Mozilla Updates Firefox to Fix Security Gaps

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The Mozilla Foundation updated the Firefox Web browser Tuesday in order to patch a series of security vulnerabilities, including widely publicized browser spoofing issue and a frame-injection issue.

Mozilla has released Firefox 1.0.5 and plans to follow it with new versions of its Thunderbird e-mail client and namesake browser application suite on Wednesday, said Chris Hofmann, Mozilla's director of engineering.

The Firefox update fixes 11 security issues discovered both by outside security researchers and from Mozilla's own Security Bug Bounty Program, which offers a $500 reward for reporting bugs.

Hofmann said that Mozilla knows of no exploits of the security vulnerabilities patched in Firefox 1.0.5.

Among the vulnerabilities plugged in Firefox 1.0.5 is a browser spoofing issue reported last month by security researcher Secunia. The spoofing vulnerability, which affected all major browsers, could aid scammers in successfully launching phishing attacks.

Users could be convinced to provide sensitive information in JavaScript dialog boxes that do not display their origins. To fix the issue, the Firefox upgrade now displays in a JavaScript window's header the Web address of the source of the prompt's content, Hofmann said.

Also last month, a 7-year-old frame-injection vulnerability, which had been patched in earlier versions of Mozilla browsers, reared its head again in Firefox.

The new version patches the flaw, which had the potential to allow an attacker to load malicious content in the browser window of a trusted Web site by exploiting the way browsers handle frames.

It is working on a revamped software updating system for the next major release of Firefox, Version 1.1, which is due for release later this summer.

A second alpha release of Firefox 1.1, called "Deer Park," was slated to be available for testing among developers as soon as Tuesday.

That alpha was supposed to include early test code of the new software updates system, Hofmann said.

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