Security
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Another Adobe Reader security hole emerges

by Elinor Mills

Updated 4:35 p.m. PDT *with Adobe saying Windows, **Mac** and Unix versions of Reader are affected and more details.*

Security experts are recommending that people disable JavaScript in Adobe Reader following reports of a vulnerability in the popular portable document format reader on Tuesday.

The vulnerability appears to be due to an error in the "getAnnots()" JavaScript function and exploiting it could allow someone to remotely execute code on the machine, according to **an advisory** from the US-CERT.

"US-CERT encourages users and administrators to disable JavaScript in Adobe Reader to help mitigate the risk," the post said. "To disable JavaScript in Adobe Reader, open the General Preferences dialog box. From the Edit-Preferences-JavaScript menu, uncheck 'Enable Acrobat JavaScript.'"

All currently supported shipping versions of Adobe Reader (8.1.4, 9.1 and 7.1.1 and earlier) are vulnerable and Windows, Macintosh and Unix platforms are affected, Adobe said **in an advisory**.

The company said it would release updates for all the platforms but did not yet have a time frame for that. "We are currently not aware of any reports of exploits in the wild for this issue," the advisory said.

At the RSA security conference **last week**, F-Secure Chief Research Officer Mikko

Hypponen said Internet users should switch to using an alternative PDF reader because of the security issues with Adobe Reader. A list of them is available on the **PDFReaders.org** Web site.

Of the targeted attacks so far this year, more than 47 percent exploit holes in Acrobat Reader, while six vulnerabilities have been discovered that target the program, he said.

Just **last month**, Adobe issued a fix for an Acrobat Reader hole that attackers had been exploiting for months, after issuing a patch for a critical vulnerability in Flash player **the month before**.

Elinor Mills covers Internet security and privacy. She joined CNET News in 2005 after working as a foreign correspondent for Reuters in Portugal and writing for The Industry Standard, the IDG News Service, and the Associated Press. E-mail Elinor.

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