INFO WORLD

December 11, 1995

1995 PRODUCT OF THE YEAR AWARDS

Issue Date: January 29, 1996
Ad Close Date: January 12, 1996
Fractional Ad Close Date: December 20, 1995

InfoWorld's 1995 Product of the Year Awards shine the spotlight on the most outstanding products the *InfoWorld* Test Center and editors discovered in a year's worth of testing and evaluation.

(Turn the page for details.)

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THE ENTERPRISE PRODUCT NEWSWEEKLY

NEWSPAPER $3.95

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The courage of

our convictions

Macro virus threat continues

By Jason Pontin

FOUR MONTHS AFTER the Concept macro virus first caused chaos with Microsoft Word users, three additional macro viruses and two macro Trojan horses have surfaced, forcing vendors to scramble to offer customers some kind of protection.

Macro viruses and Trojan horses are written using the scripting tool contained in popular personal productivity applications such as Word.

Malicious macros are frightening because they are hidden inside ordinary data files, are as cross-platform as legitimate macros, are very easy to write, and can be passed along via LANs and the Internet.

"They have the potential to be a much bigger threat than conventional viruses, because people exchange data files all the time," said Karen Black, vice president of Symantec Corp.'s desktop group. "With the Internet, the problem becomes much worse."

Three additional Word macro viruses have turned up since August (see chart); two — DMV and Nuclear — have spread worldwide over the Internet.

The macro Trojan horses — technically not viruses because they do not replicate — are particularly worrisome. One, called FormatC, reformats a user's hard drive; the other, called Weideroffnen, deletes the user's AUTOEXEC.BAT file from the Windows root directory.

But users have protection.

■ McAfee Associates Inc. released two weeks ago VirusScan 1.5 for Windows 95, which automatically detects the Concept, Colors, Nuclear, and DMV macro viruses. The company released a version for Windows 3.x and DOS with similar protection at the same time. McAfee VirusScan costs $65.

■ Symantec's Peter Norton Group releases monthly updates for its suite of Norton AntiVirus products that, to date, protect against all the malicious macros but not against the Weideroffnen

macro Trojan horse. Norton AntiVirus costs $79.

■ S&S Software International Inc. last month released an update of its Dr. Solomon's Anti-Virus Toolkit that automatically detects the known macro viruses and macro Trojan horses. Dr. Solomon's Toolkit costs $125.

S&S Software, located in Burlington, Mass., is at (617) 273-7400.

Symantec, located in Cupertino, Calif., can be reached at (800) 441-7234.

McAfee, in Santa Clara, Calif., can be reached at (408) 988-3832.

Known macro viruses

○ **Concept** causes Word to save documents as templates rather than as files. It infects every new Word document saved with the File/Save As command.

○ **Colors** randomly changes the color settings for text and other screen objects in Word documents.

○ **Nuclear** adds two lines to the end of a printed Word document, demanding the end of French nuclear testing in the Pacific.

○ **DMV** documents each stage of its propagation with Word dialog boxes.

InfoWorld Street Prices
17-inch color monitors

Model[1]	Dot pitch	Low	High	Average	Change from September
Apple Multiple Scan 17	.26mm	$929	$999	$960	+1%
CTX-1765GMe	.27mm	$640	$685	$662	N/A[2]
Mag InnoVision DX17F	.26mm	$610	$729	$660	+2%
Nanao FlexScan T2-17	.25mm	$1,189	$1,330	$1,264	-2%
NEC MultiSync XP17	.28mm	$998	$1,195	$1,055	-4%
Nokia Multigraph 447X	.25mm	$890	$1,018	$954	-3%
Panasonic PanaSync C-1791Ei	.27mm	$689	$780	$752	N/A[2]
Samsung SyncMaster 17GLsi	.26mm	$808	$948	$858	N/A[2]
Sony Multiscan 17sf1	.25mm	$825	$910	$861	N/A[2]
ViewSonic 17GS	.27mm	$700	$775	$748	-1%

InfoWorld Street Prices are based on telephone surveys of resellers and on print advertising in computer publications and regional newspapers. Price information was collected between Nov. 26 and Dec. 1.

1. All displays are flat screen, noninterlaced, multifrequency, MPR II compliant; each has a maximum resolution of 1,280 by 1,024, except for the Nanao and Samsung models, which have a maximum resolution of 1,600 by 1,200, and the Nokia model, which has a maximum resolution of 1,600 by 1,280.
2. Model not included in September pricing survey.

Phoenix to market AT&T Business Network

By Deborah DeVoe

AT&T'S RECENTLY launched Business Network on-line service may gain a considerable increase in exposure as a result of an agreement with Phoenix Technologies Ltd.

BIOS developer Phoenix will offer its existing OEM customers the Business Network, which could then be bundled on PC systems. Financial terms were not disclosed.

"With this agreement, AT&T is making a strong initial step by getting exposure and gaining a trial," said Allen Weiner, an analyst at Dataquest Inc., in San Jose, Calif.

The key issue will be whether customers reuse the service, Weiner added. Users may be attracted by the services, but if the quality and business information are less than optimal, they won't return, he said.

It will be a hard sell for AT&T, because the service is provided on AT&T's proprietary Interchange Online Network instead of the open World Wide Web, analysts said.

AT&T, however, thinks the network's business focus will attract users, especially those in the small office/home office market.

"The big on-line services today

are not strictly targeted at business," said Rob Lippincott, vice president of AT&T's New Media Services unit. "The Business Network will be sold to individuals who have a need for business information and don't have the information resources large companies typically have."

Launched Oct. 30, the Business Network has more than 2,500 business information sources as well as business directory and advice services, AT&T said. Officials would not give its number of subscribers.

AT&T, in Cambridge, Mass., can be reached at (800) 660-2299.