

Russian Cybercriminals Spreading Influence

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The cover of a report from cybercrime analyst Group-IB. The report says Russia's cybercrime market reached \$2.3 billion last year.

Russia is losing the battle with cyber criminals, becoming the third-largest producer of spam in the world and sixth most active producer of malicious code in a cybercrime market estimated at \$2.3 billion, industry reports said.

In Europe, Russia places number one for spam, and is sixth in the world in terms of malware production, up from 10th place last year, Symantec's annual Internet Security Threat Report said.

Symantec said more than 60 percent of infected resources are normal sites that hackers have altered to distribute their viruses. Blogs and social networks were the largest sources of infection, representing 19.2 percent of infection sources.

Infections in mobile devices also saw a sharp rise, increasing as much as 93 percent due

to increasingly sophisticated attacks targeting mobile operating systems like Google's Android.

Russian cybercrime investigations company Group-IB released a report evaluating Russia's 2011 cybercrime market, which has nearly doubled in value from the previous year to \$2.3 billion, owing to greater control and organization by traditional organized crime elements, the report said. Online fraud accounted for the largest portion of the market at \$942 million, followed by spam at \$830 million.

Analysts from Group-IB said legislation targeting cybercrime is critical to fighting the growing problem. The report indicated that Russian-speaking hackers were behind 36% of cybercrime around the world last year.

In November, Russian lawmakers for the first time suggested making spamming activities illegal, though critics say not enough is being done.

Earlier this year, a Russian was accused by the U.S. of being responsible for a global spam network that accounted for as much as one third of all global spam.

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