

Storm Worm Alert – from RB Balch IT Consultants

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If you received a pop-up recently urging you to invest in a stock, it is highly likely that you are infected with the Storm Worm, a very nasty infection that is still active on PC's worldwide.

Computers infected with the Storm Worm are then used to send out email spam advertising "Hot New" stocks, which turn out to be worthless. The user of the infected machine likely is not aware that their computer is now sending out possibly 1,000's of emails a day.

There are over 200,000 "active botnet" machines all connected together and controllable from a single point – well more than enough to take out any website on the internet, should they wish to do so.

The infected machines have been responsible for as many as 2.7 billion spam emails in a single day; as many as 1 million machines may have been infected since January, making it the most prolific email worm in history.

Basically think of it as 200,000 soldiers ready to do whatever their leader tells them to do.

This infection installs a worm – the Storm Worm – on your computer. While very annoying, it can be removed. Microsoft's "Malicious Software Removal Tool" that comes down as a monthly update can remove it automatically - hence another reason to have updates allowed automatically. Wipe and reload is generally not necessary for this particular infection - unless other infections have piggy backed onto it.

The infection has now gone a step further and began sending pop-ups on infected machines advertising a particular stock - HPGI.PK, from Hemisphere Gold company.

If you noticed this pop-up, or other symptoms such as Symantec anti-virus constantly scanning outbound email, then you should have your system checked immediately.

If you have any questions, please contact RB Balch at (623) 561-9366 or via email at help@rbbalch.com. You can also request an onsite visit via our website at <http://www.rbbalch.com> and receive a \$5 discount off your bill.