

Are You Know About Spam Zombie?

Over the past few years you've all become familiar with the terms spam, spam filter, whitelists, blacklists and a whole myriad of other terminology associated with the problem of spam. You now have to add a new and extremely worrying phrase to that list - spam zombie.

With the net closing in around them spammers are looking for new and more inventive ways to send out their junk email. Spam filters and challenge response systems are becoming progressively more intelligent and blocking more spam each day. What was a spammer to do? The spammers took the next step - infiltrating your PC and using it as a spamming tool.

When most of you think of the word zombie you're reminded of old B movies with groaning zombies are chasing the terrified actress through a castle, swamp or whatever low cost setting the movie revolved around. Spam zombies are, however, far more real and far more dangerous.

A spam zombie is when your computer is taken over by a type of virus called a Trojan. Once this Trojan virus is on your computer it sets up an SMTP (Simple Mail Transfer Protocol) application which allows it to begin sending email directly from your PC to tens of thousands of victims. This all happens invisibly in the background and can be difficult to detect for even the experienced computer user.

How do these Trojans get onto your computer? As in most cases they come from porn, wares or similar sites. One of the first spam zombie trojans to appear became available via a link on sites promising viewers free access to a porno webcam. One click later and the Trojan is installed on your computer ready to send out spam. Phatbot and Proxy-Guzu are two of the more common Trojans used for the purpose of turning your computer into a spam zombie.

How can you check if your computer has become a spam zombie? Make absolutely certain that both your anti-virus and firewall software have current detection signatures and have been completely patched and updated. Working online without taking these necessary security precautions is simply asking for trouble.

Internet Service Providers are under huge pressure to quarantine the IP address of any computer which has been turned into a spam zombie. This is done on the basis that the ISP risks their entire IP range being blacklisted or banned by some spam filtering services or companies.

The very least you owe yourself is to run a full virus and spyware scan on your computer today. You might be unpleasantly surprised at what you'll find lurking there.

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