BIT CONCEPTS
756 South 1st Street, Suite 200
Louisville, KY 40202
Phone: 502.587.5940
Fax: 502.587.5944

www.BIT-CONCEPTS.com

Sales from the Internet - Protect Your Computers
By Dennis McDonough

After a two-month break, I again have taken the time to get back to writing articles. I apologize to those who have missed my articles. As I began to write this article today I received another notice of a new worm that is causing many people problems with their computers.

Many notices people receive are not legitimate, however this email was from CERT. The CERT Coordination Center is renown and respected information source. CERT is located at the Software Engineering Institute, a federally funded research and development center at Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. CERT can be found on the web at http://www.cert.org. CERT's website contains information that ranges from protecting your computers against potential problems, solutions to current problems, and predicting future problems.

Blaster is latest worm, the next wave of harassment for computers without current Anti-Virus software or the released critical updates. The amazing thing about the worms or viruses that are being released on the web is that they can easily be stopped. Virus creators are not computer geniuses that are creating something really new. They watch for discoveries that others make as security holes in the Operating Systems. The hackers take that information and set up a program to propagate itself out to other computers. Kits are even available for download, how hard can it be?

Worms and Viruses cost all computer users time and money. Many other things are more fun than trying to remove a virus from a computer. Computers systems would be much faster if they did not have to run these extra software programs. Just remember Blaster is not the first and will not be the last program that disrupts the Internet.

You can help the stop the next threat now, by taking a few simple steps:

1) **Run Anti-Virus Software:** Software is available for download and some programs are free. Installation is just the beginning, setup fulltime protection, including email. Schedule their automated update process, and scan your system on at least a weekly basis.

2) **Use a Firewall:** No good network administrator would connect his companies network to the Internet without a firewall. Why would you connect your computer to an Internet service provider without one?

   Think about a firewall being the watchdog that keeps things away from your computer. A firewall can be a hardware device or software on the PC. There are many firewalls to choose from today at a minor cost or free.

3) **Run the Windows Automatic Update Manager:** A free service from Microsoft. If you are running Windows 98, NT, ME, 2000 or XP this service can be setup to work for you automatically. This is installed by running the Windows Update Icon in your Start Menu. If it is not there, open Internet Explorer, select the Tools menu and select Windows Update.

   Once your system has been updated, you can go to your Control Panel and click on the Automatic Updates icon. In the Settings area the third item will schedule downloading and installation of new updates for you.

If you do not run a Windows operating system, don't feel secure. Not all worms or viruses are made for Windows computers. Windows seems to be the number one target. Check with you operating system developer for their latest protection system.

Take the time to see that all of these tasks are complete on your computers. Your Internet connection will be faster and your computers will be more reliable and available for you to use.

Dennis McDonough is President of BIT Concepts. Dennis can be contacted at 502-587-5940 ext 202 or thru the website at www.bit-concepts.com.

A complete list of articles can be found at: http://www.dmcdon.com/articles.asp