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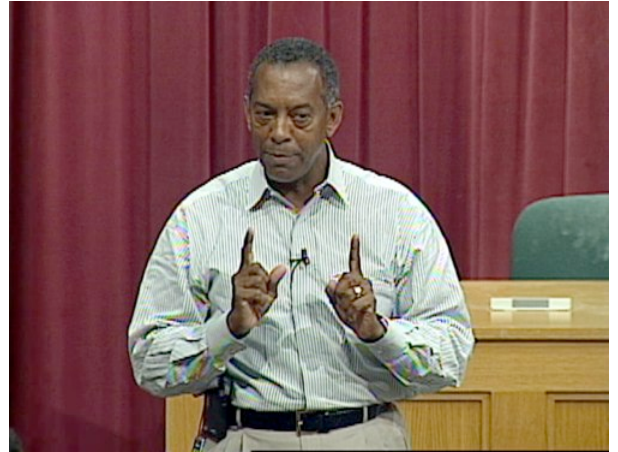
Pervasiveness and Execution: Staying Ahead of Competitors

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Amateur hackers are mainly knowledgeable about the windows environment, says Thompson. But professional hackers can hack into anything. Symantec welcomes the giants like Intel and Microsoft into the space. According to Thompson, the Netscape phenomenon was a product of the arrogance of youth that is not prevalent in the country boys at Symantec.



Transcript

I think the answer is one of pervasiveness. I mean of millions and millions of PCs in the world, Microsoft sits on 90, you pick the number, 95% of them. So what people who have become artists at the craft of writing viruses or hacker attacks are most knowledgeable about is the Windows environment and hence it becomes the catalyst or the target for a lot of that activity. People who are sophisticated hackers however, they can break into Unix-based or Linux-based systems. They can break into a lot of infrastructure if they're determined. I would argue that the novice hacker dabble-dabbles with Windows. The real professional knows his way around some more sophisticated systems environments that may have a Windows dimension to them but by and large they're not pure Windows themselves. As far as Microsoft and Intel and other gorillas as we call it in our company play in the space, we welcome them to the space. Symantec has innovated around Microsoft for 21 years now and so we cannot run from the shadow of the Redmond juggernaut. What we can do is outrun them and outthink them in a very specific domain around security technologies.

When you are a purpose built company as we are, it's a heck of a lot easier to innovate within the designated purpose of the company and hopefully execute a lot faster than someone who has a broad, broad portfolio of technologies and competing interests, if you will, inside the company. With respect to Intel, both Microsoft and Intel are good partners of ours. One of the things I learned many, many years ago is you keep your partners close, you keep your enemies closer, and so to the extent that someday they decide that they want to be in our territory by being close partners with them hopefully, we'll learn something from that. That intelligence will help us deal with what Symantec has to do, but I don't spend a waking night worried about what Microsoft or Intel are going to do in the security space. My energies when I'm awake in the morning at 3 where I know what my ceiling looks like better than anyone else is what are we doing wrong? What does our execution need to pick up on? How do we stay one step ahead of not just Microsoft and Intel but a bunch of little ankle biters out there who would love to have the territory that we have? So Microsoft is one thought but there are literally hundreds of other companies that really have their minds and eyes set on capturing a piece of the big security market. Have you seen what has happened to Netscape browser market which was a dominant browser then it was introduced? Yes. I think a little bit of the Netscape phenomenon though was the arrogance of youth, a little in-your-face attitude and we're humble country kids at Symantec, we don't play that. So when you rub someone's nose in it who's got the resources that Microsoft has, you should expect to be attacked.