The Growth of Mobile Devices: Leading to a Growth in Mobile Viruses by Sean Burke

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The days when the internet could only be accessed by a desktop computer are long gone. In 2012, people can go online in seconds through their laptop, mobile phones or tablet computers. This increase in portability has certainly made the internet far more useful and accessible in the 21st century than in the early days of its adoption. However, the growth of mobile devices is also leading to a growth in mobile viruses â€“ a serious threat of which many people still remain unaware.

According to recent statistics, 27 per cent of adults and 47 per cent of teenagers now own a smartphone in the UK. Four per cent are said to own a netbook (a small, streamlined laptop) and half of the UK population is expected to own a tablet PC by 2017. This huge and very visible growth in mobile devices means that it will be easier than ever before for mobile malware perpetrators to spread malicious programmes.

Malware â€“ malicious software that includes things like viruses, worms and trojans â€“ has the potential to damage or seriously disrupt a computing device. Some malware attacks are relatively harmless and may be designed as a prank or an experiment. Others aim to cause real harm by extracting personal details â€“ such as private banking information â€“ from computer users.

Many technology users â€“ including those who own a mobile device â€“ are well aware of the risks of malware to their desktop or laptop computers, and have likely installed antivirus software to protect them from such risk. However, the perils of mobile malware are considerably less well-known, and many smartphone and tablet users remain oblivious of the need to install security software on these devices.

The most comprehensive way to protect yourself against mobile viruses is to invest in mobile anti virus software. However, itâ€™s also important to take precautions and make certain alterations in your mobile internet behaviour, rather than letting your security software do all the work for you. For instance, avoid connecting to unsecured wireless internet networks with which youâ€™re unfamiliar. This can be particularly difficult, especially if youâ€™re a frequent attendee at conferences or large events where youâ€™re required to tweet or live blog by-the-minute. However, if you ensure that you always use a secured network, youâ€™ll reduce the chances of encountering mobile malware or a suspicious connection.

You should also ensure that you update your mobile malware software frequently. Mobile viruses and trojans are always evolving, especially as new developments in portable internet-enabled devices become popular. Antivirus companies are continuously developing in order to stay ahead of malware spreaders, so keeping your security software up to date offers you a good chance of protecting your device from infection.

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