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March 2024

**Celebrating over
TWENTY THREE
YEARS
of Service and
Satisfied
Customers!**



“As a business owner, you don’t have time to waste on technical and operational issues.

That’s where we shine!
Call us and put an end to your IT problems finally and forever!”

Fred Holzager,
IT Director

Holzager Technology Services
and
Publisher of
The Tech Insider

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Snapple Real Fact #1020

“DFW airport in Texas is larger than the island of Manhattan.”

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The Tech Insider

“Insider Tips To Make Your Business Run Faster, Easier and More Profitably”



Are Your Smart Home Devices Spying On You?

The integration of smart home devices has become synonymous with modern living. They offer convenience, efficiency, and connectivity at our fingertips.

But a recent study has raised concerns about the darker side of these smart gadgets. It suggests that our beloved smart home devices may be spying on us.

It's natural these days to invite these devices into your home. Yet, there is also the need to scrutinize their privacy implications.

The Silent Observers in Our Homes

Smart home devices can range from voice-activated assistants to connected cameras and thermostats. They have woven themselves seamlessly into the fabric of our daily lives.

These gadgets promise to make our homes smarter and more responsive to our needs. But

a study by the consumer advocate group **Which?** raises unsettling questions. What is the extent to which they may be eavesdropping on our most private moments?

The study examined the data practices of popular smart home devices.

Key Findings from the Study

The study scrutinized several popular smart home devices such as smart TVs, doorbell cameras, and thermostats.

Widespread Data Sharing

A significant number of smart home devices share user data with third-party entities. This data exchange is often unbeknownst to users. It raises concerns about the extent to which companies are sharing our personal data as well as doing so without explicit consent.

(Continued on page 2)



“We Love Referrals” 2024 Offer

**Keeping with the spirit of helping others,
if you refer a business to us and they become our customer,
we will donate \$100 to your favorite charity.**

At Holzager Technology Services, we believe that referrals are the greatest form of flattery. By recommending your partners, associates, or professional contacts, you can help them enjoy worry-free IT and support a worthy cause of your choice!

**For more information, please see our website at
www.tech4now.com/we-love-referrals, contact us by phone at 201-797-5050**



Quotations

“Enjoy the little things in life because one day, you’ll look back and realize they were the big things.”

—Kurt Vonnegut, Jr.

“I believe we are here on the planet Earth to live, grow up and do what we can to make this world a better place for all people to enjoy freedom.”

—Rosa Parks

“To be yourself in a world that is constantly trying to make you something else is the greatest accomplishment.”

—Ralph Waldo Emerson

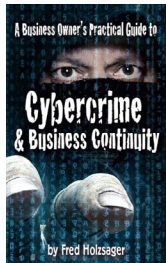
“A dead end is just a good place to turn around.”

—Naomi Judd

“If you light a lamp for someone else, it will also lighten your path.”

—Buddha

Read Fred’s Book!



If you would like to have us speak to your organization and give away some free copies to attendees, give us a call. For more details on the contents and how to get your own copy, please visit our special web page at www.tech4now.com/cybercrime

“We make all of your computer problems go away without the cost of a full-time I.T. staff”

Ask us about our fixed price services HTS Insight Hassle-Free Agreements— Computer Support at a flat monthly fee you can budget for just like rent!

Are Your Smart Home Devices Spying On You?

(Continued from page 1)

Potential for Eavesdropping

Voice-activated devices, like Alexa, are common. Smart speakers and assistants were found to be particularly susceptible to potential eavesdropping. The study revealed some eyebrow raising information. There were instances where these devices recorded and transmitted unintentional audio data.

Lack of Transparency

One of the most disturbing aspects highlighted by the study is the lack of transparency. Data practices are often obscured under mountains of text. Many smart home device manufacturers fail to provide clear and comprehensive information.

Security Vulnerabilities

The study also identified security vulnerabilities in certain smart home devices. This highlights the risk of unauthorized access to sensitive information. Inadequate security measures could potentially expose users to cyber threats.

