

Winnie

Winnie (also known as **WinNY**) is a Japanese peer-to-peer (P2P) [file-sharing](#) program developed by Isamu Kaneko, a research assistant at the [University of Tokyo](#) in 2002. Like [Freenet](#), a user must add an [encrypted](#) node list in order to connect to other nodes on the network. Users choose three cluster words which symbolize their interests, and then Winnie connects to other nodes which share these cluster words, downloading and storing encrypted data from cache of these neighbors in a [distributed data store](#). If users want a particular file, they set up triggers (keywords), and Winnie will download files marked by these triggers. The encryption was meant to provide anonymity, but Winnie also included bulletin boards where users would announce uploads, and the [IP address](#) of posters could be discovered through these boards. While Freenet was implemented in [Java](#), Winnie was implemented as a Windows [C++](#) application.^[1]

The software takes its name from [WinMX](#), where the M and the X are each advanced one letter in the Latin alphabet, to N and Y. Netagent published a survey in June 2018 suggesting that Winnie was still the most popular p2p network in Japan ahead of [Perfect Dark \(P2P\)](#) and [Share \(P2P\)](#) with approximately 45,000 nodes connecting each day over Golden Week.^[2] The number of nodes on Winnie appears to be holding steady compared with 2015.

Kaneko first announced Winnie on the Download Software board of the [2channel](#) (*2ch* for short) Japanese bulletin board site. Since 2channel users often refer to anonymous users by their post numbers, Kaneko came to be known as "Mr. 47" ("47-Shi", or 47氏 in Japanese), or just "47".

After Winnie's development stopped, a new peer-to-peer application, [Share](#), was developed to be a successor.

Winnie	
Developer	Isamu Kaneko (金子 勇) 1971–2013
Initial release	2002
Written in	C++
Operating system	Microsoft Windows
Type	Anonymous P2P
License	Closed source
Website	web.archive.org/web/20030602161140/http://www.geocities.co.jp/SiliconValley/2949/ https://web.archive.org/web/20030602161140/http://www.geocities.co.jp/SiliconValley/2949/

Antinny

Since August 2003, several [worms](#) called "[Antinny](#)" have spread on the Winny network, copying itself to the Winny folder for file uploads with a fabricated name.^[3]

Some versions of Antinny work as follows:

- Upload files from the host computer onto the Winny network.
- Upload screenshots onto an image board.
- [Denial-of-service attack](#) to a copyright protecting agency web site.

Some people have uploaded their information unwittingly from their computers because of Antinny. That information includes governmental documents, information about customers, and people's private files. Once the information is uploaded, it is difficult to delete.^[4]

In 2005, [All Nippon Airways](#) suffered an embarrassing leak of passwords for security-access areas in 29 airports across Japan. A similar incident occurred with [JAL Airlines](#) on 17 December 2005, after a [virus](#) originating from Winny affected the computer of a co-pilot.^[5]

Following this, highly publicized cases of sensitive file uploading have come to light in Japan's media. In particular, a defense agency was forced to admit that classified information from the [Maritime Self Defense Force](#) was uploaded by a computer with Winny software installed on it.^[6]

Perhaps the largest Winny-related leak was that of the [Okayama Prefectural Police Force](#), whose computer leaked the data of around 1,500 investigations. This information included sensitive data such as the names of sex crime victims, and is the largest amount of information held by Japanese police to have ever leaked online.

Arrests and court cases

On November 28, 2003, two Japanese users of Winny, Yoshihiro Inoue, a 41-year-old self-employed businessman from [Takasaki, Gunma Prefecture](#) and an unemployed 19-year-old from [Matsuyama](#), were arrested by the Kyoto Prefectural Police. They were accused of sharing copyrighted material via Winny and admitted to their crimes.

