National Cyber Alert System

Cyber Security Alert SA09-286B

Multiple Vulnerabilities Affect Adobe Reader and Acrobat

  Original release date:
  Last revised: --
  Source: US-CERT

Systems Affected

   * Adobe Reader and Acrobat 9.1.3 and earlier 9.x versions
   * Adobe Reader and Acrobat 8.1.6 and earlier 8.x versions
   * Adobe Reader and Acrobat 7.1.3 and earlier 7.x versions

Overview

 Adobe has released Security bulletin APSB09-15, which describes multiple vulnerabilities affecting
Adobe Reader and Acrobat.

Solution

 Update

 Adobe has released updates to address this issue. Users are encouraged to read Adobe Security
Bulletin APSB09-15 and update vulnerable versions of Adobe Reader and Acrobat.

 Disable JavaScript in Adobe Reader and Acrobat

 Disabling JavaScript may prevent some exploits. Acrobat JavaScript can be disabled using the
Preferences menu (Edit -> Preferences -> JavaScript; un-check Enable Acrobat JavaScript).

 Prevent Internet Explorer from automatically opening PDF documents

The installer for Adobe Reader and Acrobat configures Internet Explorer to automatically open PDF files
without your interaction. However, you can set up a safer option that prompts the you by importing the
following as a .REG file:

 Disable the display of PDF documents in your Web browser

Preventing PDF documents from opening inside your Web browser will partially mitigate this
vulnerability. By applying this workaround, you may also lessen the possibility of future vulnerabilities.

 To prevent PDF documents from automatically being opened in a Web browser, do the following:

  1. Open Adobe Acrobat Reader.

2. Open the Edit menu.
3. Choose the preferences option.
4. Choose the Internet section.
5. Un-check the "Display PDF in browser" check box.

 Do not access PDF documents from untrusted sources

Do not open unfamiliar or unexpected PDF documents, particularly those hosted on Web sites or delivered as email attachments. Please see Cyber Security Tip ST04-010.

Description

Adobe Security Advisory APSB09-15 describes a number of vulnerabilities affecting Adobe Reader and Acrobat. An attacker could exploit these vulnerabilities by convincing a user to open a
 specially crafted PDF file.

These vulnerabilities could allow a remote attacker to take control of your computer or cause it to crash.