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**GLOBAL IT NEWS**

**Microsoft and Veritas in joint development project**

Microsoft and Veritas Software, the data storage software company, plan to jointly develop software technology for Microsoft's SQL Server database, the Financial Times reports. The alliance will help Veritas to benefit from increased sales of SQL to corporations, where Microsoft's main competitors are Oracle and IBM. Microsoft will benefit from Veritas's dominance in Unix, which could aid sales to the corporate software market. Programmers from the 2 companies will co-operate on data storage products and interfaces between Veritas and Microsoft software. Veritas's software will provide Microsoft SQL Server customers with important capabilities for managing and backing up data.

**Web servers infected by internet worm**

300,000 web servers have been infected by an Internet worm that takes advantage of a security flaw in Microsoft software to deface sites. The worm could also help attackers identify infected computers and gain control of them. The "Code Red" worm infects servers using unpatched versions of Microsoft's Internet Information Server software and defaces the Web sites hosted by the servers. Microsoft identified the vulnerability and posted a downloadable fix on its website last month, but many companies had failed to apply the security update. Microsoft urged all system administrators to update their copies of Internet Information Server.

For details see <http://www.zdnet.com/zdnn/stories/news/0,4586,5094345,00.html?chkpt=zdnnp1tp01>

### **Warning of new computer worm**

Symantec has warned of a fast-spreading new worm that could delete files and fill up the hard drives of infected computers. The worm, "W32.Sircam" or "SirCam," arrives attached to an e-mail message with a randomly chosen subject line. The body of the message is also randomly chosen, although the first and last lines are always "Hi! How are you?" and "See you later. Thanks" in the English version of the message. Once activated, the virus sends copies of itself to all e-mail addresses in the Microsoft Outlook address book. The sent e-mail message also includes a randomly chosen document from the infected computer. The worm has several unusual features, including the fact that it resides in the recycle bin of the infected PC, where people may not look for it. It can also carry out several destructive acts based on a combination of arcane PC settings and chance. The worm is also "network aware", which means it will search for network resources and attempt to propagate itself to attached systems. Symantec has classified the worm as a "severe" threat, saying several hundred computers at a handful of sites had been infected with the worm as of Thursday evening. McAfee classified the worm as a "medium" risk and said 1,418 infected files had been reported in the last 30 days.

For details see [http://news.cnet.com/news/0-1003-200-6625286.html?tag=mn\\_hd](http://news.cnet.com/news/0-1003-200-6625286.html?tag=mn_hd)

### **Digital signatures become law in Europe**

A European Commission directive last week legally recognised digital signatures for the first time. This means that digital signatures now have the same standing as conventional handwritten signatures on contracts and other agreements. All 15 member states of the European Union have implemented the digital signature law. Similar legislation has been operating in the U.S. for the past 9 months. Technology experts claim that it is more difficult to forge an electronic signature than a hand-written one.

For details see [http://news.bbc.co.uk/hi/english/business/newsid\\_1446000/1446426.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/hi/english/business/newsid_1446000/1446426.stm)

### **Dell shortens consumer PC warranties to 1 year**

In a bid to lower the price of its computers, Dell has announced that it will reduce warranties on its consumer and small business PCs from 3 years to 1 year. Customers will be given the option to extend the warranty in the second and third year for an additional fee. Dell will also offer new buyers the option of accepting a warranty which requires them to return the equipment to Dell for repairs. If buyers accept this condition they will be offered a discount, but repairs will take between two and three weeks.

For details see [http://idg.net/ic\\_652569\\_1773\\_1-3921.html](http://idg.net/ic_652569_1773_1-3921.html)

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## **HUNGARY'S IT HEADLINERS**

### **Hungarian universities receive high performance computers**

20 Hungarian colleges and universities were last week presented with high performance 64-bit Alpha computers, valued at over HUF 1 billion, the Financial Times reports. The institutions won research bids offered by Compaq Computers, Hungary, and have been given 3 years of free use of the leading edge computers.

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