

Example of history and origin of computer viruses essay

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Computer virus is the software which damages data, programs or the computer itself. It is a concealed program which can contaminate other programs by modifying them and causes data loss. It gets attached to other software and runs secretly every time the host program is executed. The virus replicates itself within a computer system. Some viruses hidden in the computer can infect the computer at a particular time called time bomb viruses.

Computer viruses first came forth in the 1980s due to a number of factors, such as, the increase in personal computers, the utilization of computer bulletin boards, the floppy disk, and so on. Early on these software were parts of codes implanted in the genuine program, for instance in a game or word processor and when the consumer downloaded or ran it the virus starts working and moves into the memory from where it find other software to modify and add the code into them. When the program is opened by the user who is not aware of this, the virus starts working on towards other programs and similarly infecting them and so on. Similarly if the contaminated programs passed on to another by means of a floppy disk, the virus spreads in new programs and so the chain continues.

The first virus was written by Bob Thomas in 1971. This virus is called ' Creeper' and it displayed a message on the system, " I'm the creeper, catch me if you can!" this virus did not infect computers until in 1986 an actual virus was created by Farooq Alvi Brothers, who pirated software to produce this virus.

The computer viruses were originated in 1949, when a Mathematician John Von Neuman explained about programs that self-replicated, which resembled what we now call a computer virus. In the 60s a game, ' Core Wars' was programmed as a self-replicating program (a virus) that kept on producing and saturating the memory of the computers. This was stopped when an anti-virus, ' Reaper' was created by the same programmers. The Reaper wiped out all the replicas of Core Wars that were produced, hence leaving behind only the real program. This was discovered in 1983 and called as a computer virus and was discussed in detail in an influential scientific magazine.

At the same time MS- DOS was the operating system that was used throughout the world. This system lacked many hardware elements which are used in the present time hence it had a lot of shortcomings. Moreover it was hit by a virus, Brain in 1966, which was a malevolent code developed to contaminate the booting system of the disks in order to seize access to the contents in them. In the same year Trojan, a function known as PC-Write was also created. Later on when the producers of viruses found out that virus that affects files can be injurious to the systems also. Hence in 1987, Suriv-02, another virus that harmed COM files was created. This also led to the creation of Jerusalem or Viernes 13, viruses which weren't that harmful as Morris worm, which emerged in 1988 and almost 6000 computers were infected by it.

Hence from 1988-1995 many viruses infected computers, namely, the first marco virus, polymorphic viruses, Michael Angelo, which activated

epidemics. With the extensive use of internet and email, viruses were also modified. Such as, in 1999, Melissa, a virus infected Word 97 and 2000 files in a way that it attached and sends itself as an email to the contact in the address book of the user which contained it in the computer. Microsoft, Intel and Lucent Technologies closed their internet connections to clear the virus out. Similarly, the virus VBS/LoveLetter also known as ' I Love You' harmed computers costing approximately 10, 000 million Euros. This virus also attached itself to emails messages with a subject ' I LOVE YOU' and a file ' LOVE-LETTER-FOR-YOU. TXT. VBS'. When the consumer clicked and opened the message the computer got bugged.

Other types of malwares were referred to as computer virus, which was included to adware and spyware that did not reproduce itself. Viruses are usually noticeable by the computer users through some type of symptoms. There are many viruses that are covert and do not show any symptoms to the users. There are viruses which only reproduce themselves and do nothing else. However other viruses erase information stored in the hard disk, messages are displayed by a kind of virus while other made small changes in the computer program.

It is a confusing question as to what computer viruses are and it is hard to think how long they have existed. This virus is quite similar to biological virus, once attacked it spreads and multiplies itself within the system. Some viruses are residents in computer while others are non- resident. Resident viruses attack the memory, are hosted in the program and are very quick infectors. On the other hand, the non-resident viruses help in locating the

infected files. These viruses are a hazard for the computers. However, it is necessary that a good anti-virus is installed and updated every now and then to protect the computer from any sort of bug. Most of these viruses are created by humans themselves. When the program is marketed they have a virus which is transmuted into the computer other viruses enter the computer through the use of modem. These are perfectly safe to use. The viruses usually affect the RAM and your computer disk. Commercial and share-ware programs are developed to detect the virus which has been causing system problems. These programs should be tested before installing any disk or the computer is first started each day, the computer hard drive should be scanned.

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