

New Virus Infections: The Necessity of Anti-virus software

Everyone knows how important it is to maintain up to date anti-virus software installed on their system. Yet even in major systems virus infection is still rife. In March 2009 the computer systems in several hospitals in the Scotland were so badly hit by a virus infection that the computers had to be shut down.

This was more than inconvenient. In fact it had the potential to cost lives as operations that had been planned for a number of patients suffering from cancer had to be postponed. Luckily the patients have now received their treatments and have suffered no harm as a result; however the outcome could have been different.

It is remarkable that a highly sophisticated hospital computer system run by professional IT experts could become infected by a virus. The virus is thought to be a worm called Mytob. This is a particularly sinister infection for a hospital computer system as the Mytob worm seeks out personal information on the computer and transmits it to the perpetrator. Thus the patients confidential information would be compromised.

Mytob has been around for many years, in fact it was first detected back in 2005. Other hospitals have also been infected by it with a serious outbreak occurring in 2008 that affected several hospitals in London.

It would appear that the fault lies in not taking sufficient precautions and not running the latest ant-virus software. All [antivirus software](#) that are continually updated with the latest information on known threats were quite capable of preventing these outbreaks. It should be a simple matter to prevent any source that is not protected by anti-virus software connecting to the network.

Once a virus has been allowed to infect a network it is much more difficult to get rid of it. In fact the computers at the Scottish hospitals were closed down for two full days as IT staff battled to clean up and disinfect the system. Prevention is always better than cure.

About the Author

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