

## "1 in 10 'Top Search' Results Categorized as Malware: Websense Security Labs Reports Q3-Q4 2009

Websense revealed the findings from its bi-annual research report Websense Security Labs, State of Internet Security, Q3-Q4 2009. Every hour, Websense Security Labs ThreatSeeker Network scans more than 40 million Web sites and ten million emails for unwanted content and malicious code. Using more than 50 million real-time data collecting systems, ThreatSeeker Network monitors and classifies Web, email and data content —providing Websense with unparalleled visibility into the state of content on the Internet and in email.

### Major findings:

- 13.7 percent of searches for trending news/buzz words (as defined by Yahoo Buzz & Google Trends) led to malware. Search engine optimization poisoning attacks target the top searches enabling hackers to drive traffic to their sites.
- In contrast to the first half of the year where mass injection attacks like Gumblar, Beladen and Nine Ball promoted a sharp rise in the number of malicious Web sites.
- 3.3 percent decline in the growth of the number of Web sites compromised. Malware authors have replaced their traditional scattergun approach with focused efforts on Web 2.0 properties with higher traffic and multiple pages.
- Overall, comparing the second half of 2009 with the same period in 2008, there has been an average growth of 225 percent in malicious Web sites.
- Malware authors continue to capitalize on Web site reputation and exploiting user trust with the second half of 2009 revealing 71 percent of Web sites with malicious code are legitimate sites that have been compromised.
- Web 2.0 sites allowing user-generated content are a top target for cybercriminals and spammers. Websense Defensio™ technology enabled Websense Security Labs to identify that 95 percent of user-generated comments to blogs, chat rooms and message boards are spam or malicious.
- 35 percent of malicious Web attacks included data-stealing code, demonstrating that attackers are after essential information and data.
- The Web continues to be the most popular vector for data-stealing attacks. In the second half of 2009 58 percent of data-stealing attacks are conducted over the Web.
- Tens of thousands of Hotmail, Gmail and Yahoo email accounts were hacked and passwords stolen and posted online which resulted in a marked increase in the number of spam emails.
- 85.8 percent of all emails were spam.
- During the second half of the year, 81 percent of emails contained a malicious link.

Websense Chief Technology Officer Dan Hubbard -- "Malicious hackers are really focusing their efforts to ensure they're driving their victims straight to them. By poisoning search results and focusing on Web 2.0 sites, their efforts are often more efficient and effective. The blended nature of today's threats combined with compromised legitimate sites, takes full advantage of an increased perception of trust when using search engines and interacting with friends or acquaintances online.

