

# Crystal Ball Or Rear View Mirror?

It's that time again where the so-called experts are cast as seers in a Shakespeare play to tell seekers of vision that their world is about to tragically end. Yes, it's time for the 2008 security predictions. There is a very simple formula that is almost universally



*Randy Abrams*

used to forecast the coming year in security. We all have specially crafted crystal balls. Smack dab in the middle of each of our crystal balls is a rear view mirror. What the experts know is if we want to see the upcoming trends, we need only look behind us. The rear view mirror lets us appear to be looking forward as we look back!

The trends are as simple to predict as they are useless to predict. I can tell you with a high degree of certainty what is going to happen. We will see increasing attacks on Apple products. Windows Vista and XP will continue to be compromised. Applications from a variety of vendors will be found to have vulnerabilities the bad guys will exploit. Credit card fraud and identity theft will continue to grow. Web pages will continue to be defaced in order to compromise users that visit legitimate websites. Advertisements on web pages will increasingly become attack vehicles, even on highly respected websites.

If you are really interested in security, ignore the trends. Trends are not how you design security. Security is all about managing risk. If you are doing the right things now to promote security in your organization, the trends will go on without affecting you. If you are keeping your operating system and applications patched, the trend toward exploiting vulnerabilities will be mitigated by your diligence. If you are using a properly configured firewall, you will repel a number of attacks, regardless of the trends. If you keep your antivirus program up-to-date you won't fall victim to old threats that have been detected for months, when the less security savvy get nailed by them. If you employ proactive security solutions, you'll be better prepared for unforeseen attacks.

If you want to be part of a known but underused smart security trend, start providing all of your employees with security training. For the past few years the trend has been to exploit the naive user.

Security software can at best only help to mitigate the problem, but education is the only known cure for naiveté.

If you control your security, trends are of little value. If you follow the trends, you are one of the victims.

If you have any computer security questions or topics you would like translated from geek speak to human speak, feel free to shoot me an email at [askeset@eset.com](mailto:askeset@eset.com).



*Randy Abrams is Director of Technical Education for ESET*

*[AskESET@eset.com](mailto:AskESET@eset.com)*

*[www.eset.com](http://www.eset.com)*

**610 West Ash Street, Suite 1900**

**San Diego, CA 92101 • 866.496-ESET**

*ESET paid for this space and is solely responsible for its content.*