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BitDefender Labs Reports on the Most Common Types of Image and Text Spam in 2007

BUCHAREST, Romania â August 14, 2007 â BitDefenderâ, a global provider of award-winning antivirus software and data security solutions, announced today that its labs have reported on the subject matters most commonly related to image and text spam within the first half of 2007.

BitDefender Labs found that within the first six months of 2007, spam messages focused on pump-and-dump penny stocks were the most prevalent of all spam messages, and that image spam was the medium of choice for the senders of these spam messages. Spam focused on sexual enhancing drugs was found to be a distant second in BitDefenderâ's ranking of image spam.

According to BitDefender Labs, the most common subjects of image spam since January 2007 included:

1. stock 75%
2. drugs (sex-related) 8.1 %
3. replica watches 5 %
4. mortgage 4 %
5. phishing 2 %
6. porn 2 %
7. diploma 1 %
8. drugs (weight-loss related) 0.9 %
9. travel 0.5 %
10. software 0.5 %
11. other topics 1%

While image spam was shown to be the method of choice for penny stock spammers, BitDefender Labs found text spam to be the preferred choice for drug-related topics. Spam messages focused on sexual enhancing and weight loss drugs accounted for a whopping 56.2% of all text spam, while spam messages focused on replica watches came in at the third place in both of BitDefenderâ's image and text spam lists.

According to BitDefender Labs, the most common subjects of text spam since January 2007 included:

1. drugs (sex-related) 42.5 %
2. drugs (weight-loss related) 13.8 %
3. replica watches 9.1 %
4. mortgage 7.4 %
5. phishing 4.2 %
6. electronics 3.8 %
7. traveling 3.6 %
8. stock 3.6 %
9. software 2.5 %
10. diploma 2.1 %
11. grants 1.5 %
12. dating 0.5 %
13. other topics 5.4 %

New types of spam have emerged in 2007, most notably hosted-image spam, which instead of containing an image, provides a link to a website hosting the spam. Spam with attachments, such as a PDF file, is another type of spam that has become more apparent since the beginning of 2007.

In terms of anti-spam measures, the latest trends are the use of malformed mail boundaries,

which make it hard to unpack e-mails for inspection, and the use of malformed HTML code in an attempt to confuse parsers. Bayes poisoning and word obfuscation were found by BitDefender Labs to be used less frequently than in past years.

"Among the trends we found were that spammers are e-mailing fewer targets at a time, while introducing small variations in every e-mail sent in hopes of avoiding timely detection," said Vlad Valceanu, head of BitDefender's Antispam Lab. "We expect to see more of this in the next half of the year, as well as an increased use of attachments and possibly even embedded flash," he concluded.

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About BitDefender®

BitDefender is the creator of one of the industry's fastest and most effective lines of internationally certified [security software](#). Since its inception in 2001, BitDefender has continued to raise the bar and set new standards in proactive threat prevention. Every day, BitDefender protects tens of millions of home and corporate users across the globe - giving them the peace of mind of knowing that their digital experiences will be secure. BitDefender security solutions are distributed by a global network of value-added distribution and reseller partners in more than 100 countries worldwide. More information about BitDefender and its products are available at the company's [security solutions](#) press room. Additionally, BitDefender's [Malware City](#) provides background and the latest updates on security threats helping users stay informed in the everyday battle against malware.