Navigating the Smart Home Landscape Safely

Here are the key steps to navigate the smart home landscape safely.

1. Research Device Privacy Policies—

Before purchasing a smart home device, carefully review the manufacturer’s privacy policy.

2. Optimize Privacy Settings –

Take advantage of privacy settings offered by

A significant number of smart home devices share user data with third-party entities.

smart home devices. Many devices allow users to customize privacy preferences.

3. Regularly Update Firmware –

Ensure that your smart home devices have the latest firmware updates.

4. **Use Strong Passwords** – Put in place strong, unique passwords for each smart home device. Avoid using *default* passwords.

5. Consider Offline Alternatives

– Research whether you can achieve certain smart home functionalities with offline alternatives. If you can, opt for devices that operate offline or have limited connectivity.

6. Limit Voice-Activated Features –

If privacy is a top concern, consider limiting or disabling voice-activated features. This reduces the likelihood of inadvertent audio recordings and potential eavesdropping.

7. Regularly Audit Connected Devices –

Periodically review the smart home devices connected to your network. Seeing just how many there are may surprise you. Remove any devices that are no longer in use or lack adequate security measures. Keep a lean and secure smart home ecosystem to mitigate your risk.

QUICK SECURITY TIP: As the summer approaches and the weather changes, most folks look to travel for a change of pace. Next time you go on a trip, keep in mind, you should remove any credit cards or information you don’t need to carry while away. Leave the items you don’t need at home, but DO take copies of the ones you do take (front & back) with you and store them in a secure place (not necessarily on your person). This way, in case of a robbery or other reason your wallet or purse gets lost, you have a way to cancel and replace them. It may also be wise to have phone numbers for the credit reporting agencies to freeze your accounts.

“I DIDN’T KNOW”

Unfortunately, That Excuse Doesn’t Replenish Your Bank Account, Resolve A Data



Breach Or Erase Any Fines And Lawsuits.

It’s coming ...

- That day a hacker steals critical data, rendering your office useless
- That day when your bank account or credit card is compromised
- Or that day when your customers’ private lives are uprooted

Cybercriminals and hackers are constantly inventing NEW ways to infiltrate your company, steal your assets and disrupt your life. The ONLY way to STOP THEM is this:

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Now, for a limited time, we have the perfect way to help reduce your risk and keep you safe! Simply sign up to receive our FREE “Cyber Security Tip of the Week.” We’ll send these byte-size quick-read tips to your e-mail inbox. Every tip is packed with a unique and up-to-date real-world solution that keeps you one step ahead of the bad guys. And because so few people know about these security secrets, every week you’ll learn something new!

Get your FREE “Cyber Security Tip of the Week” at <https://www.tech4now.com/cyber-security-tip-of-the-week/>

Cringeworthy One/Two Liners

How many times have you heard a quick one or two liner that made you cringe? How about some more?

Q Why did the can crusher quit his job? Because it was soda pressing.

Q Bread is a lot like the sun. It rises in the yeast and sets in the waist.

Q What do you call a bear with no teeth? A Gummy Bear.

Q A doctor reaches into his white coat to get a pen and write a prescription, but pulls out a thermometer. "Dammit! It appears another a**hole has my pen!"

Q Being an astronaut is unusual. It's the only job where you get fired before you start work.

Q What starts with an 'E,' ends with an 'E' and has only one letter in it? An envelope

Q How do you spell CANDY with only two letters? 'C' and 'Y'

Q Why are proctologists so gloomy? They always have the end in sight.

Q If debugging is the process of removing bugs in software, then programming must be the process of putting them in.

Q Can February march? No, but April may.

Q I never wanted to believe that my Dad was stealing from his job at the Roads Department. But, when I got home, all the signs were there.

Q How come your nose runs, but your feet smell?

