Fortinet October Threat Landscape Report Highlights Increased Zeus/Money Mule Risks

Report Offers Money Mule Recruitment Warning Signs

SUNNYVALE, CA, Oct 27, 2010 (MARKETWIRE via COMTEX News Network) -- Fortinet(R) (NASDAQ: FTNT) -- a leading network security provider and the worldwide leader of unified threat management (UTM) solutions -- today announced its October 2010 Threat Landscape report, which warns of increased Zeus activity and the related risks money mules take when signing up for questionable job opportunities.

"As outlined in our '2010 Threat Predictions Realized' report, money mules have been aggressively recruited this year to help cyber criminals launder money," said Derek Manky, project manager, cyber security and threat research, Fortinet. "A recent example of this is the worldwide prosecutions of a Zeus criminal operation, which included 37 charges brought against alleged money mules."

Recent Zeus stories illustrate how prevalent money mules have become and how they are being used to filter, disguise and spread money transfers. Mules today are typically recruited into criminal organizations through legitimate-looking advertisements. A suspect ad may suggest a client is looking for a "payment processing agent," "money transfer agent," or something as general and vague as an "administrative representative." These recruitment ads can be found anywhere from print and online job sites to direct points of contact. While many mules likely enter into the business relationship knowing the full criminal implications of what they're doing, there are a surprising number that do not.

Preying on the Desperation of Job Seekers One of the most recent money mule recruitment emails FortiGuard flagged this month began the subject line with, "Re: CV." The body of the email offered the recipient an "administrative representative" position for a proposed salary of EUR 5,000 per month plus commission. One of the listed job duties was to "administer day-to-day financial responsibilities for clients," as well as prepare weekly financial reports.

"The majority of opportunities we're seeing today offer prospects roughly 10 percent commission for any transfers they make," Manky continued. "With a few simple clicks, a $10,000 transfer could net the mule roughly $1,000."

Money Mule Warning Signs The following guidelines can be used to help prevent someone from inadvertently becoming a money mule:

-- If the job offer sounds too good to be true, then it probably is. Be wary of any job opportunities that promise great rewards for little or no work or work experience.
-- If the job description is vague, unclear and/or doesn't stipulate who you would be reporting to in the new position, then do deeper research into the company to get those questions answered.
-- Be especially scrupulous with regards to money transfer job offers that are coming from overseas, as they can be very difficult to research and verify. If the company in question doesn't have verifiable contact information (phone, email contact and address) on their web site, think twice about working with them.
-- Be cognizant of any company that asks for a personal bank account number as the means through which money is expected to flow. Recruiters will typically mandate that their mules use anonymous money transferring services for outbound funds; as with any scam, be cautious of a request such as this.
-- Security services such as antispam and web content filtering can also help to minimize money mule recruitment attempts, as they could help flag the recruitment emails, or potentially warn or block specific illegitimate job recruitment domains.
-- Anyone suspecting they may have been a victim of this type of crime should contact their bank immediately.

FortiGuard Labs compiled threat statistics and trends for October based on data collected from FortiGate(R) network security appliances and intelligence systems in production worldwide. Customers who use Fortinet's FortiGuard Services should already

be protected against the threats outlined in this report.

FortiGuard Services offer broad security solutions including antivirus, intrusion prevention, Web content filtering and anti-spam capabilities. These services help protect against threats on both application and network layers. FortiGuard Services are updated by FortiGuard Labs, which enables Fortinet to deliver a combination of multi-layered security intelligence and zero-day protection from new and emerging threats. For customers with a subscription to FortiGuard, these updates are delivered to all FortiGate(R), FortiMail(TM) and FortiClient(TM) products.

The full October Threat Landscape report, which includes the top threat rankings in several categories, is available now. Ongoing research can be found in the FortiGuard Center or via FortiGuard Labs' RSS feed. Additional discussion on security technologies and threat analysis can be found at the Fortinet Security Blog.

About Fortinet (www.fortinet.com) Fortinet (NASDAQ: FTNT) is a worldwide provider of network security appliances and the market leader in unified threat management (UTM). Our products and subscription services provide broad, integrated and high-performance protection against dynamic security threats while simplifying the IT security infrastructure. Our customers include enterprises, service providers and government entities worldwide, including the majority of the 2009 Fortune Global 100. Fortinet's flagship FortiGate product delivers ASIC-accelerated performance and integrates multiple layers of security designed to help protect against application and network threats. Fortinet's broad product line goes beyond UTM to help secure the extended enterprise - from endpoints, to the perimeter and the core, including databases and applications. Fortinet is headquartered in Sunnyvale, Calif., with offices around the world.

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Media Contact:
Rick Popko
Fortinet, Inc.
+1-408-486-7853
rpopko@fortinet.com

SOURCE: Fortinet

mailto:rpopko@fortinet.com