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BitDefender Detects New Trojan that Hijacks Google Text Advertisements; Cuts into Google Revenues

BUCHAREST, Romania â December 18, 2007 â BitDefenderâ, a global provider of award-winning antivirus software and data security solutions, announced today that BitDefender antivirus analysts have detected a new trojan, which hijacks Google text advertisements, replacing them with ads from a different provider. The threat, which is identified by BitDefender as Trojan.Qhost.WU, modifies the infected computers' Hosts file (a local storage for domain name / IP address mappings, which is consulted before domain name servers and is considered authoritative).

The modified file contains a line redirecting the host "page2.google syndication.com" which should point to an IP of the form 6x.xxx.xxx.xxx to a different address, of the form 9x.xxx.xxx.xxx, so that the infected machines' browsers read ads from server at the replacement address rather than from Google.

"This is a serious situation that damages users and webmasters alike," said Attila-Mihaly Balazs, a BitDefender virus analyst. â Users are affected because the advertisements and/or the linked sites may contain malicious code, which is a very likely situation, given that they are promoted using malware in the first place. Webmasters are affected because the trojan takes away viewers and thus a possible money source from their websites.â

Users are advised to let BitDefender software delete the trojan. For further details on the ad-hijacking trojan, please visit BitDefenderâs Defense Portal site at: <http://www.bitdefender.com/site/VirusInfo/realTimeReporting/>.

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BitDefender is a leading global provider of security solutions that satisfy the protection requirements of today's computing environment. The company offers one of the industry's fastest and most effective lines of security software, setting new standards for threat prevention, timely detection and mitigation. BitDefender delivers products and services to over 41 million home and corporate users in more than 180 countries. BitDefender has offices in the United States, the United Kingdom, Germany, Spain and Romania. Further information about BitDefender can be obtained by visiting: <http://www.bitdefender.com>.

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