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RFID Tags Vulnerable To Viruses

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A new study, released in Europe shows it's possible to put viruses in the tags containing RFID chips. The little radio identification tags will soon be in more and more products and tracking all kinds of things and now, it seems they will be loaded with viruses too.

The academic paper prepared by a group of European scientists was present at an academic conference in Pisa. At the conference, the researchers say they will show how to infect the tiny chips, which only hold 128 characters of information.

While there are many practical reason to utilize the RFID tags in business, for tracking products all along the line from creation to sale, questions continue to arise about their use. Livestock and pets have been tracked this way for years, as have animals out in

the wild.

Now, with this possibility of viruses appearing, it would seem some of their usefulness is up for debate. The paper, "Is Your Cat Infected With a Computer Virus?," by the research group based in Amsterdam's Vrije University goes into detail about how a virus could penetrate the systems and create all kind of problems.

The biggest flaw in the argument is someone from the inside would have to insert the virus in most cases. It would have to be done when they're being programmed. In many cases, those programming would probably not be amiable to such behavior.

The real threat is incredibly common in the real world. It's the ever-popular buffer overflow and the potential for damage is in these chips too. For folks interested in looking at the study, check out their site.

This isn't the only problem with the RFID tags either. The privacy issues continue to enjoy continued debate involving this little device. It won't be resolved in the immediate future either.

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John is a staff writer for SecurityProNews covering cyber security.

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