

[SUBSCRIBE](#)[SIGN IN](#)**UNCATEGORIZED** —

Possible NT, Windows 2000 source code leak

Rumors are circulating that the source code, or at least a portion thereof, ...

KEN FISHER - 2/13/2004, 12:26 AM

Rumors are circulating that the source code, or at least a portion thereof, for both Windows NT and Windows 2000 has been leaked onto the Internet. As of yet, there has been no official word from Microsoft. The rumor apparently started at a [news aggregator](#) that has not yet disclosed how they came to such information. They have, however, assessed the situation in dire, alarmist terms.

Neowin has learned of shocking and potentially devastating news. It would appear that two packages are circulating on the internet, one being the source code to Windows 2000, and the other being the source code to Windows NT. At this time, it is hard to establish whether or not full code has leaked, and this will undoubtedly remain the situation until an attempt is made to compile them. [...] This leak is a shock not only to Neowin, but to the wider IT industry. The ramifications of this leak are far reaching and devastating. This reporter does not wish to be sensationalist, but the number of industries and critical systems that are based around these technologies that could be damaged by new exploits found in this source code is something that doesn't bare thinking about.

Our own internal analysis of the code is not conclusive, although we are currently rather skeptical that the leak is actually real. To be sure, the entire source code is not present. If the leak was generated from one of the customers who has recently licensed the code, it's reasonable to suspect

that the build tree was not handed over to such customers in its entirety. The question is this: is what's out there partial code, or just a fake? Part of the problem lies in verifying what we can't see: few know what the Windows source code looks like, so there are a lot of guesses about what *should* be in the code. For example, are source references to MIPS and PPC appropriate to Windows 2000? They're "in the leak," but why wouldn't they have been removed from the NT4 days? A quick [peek at the file listing](#) shows some rather interesting entries.

The ramifications of the leak are not entirely clear. Many are quick to assume that such a leak will generate a whole new range of exploits, but this is not necessarily the case. Additionally, there's little reason to assume that this would increase piracy, as ISOs are already readily available for these two OSes.

Update: Microsoft is now confirming the code leak, [according to the Associated Press](#):

Microsoft Corp. said late Thursday that portions of its Windows source code - the tightly guarded blueprints of its dominant operating system - had been leaked over the Internet. Microsoft spokesman Tom Pilla said in an interview with The Associated Press that some incomplete portions of the Windows 2000 and Windows NT4 source code had been "illegally made available on the Internet." The company was made aware of the leak on Thursday and is investigating, Pilla said. He did not know how much of the code had been leaked or how many people may have gained access to it. The company could not immediately pinpoint the source of the leak, and has contacted law enforcement authorities, he said.

While the cat is out of the bag, this is likely to be more of an embarrassment to Microsoft than a genuine security risk.

READER COMMENTS

SHARE THIS STORY

KEN FISHER

Ken is the founder & Editor-in-Chief of Ars Technica. A veteran of the IT industry and a scholar of antiquity, Ken studies the emergence of intellectual property regimes and their effects on culture and innovation.

EMAIL ken@arstechnica.com // **TWITTER** [@kenfisher](https://twitter.com/kenfisher)



Unsolved Mortal Kombat Mysteries With Dominic Cianciolo From NetherRealm Studios

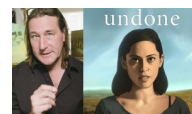
Today Ars Technica is joined by Dominic Cianciolo, story and voice over director at NetherRealm Studios, to answer your burning questions about the unsolved mysteries of the Mortal Kombat universe. Thank you to r/MortalKombat on reddit and the Ars Technica community for providing questions! Directed and Produced by Justin Wolfson Edited by Ron Douglas



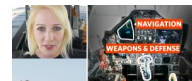
Unsolved Mortal Kombat Mysteries With Dominic Cianciolo From NetherRealm Studios



US Navy Gets an Italian Accent



How Amazon's "Undone" Animates Dreams With Rotoscoping And Oil Paints



Fighter Pilot Breaks Down Every

[+ More videos](#)

[← PREVIOUS STORY](#)

[NEXT STORY →](#)

Related Stories

Today on Ars

- [STORE](#)
- [SUBSCRIBE](#)
- [ABOUT US](#)
- [RSS FEEDS](#)
- [VIEW MOBILE SITE](#)

- [CONTACT US](#)
- [STAFF](#)
- [ADVERTISE WITH US](#)
- [REPRINTS](#)

NEWSLETTER SIGNUP

Join the Ars Orbital Transmission mailing list to get weekly updates delivered to your inbox.

[SIGN ME UP →](#)

CNMN Collection

WIRED Media Group

© 2020 Condé Nast. All rights reserved. Use of and/or registration on any portion of this site constitutes acceptance of our User Agreement (updated 1/1/20) and Privacy Policy and Cookie Statement (updated 1/1/20) and Ars Technica Addendum (effective 8/21/2018). Ars may earn compensation on sales from links on this site. Read our affiliate link policy.

[Your California Privacy Rights](#) | [Manage Preferences](#)

The material on this site may not be reproduced, distributed, transmitted, cached or otherwise used, except with the prior written permission of Condé Nast.

[Ad Choices](#)