

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- What is a Virus?
- 10 Shocking Facts!
- FIRE-CRACKER DEAL!
- Hot Summer
 Deal!

Computer & Networking Technologies, LLC

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What is a Virus?

A virus is a computer program that is designed to replicate itself from file to file on a single computer. Viruses spread quickly to many files within a computer, but they do not spread between computers unless people exchange infected files over a network.

By 1990, there were roughly 50 known computer viruses. During the late 1990s, the number of viruses skyrocketed more than 48,000! Despite the many thousand virus strains that exist, very few viruses have found their way out of research labs to end-user computers. Based on industry statistics, of the more than 48,000 known computer viruses, only 200 to 300 are in general circulation at any one time.

Viruses are classified by the type of file or disk that the virus infects:

• Boot viruses attach themselves to hard drives. When a user boots from an infected hard drive, the virus is activated and the computer becomes infected.

• Application viruses spread from one application to another on the computer. Each time an infected application program is run, the virus takes control and spreads to other applications.

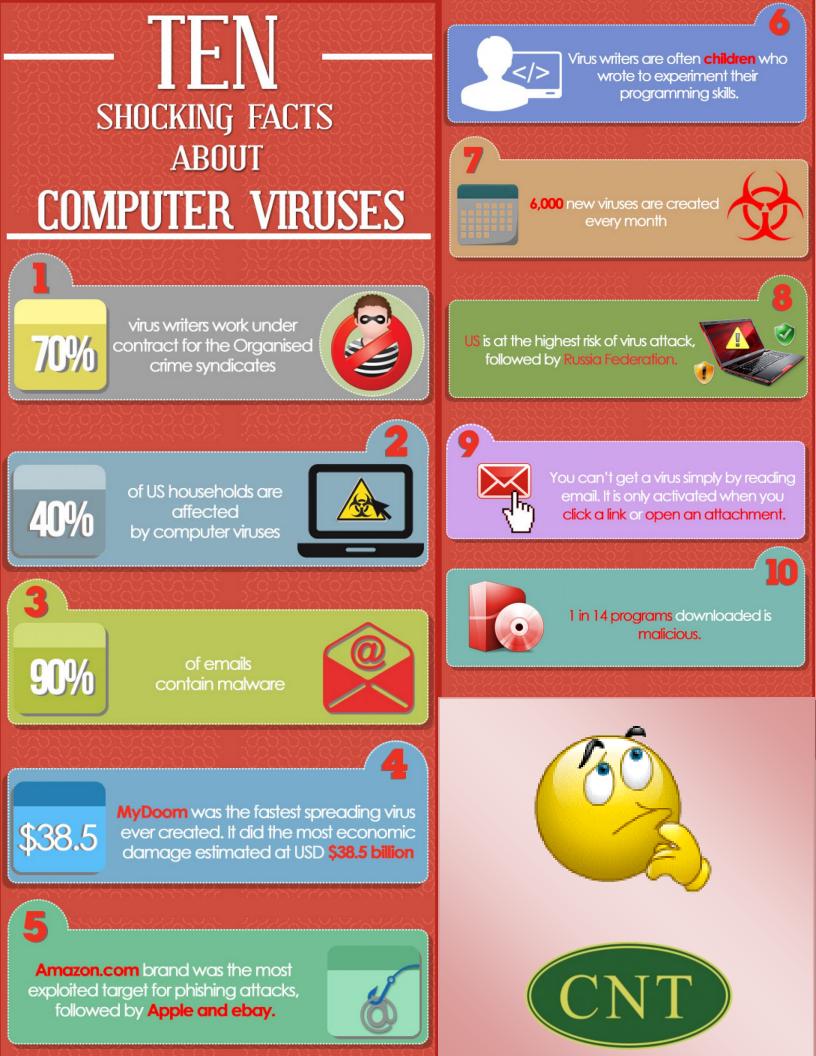
• Macro viruses spread through documents, spreadsheets, and other data files that contain computer macros. A macro is a small, self-contained program that is embedded directly within a document or spreadsheet file. Typically, macros are used to automate simple computer tasks such as summing a set of numbers in a spreadsheet. Modern macros are powerful enough to copy themselves between documents or spreadsheets.

• Script viruses infect other script files on the computer. Script viruses, which are written in high-level script languages such as Perl or Visual Basic, gain control when a user runs an infected script file.

A typical computer virus works as follows: First, the user runs infected program A. Program A immediately executes its viral logic. The virus locates a new program, B, that it thinks it can infect. The virus checks to see if the program is already infected. If program B is already infected, the virus goes back to locate another program to infect. If it is not already infected, the virus appends a copy of its logic to the end of program B and changes program B such that it, too, will run the malicious logic. The virus then runs program A so the user does not suspect any malicious activities.

Viruses can be written in numerous computer programming languages including assembly language, scripting languages (such as Visual Basic or Perl), C, C, Java, and macro programming languages (such as Microsoft's VBA).





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