Q I suppose, for the same reason you drive on a parkway and park on a driveway.

Q Said the mathematician to his son: If you ever get cold, just stand in the corner of a room for a while. They're normally near 90 degrees.

Q Whoever started 'knock knock' jokes should get a 'no bell prize.'

Q What do you get when you cross an elephant with a rhinoceros? 'Elephino.'

Q What happens once in a minute and twice in a moment, but never in a decade? The letter M.

Q I was in the Bank the other day and asked the teller to check my balance, so she pushed me!

Q What nails do carpenters hate to hit with a hammer? Fingernails

Q Why did the picture go to jail? Because it was framed.

Q The other day, I yelled into a collander. I strained my voice.

Q Dogs can't operate an MRI machine, but CATscan.

Q Two potatoes are standing on a street corner. How can you tell which one is a prostitute? It's the one with a label reading "Idaho."

Q Holding a door open for a clown is a nice jester.

Q Buckle Up! Windshields hurt

On May 4, 2023, we celebrated World Password Day. Please visit our website to get your free Password Protection 101 PDF handout. Visit https://www.tech4now.com/files/2023/04/Password_Protection_101_Infographic.pdf to view and download it. It's still valid info.

Quick Productivity Tips

With each browser offering more new features, it has become a parallel universe to the smartphone with the mobile apps you can incorporate into your system. The new paradigm is the *browser extension*. Just like with your smartphone, it is always possible to download and install the wrong code which may eventually lead to an issue.

People tend to download many and use few. These extensions offer users extra functionalities and customization options.

While browser extensions enhance the browsing experience, they may also pose a danger which can mean significant risks to your online security and privacy.



In the image shown above, note the red arrow highlighting the Extension icon. To the left of it is the extension icon from a password manager that is active and not hidden (below yellow arrow).

Key Risks Posed by Browser Extensions

Privacy Intrusions – Many browser extensions request broad permissions. If abused, they can compromise user privacy. Some of

these include accessing browsing history and monitoring keystrokes.

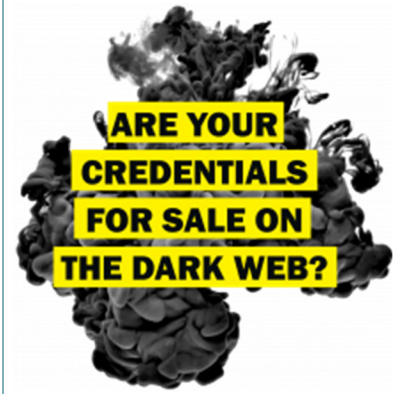
- **Malicious Intent** – There are many extensions developed with genuinely honorable intentions. But some extensions harbor malicious code. This code can exploit users for financial gain or other malicious purposes.

- **Outdated or Abandoned Extensions** – Extensions that are no longer maintained or updated pose a significant security risk. Outdated extensions may have unresolved vulnerabilities. Remove them immediately.

- **Phishing and Social Engineering** – Some malicious extensions engage in phishing attacks. These attacks can trick users into divulging sensitive information.

Mitigating the Risks: Best Practices for Browser Extension Security

1. Stick to official marketplaces.
2. Review permissions carefully.
3. Keep extensions updated.
4. Limit the number of extensions you install.
5. Use security software.
6. Educate Yourself.
7. Report Suspicious Extensions.
8. Regularly audit your extensions.



Find Out with a Complimentary Dark Web Scan

Did you know...?

- Cyber-attacks have continued to grow in cost, size, and impact—causing 60% of SMBs to go out of business within 6 months of a cyber incident.

- Over 80% of data breaches leverage stolen passwords as the principal attack vector—often acquired on the *Dark Web*.

- Far too often, companies that have had their credentials compromised and sold on the Dark Web don't know it until they have been informed by law enforcement—but then, it's too late.

- To help keep your critical business assets safe from the compromises that lead to breach and theft, we are offering a complimentary, one-time scan with **Dark Web ID™ Credential Monitoring**.

