

28 March 2008

By: Marius Oiaga, Technology News Editor



## [If You Think Mac OS X Is More Secure than Windows, Think Again](#)

*Reveals a vulnerability study authored by the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology*

If you think that Mac OS X is more secure than Windows, by all means, think again. Despite the fact that the Cupertino-based hardware company claims that Mac OS X is secure by default and out of the box, data put together by [the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology](#) comes to contradict Apple's marketing campaigns. After analyzing no less than six year's worth of vulnerability handling performance and the patch development process of both Microsoft and Apple, the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology concluded that the security flaws statistics only point to the insecurity of Mac OS X. "For both vendors we find that major software development projects (such as a new OS release or Service Pack) consumes resources at the cost of patch development. Our data does not support the common belief that software from Apple is inherently more secure than software from Microsoft. While the average number of unpatched vulnerabilities has stabilized for Microsoft, Apple has bypassed Microsoft and shows an increasing trend. We provided an insight into the vulnerability lifecycle and trends in the insecurity scene based on empirical data and analysis. To properly plan, assess, and justify vulnerability management knowledge of the vulnerability ecosystem is important," reads an excerpt of the "0-Day Patch Exposing Vendors (In)security Performance" whitepaper authored by Stefan Frei, Bernhard Tellenbach, and Bernhard Plattner. Between January 2002 to December 2007, the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology counted no less than 658 high and medium risk vulnerabilities in various Windows operating systems from Windows XP to Windows Vista RTM. During the same period, Apple's platforms were affected by 738 high and medium risk security flaws. The perspective delivered by the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology's independent study reveals that Microsoft has been stagnating in terms of the volume of security vulnerabilities, while peaking at 165 in 2006. In contrast, Apple is on an ascendant trend hitting 175 security flaws in 2006 and 220 in 2007.