

NEWS BRIEF

Presented by
Crendon Insurance Brokers Ltd

Two-week Window to Protect Yourself Against Malware Threats

Starting 2 June, the UK public has a two-week opportunity to get rid of and shield themselves from two types of malware (GOZeus and Cryptolocker) that attack computers running any version of Windows. This opportunity is a result of action taken by the National Crime Agency (NCA) as part of a concerted multi-national effort.

In one of the largest industry and law enforcement collaborations to date, task forces in more than 10 countries around the world have weakened the global network of malware-infected computers, making any attempts to strengthen online safety particularly effective for the next two weeks.

Understanding the GOZeus and Cryptolocker Threats

Users are infected by clicking on attachments or links in emails which look genuine but actually install malware. These emails are generated by other victims' computers. Unbeknownst to the victims, their infected computers continually send mass emails, resulting in a snowball effect that spreads the virus to more victims.

If a user with an unprotected computer clicks on the bogus link or file, GOZeus is automatically installed, linking the victim's computer to BotNet, a network of already-infected machines.

The malware silently monitors the user's activity until the opportunity arises to capture private information, then transmits that information to

the criminals using BotNet. If the malware cannot uncover a sizable financial reward, it 'calls in' Cryptolocker, which encrypts the user's files and asks for payment (about £300) to unencrypt them.

Protecting Yourself

To protect yourself from these threats, which industry insiders estimate have infected more than 15,500 UK computers and could be costing users millions of pounds, take the following actions recommended by the NCA:

- Install and update your security software.
- Run computer scans to detect any threats.
- Verify that your computers' operating systems and applications are up to date.

Going forward, you should routinely check that your security software is up to date, run scans to uncover any new threats and verify that your operating systems are the latest versions.

For more specific advice, consult Get Safe Online's website at www.getsafeonline.org/nca. Rely on Crendon Insurance Brokers Ltd for resources you need to help secure your computers from the latest threats.



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