German spam makes comeback
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A FLOOD of German-language right-wing spam hit inboxes around the globe over the weekend, pushed out by PCs infected with a version of the Sober worm. Carrying subject lines such as "Multi-Kulturell = Multi-Kriminell", the emails point readers to a variety of websites carrying articles supporting right-wing causes. However, the messages contain no malicious code.

The attack mirrors a similar German right-wing spam campaign that took place in June 2004, timed to coincide with federal elections in Germany.

A spokeswoman for email filtering group Message Labs said the emails had been propagated by the "Sober.q" variant of the Sober worm, the first generation of which appeared in 2003.

It appeared that a botnet network of "zombie" PCs had been used to mount the spam campaign, although no figures on the distribution of the email were available yet, she said.

A Telstra spokesman said the carrier had been blocking the messages at the network level since 11:45 AEST today.

It's believed that the German text in the messages may have allowed them past text-based searches in anti-spam measures designed for English-language markets.

The latest attack comes a week after thousands of marchers from the extreme right-wing National Democratic Party were forced to abandon a planned protest in Berlin about what they described as Germany's "culture of guilt" over the Second World War.

The protest, staged on the 60th anniversary of Germany's surrender to Allied forces, was called off after the group was confronted by several thousand more opponents of the march.

Another Sober variant was also behind a spate of recent emails purporting to be ticket confirmation messages for the 2006 World Cup in Germany from football governing body FIFA.

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