If you are interested in learning more about the risks involved in ignoring your password security, give us a call at (201) 797-5050 or visit our website at

<https://www.tech4now.com/dwid> or www.tech4now.com/bullphish



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5 Reasons To Choose A Hosted VoIP Phone System

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- ✓ Virus Protection & Removal and Dark Web Monitoring
- ✓ Network Security and Online Employee Security Training
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- ✓ Wireless Networking
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- ✓ Storage Solutions and File Sharing
- ✓ System Audits, Network Documentation, and Dark Web Scans
- ✓ Voice over IP phone systems

"We make all of your computer problems go away without the cost of a full-time I.T. staff"

Ask us about our fixed price service agreements—Computer support at a flat monthly fee you can budget for just like rent!

"Some companies approach you with a we know it all position, but in working with Holzager Technology Services, we have found that they listen to us to learn about how we work, what we do, and what the problem may be. This partnership in maintaining our business has raised them from "IT Guys" to "Trusted Advisors."—Bob Weissman, P.E., L.S., Weissman Engineering Co., P.C. Midland Park, NJ

March 2024

The Lighter Side...

For Entertainment Purposes ONLY!

Why some people don't do well as paramedics

Jack and Sal are out in the woods hunting when suddenly, Sal grabs his chest and falls to the ground. He doesn't seem to be breathing; his eyes are rolled back in his head.

Jack whips out his cell phone and calls 911. He gasps to the operator, "I think Sal is dead! What should I do?"

The operator, in a calm soothing voice says, "Just take it easy and follow my instructions. First, let's make sure he's dead."

There is silence on the line... and then a shot is heard. Jack's voice comes back on the phone, "Okay... now what?"

A Government Inspector

A DEA officer stopped at our farm yesterday, he said, "I need to inspect your farm for illegally growing drugs."

I said, "Okay, but don't go in that field over there." The DEA officer verbally exploded saying, "Mister, I have the authority of the Federal Government with me!" Reaching into his rear pants pocket, the arrogant officer removed his badge and shoved it in my face. "See this badge?! This badge means I am allowed to go wherever I wish.... On any land!! No questions asked or answers given!! Have I made myself clear?... do you understand?!"

I nodded politely, apologized, and went about my chores. A short time later, I heard loud screams, looked up, and saw the DEA officer running for his life, being chased by my big old mean bull.... With every step, the bull was gaining ground on the officer, and it seemed likely that he'd sure enough get gored before he reached safety. The officer was clearly terrified. I threw down my tools, ran to the fence and yelled at the top of my lungs.... "Your badge, show him your BADGE!!"

Online Shorthand

A mom texts, "Hi Honey, what do IDK, LY and TTYL mean?"

She replies, "I Don't Know, Love You, Talk To You Later."

Mom texts back, "It's okay, don't worry about it, I'll ask your brother. Love you, too!"

The Traffic Infraction

A lawyer was driving through Virginia when he was pulled over by a sheriff. Being from New York, he figured he was smarter than the peace officer and would outsmart him to avoid a ticket and a fine. The lawyer asked, "Why am I being stopped?"

"You failed to stop at the stop sign," replied the officer.

"But, I slowed down, saw no one was coming, and continued through," said the lawyer.

"You did not come to a complete stop! License and registration please." continued the officer.

The lawyer replied, "If you can show me the difference between 'slow down' and 'stop,' I'll give you my license, registration and you can give me a ticket. If not, you must let me go and not give me a ticket."

The officer said, "That sounds fair enough to me. Please exit your vehicle."

The lawyer steps out, the policeman takes out his nightstick and he begins beating the lawyer with it. The officer then asks the lawyer, "Now, do you want me to stop or just slow down?"

You Do The Math...

If Frankie buys sixteen donuts every Monday and eats eleven of them each Wednesday, what is Frankie left with at the end of the year?

Diabetes