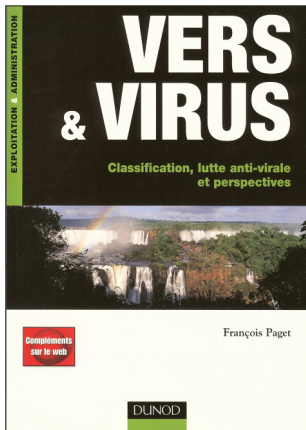# BOOK REVIEW

VERS & VIRUS

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Title: Vers & Virus
Author: François Paget
Language: French
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There have been many useful and informative books written about viruses in English. However, during a recent visit to Paris it occurred to me that I couldn't find a single good book about viruses that was written in French.

L'AUTEUR

During the same trip I met with my friend François Paget, a well respected anti-virus expert who has been working in the anti-virus industry for around 14 years.

François is one of the founders of *McAfee*'s AVERT group (Anti Virus and Vulnerability Emergency Response Team). He is also a long-standing member of EICAR and has been a WildList reporter in France since the start of the WildList. François is the person the French media contact when they need information or a comment on a new virus outbreak or malware attack. During our meeting he revealed that he had just written a new book – in his native French – which would be released one week later. I decided to buy a copy.

QUELQUE CHOSE POUR CHACUN

The book contains over 300 pages of virus information and is divided into 10 chapters. I felt that it had something for everyone – this book will help even non-specialist readers understand the virus-related security issues they encounter in their day-to-day work and it contains valuable information for IT technicians and managers.

The opening chapter is dedicated to definitions of all virus-related matters. Although these definitions are broad, they are illustrated with many examples, and the combination of the definitions and the examples provides the reader with an excellent overall picture.

The second chapter was my favourite: the history of viruses, worms and other malware. This chapter also covers some of the history of the anti-virus industry. For example, there is a

mention of the start of *Virus Bulletin* in July 1989 and even a reference to the original connection between EICAR and CARO – something not many people know about these days. The history section covers events as far as the end of 2004.

Chapter 3 gives an overview of viruses catalogued by infection method, type and functionality. The next four chapters provide a more detailed look at all the viruses described in chapter 3. The information here is set out in a clear and not excessively technical manner, thus making the book accessible for all.

Near the end of the book is an overview of anti-virus programs. The descriptions and accompanying tables are quite comprehensive. François also gives the reader suggestions as to how to go about selecting the right protection for their company. For me, though, this part of the book seems too theoretical. Having a long career as an IT security consultant behind me, I felt that this part of the book could have been written from a more practical angle. However, a description of the impact of virus outbreaks and estimate of the financial damage caused by some virus attacks boosts this chapter significantly.

The final chapter draws some conclusions and looks at the evolution of viruses. Again, the information is well presented and backed up with plenty of diagrams and charts. Indeed charts are well used throughout the book, and the book is very logically structured with clear figures and tables. François has also included a number of notes throughout the book, providing links to relevant Internet sites.

À MON AVIS

In my opinion François has done a very good job and I believe this book is a must-have for anybody who works with or is interested in 'viruses and worms' (the translation of the title). If you understand French, buy this book – you will not be disappointed. If you don't understand French, buy it as well – it could be the start of your new French language course!

As a Belgian I feel lucky to have been taught to speak and understand a number of different languages. I hope that eventually this book will be translated into English, as its style is refreshingly different from that of any other books on the subject and it will, inevitably, gain a wider audience in English.

I will certainly be adding *Vers et Virus* to my expanding library of security-related books. At this rate I will need to open some form of public library as the supply of high quality anti-virus and security-related books seems to be never ending!