Malware review

Literature, Fiction

Whiletechnologyin computing continues to rise, computer hackers and crackers are also evolving. Cracking even started at the early age of computer technology. It started from simple codes exploiting bugs in Operating Systems. And now, it becomes a hobby of some. Stealing passwords and exploiting computers are common way of cracking. Some people termed it as hacking. Everyday, anti-virus companies are also upgrading their systems since viruses and other harmful softwares are upgrading.

Piracy is another story. It is an act of duplicating someone's work and sells it. Before, it is not common and hardly be seen. But as devices and softwares are upgrading, duplications can be made in a split of seconds. For some consumers, it is good but for the industry, it is a disadvantage. Piracy is one of the major problems that media industry is facing.

But, technology cannot be fathom; it is continuously evolving in exponential manner. Musicpublishers (the entertainment industry is the ones affected) released their cure or prevention for such exploitation. The program is called " rootkit". Basically, its task is to hide copy protection on computers. With its ability, people can no longer copy music. In this way, piracy can be prevented. But, Sony admitted that someday somehow people will try to crack its code and continue on pirating. But for sure, media industry's cyber security personnel well not let crackers succeed.

On the other hand, due its capability to control computers, rootkit was distinguished by most anti-virus software as a malware. On an article on Technology Review published by MIT and written by Wade Roush,

Technology Review interviewed Bruce Scheiener a computer security guru. There, Scheiener discussed about the tool and its capabilities. In " When Copy Protection Becomes Malware", the computer security guru specifically identified the work of the rootkit and why it is called a malware.

Basically, malware is a form of software that can control the system. Some malwares are harmful. But in the case of Sony, it has no other functions except to hide copy protections on users' computer. The reason why it is distinguished as malware is because of its capability to manipulate the system wherein the user's freedom of the product is given limitations.

Added by Scheiener, computer users or consumers often times do not know what they are buying. Advertisements are so broad that buyers only see the outside appearance of the capability of the product. Consumers do not know what else their product can do. With this weakness, rootkit see an opportunity. It can't be distinguished by consumers as harmful except when their anti-virus reacts on it (after distinguishing it as a malware). But these days, rootkit is accepted by anti-virus companies as useful software and now freely preventing music from being copied.

In my opinion, it is illegal and unethical to copy a product. The ethical nature of copy protection and its implementation on the other hand is discussed in relation to a new set of copyright laws called The Digital Millennium Copyright Act. This act protects the media industry. It punishes those people involved in illegal duplication of digital products.

In some point, consumers do not freely get what they needed for a product. Consumers buy digital products to satisfy their needs. But with this technology, some consumer's rights are somewhat by passed. If we try to look at some point, there is a contradiction. Consumers wanted to buy a product that will make their lives easy. But this objective is not met since producers have the capability to control the product they want to sell. But, we can also say that it is a part of technology advancement. It is like before.

There are no copying devices before so digital products are secured. It only came when the technology advances and devices able to duplicate are manufactured. Digital products vendors are only upgrading their system. They only restore what was lost. With the rootkit, digital products today have similar limitations before, except that it's more advance and more easy to use.

There's another important thing the article discussed. The rootkit was not detected by anti-virus softwares before. There are people who know that Sony rootkit is freely exploring their computers. One of the reasons for this is that, Sony's technology or program is more powerful than the anti-virus available that time. There were customers who noticed it. Some make noise that their anti-virus software did not detect the rootkit. It's really shame on the part of anti-virus provider.

Their software should be able to protect the computer from harmful viruses yet rootkit passed the test. We can picture out that programmers are getting their codes better in order to cross the gate which are set by protection

softwares. However that did not last a long time. Anti-virus software providers developed further their products and able to detect the rootkit.

Scheiener was asked if Sony will not make another program similar to rootkit. The guru said boldly that Sony will again do it when the controversy is over. Well, we cannot blame the company for it. They are only protecting their products from pirates. If more piracy will happen the digital industry will not also last for long. There will be no marketer on the said or similar products. It is also their way of saving their jobs and professions.

Malware is really a big issue. Rootkit is not free from that controversy. The process will just create a cycle. There are people who will continue to find ways how to pirate a digital product. Crackers will continue to write codes in order to exploit bugs of every technology. While that is happening, cyber security personnel will find ways to prevent their products from being stolen. This is indeed an indication that we passed the days of low-technology and now experiencing a high-end digital technology. Nonetheless, copy protection will still be recognized as malware unless anti-virus provider withdraws its security on the program.

Reference:

Roush, W. (2006). When Copy Protection Becomes Malware. Technology Review. Retrieved