Shortly following the two users' arrests, Kaneko also had his home searched and had the [source code](#) of Winny confiscated by the Kyoto Police. On May 10, 2004, Kaneko was arrested for suspected conspiracy to encourage copyright infringement by the High-tech Crime Taskforce of the Kyoto Prefectural Police. Kaneko was released on [bail](#) on June 1, 2004. The court hearings started

in September 2004 at Kyoto district court. On December 13, 2006, Kaneko was convicted of assisting copyright violations and sentenced to pay a fine of ¥1.5 million (about [US\\$13,200](#)).^[7] He appealed the ruling. On October 8, 2009, the guilty verdict was overturned by the Osaka High Court.^[8] On December 20, 2011, Kaneko was cleared of all charges after the [Supreme Court of Japan](#) agreed that the prosecution could not prove that he had any intention to promote the software for illegal use.^{[9][10]}

In popular culture

Japanese heavy metal band, [Maximum the Hormone](#) referenced the software in their song "A-L-I-E-N" by satirically urging listeners to stop using the service in the lyrics.^[11]

See also

- Anonymous P2P
- [File sharing in Japan](#)
- Perfect Dark
- Share
- [WinMX](#)
- [Winny copyright infringement case](#)

References

- Hongo, Jun, "File-sharing: Handle Winny at your own risk (<http://beta.japantimes.co.jp/news/2009/10/27/reference/file-sharing-handle-winny-at-your-own-risk/>) ", *Japan Times*, October 27, 2009, p. 3.
- "2018年P2P利用状況調査結果 1/2" (<https://web.archive.org/web/20240909122317/https://www.netagent.co.jp/product/p2p/report/201806/01.html>) . *www.netagent.co.jp*. Archived from the original (<https://www.netagent.co.jp/product/p2p/report/201806/01.html>) on 2024-09-09.
- "Win32/Antinny" (<https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/wdsi/threats/malware-encyclopedia-description?Name=Win32%2FAntinny>) . *Microsoft Security Intelligence*.

4. Gradijan, Dave (2006-06-13). "Winny Virus Continues to Wreak Havoc Across Japan" (<https://www.csoonline.com/article/519538/data-protection-winny-virus-continues-to-wreak-havoc-across-japan.html>) . *CSO Online*.
5. "Virus spreads data, scandal over Winny" (https://web.archive.org/web/20200202181127/http://www.nbcnews.com/id/13283771/ns/technology_and_science-security/t/virus-spreads-data-scandal-over-winny/#.XjINxmKhPY) . *NBC News*. Archived from the original (http://www.nbcnews.com/id/13283771/ns/technology_and_science-security/t/virus-spreads-data-scandal-over-winny/#.XjINxmKhPY) on February 2, 2020.
6. "Confidential MSDF info leaked on Internet via Winny" (<https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2006/02/24/national/confidential-msdf-info-leaked-on-internet-via-winny/>) . *The Japan Times*. 2006-02-24.
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8. Tim Lord (2009-10-08). "Japanese Ruling Against Winny Dev Overturned On Appeal" (<http://yro.slashdot.org/story/09/10/09/0033200/Japanese-Ruling-Against-Winny-Dev-Overturned-On-Appeal>) . *Slashdot*. Retrieved 2009-10-08.
9. "Supreme court finds Winny creator not guilty" (<http://www3.nhk.or.jp/news/html/20111220/k10014782281000.html>) (in Japanese). NHK (Online). 2011-12-20.
10. "File-Sharing App Creator Not Guilty of Copyright Infringement" (<http://torrentfreak.com/file-sharing-app-creator-not-guilty-of-copyright-infringement-111223/>) . *Torrentfreak.com*. 2011-12-23.
11. "マキシマム ザ ホルモン (MAXIMUM THE HORMONE) – A-L-I-E-N Lyrics" (<https://genius.com/14978823>) .

Further reading

- Kaneko Isamu (2005). *The Technology of Winny*(*Winnyの技術 in Japanese*). ASCII. p. 201. ISBN 4-7561-4548-5. (Japanese)

External links

- (in Japanese) [Winny?](http://winny.4th.jp/) (<http://winny.4th.jp/>)

- (in Japanese) [Download and nodes for Winny, Share, Perfect Dark \(http://pckldg.com/p2p/node.php\)](http://pckldg.com/p2p/node.php)
- (in Japanese) [A post on 2ch \(http://winny.info/2ch/main/1019230372.html#848\)](http://winny.info/2ch/main/1019230372.html#848) that critics claim that Kaneko states the aim of development that Kaneko spoke is his will of pushing the tide toward the world filled with copyright law violation
- [Japanese power plant secrets leaked by virus \(http://www.theregister.com/2006/05/17/japan_power_plant_virus_leak/\)](http://www.theregister.com/2006/05/17/japan_power_plant_virus_leak/) , The Register, 17 May 2006