received a report of CommWarrior in the wild which it is seeking to confirm.

SimWorks CEO Aaron Davidson says “This is a significant development as until now mobile viruses have used Bluetooth to spread which only has a range of 10 meters surrounding the infected device. Using MMS viruses like CommWarrior have a much greater potential to spread globally”.

CommWarrior scans the infected phone's address book and periodically sends MMS messages to randomly selected contacts. It sends a copy of itself and one of several pre-defined text messages designed to encourage the recipient to install the application.

“MMS borne viruses are analogous to the more familiar mass mailing PC viruses and the fact that infected MMS' come from somebody that the recipient knows may encourage more people to actually install the infected attachment”.

“With MMS messages typically costing between \$0.25 and \$1.00 CommWarrior could also prove expensive to anyone unlucky enough to be infected by it. As the virus runs silently in the background it could be quite some time before the user becomes aware of the potentially hundreds of MMS messages that have been sent” says Davidson.

In addition to using MMS, CommWarrior also aggressively scans for nearby devices running the Bluetooth wireless communication system common on many modern phones, and sends them a copy as well. CommWarrior is the first mobile virus to use such a two-

pronged distribution strategy which may allow much faster and more geographically widespread infection of vulnerable devices.

SimWorks CEO Aaron Davidson says “While the introduction of MMS as a transmission technique allows much wider spread, in reality MMS is an emerging service and it's interoperability between operators is still in its infancy. Many phone users still do not have MMS capable devices, or do not have the service configured, and this may limit the spread of the virus. Also, just like with the Bluetooth viruses, anyone receiving an infected MMS will still receive several warning messages prior to actually completing installation”.

CommWarrior affects Series 60 phones using Symbian OS v6.1 or newer such as the Nokia 3650, 6600 and 6630. CommWarrior does not affect UIQ based Symbian phones such as the popular SonyEricsson P900/910 and Motorola A925/1000.

SimWorks Anti-Virus solution for Series 60 and UIQ based Symbian phones has been updated to provide protection from the CommWarrior virus.

About SimWorks

SimWorks is a Symbian anti-virus specialist and a leading developer of innovative mobile applications for the Symbian platform. SimWorks' product portfolio presently comprises SimWorks Anti-Virus and its Subscriber Data Management System (a phone synchronisation and social networking application).

SimWorks Anti-Virus is presently one of the best recognised anti-virus applications for Symbian UIQ and Series 60 based mobile phones. SimWorks was the first vendor to release an anti-virus product for UIQ phones and remains one of the few vendors to support both the UIQ and Series 60 platform.

Further information on SimWorks Anti-Virus, phone backup, social networking and directory service applications is available at www.simworks.biz.

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