IT RadixResource

We make IT Work for You

May 2017

It's a Zoo Out There!

Chameleon-Like Apps Steal Identities

Leo loved tweaking photos on his Android phone...

He heard rave reviews from his friends with iPhones about Prisma, a new iOS app for image editing. So, when he heard Prisma would soon be released for Android, he logged into the Google Play Store to see if it was there yet. To his surprise, he found one that looked just like what his friends were describing. Delighted, he downloaded and started using it. Meanwhile, the app—a fake—was busy installing a Trojan horse on his phone. When he got to work the next day, he logged his phone into the company wireless network as usual. The malware jumped from his phone to the network. Like a chameleon blending into the environment, this malware went undetected. No one knew. Not yet, but that was about to change.

Now, this isn't necessarily a true story (at least, not one we've heard of…yet), but it absolutely *could* have been. Tragically, similar situations are unfolding as you read this. Yes, possibly even at *your* company.

Fake apps exploded onto iTunes and Google Play last November, just in time for holiday shopping. While Google, Apple and Microsoft attempt to vet these fake apps, there's no guarantee. In fact, in 2014 alone, over a million fake apps were in existence. And, for sure, there are even more out there today! Recently, Apple "cleaned up" iTunes in an effort to quell users' concerns, but hackers still find workarounds. Unfortunately, these fake apps pose

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"Fake apps can infect your phone or tablet and steal confidential information along with credit card details you may have entered into legitimate apps."

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a real threat to the security of your network, especially if your company has anything but the strictest BYOD (Bring Your Own Device) policies in place. As a reminder, these fake apps can infect your phone or tablet and steal confidential information along with credit card details you may have entered into legitimate apps—especially apps you use for convenience when visiting retailers. And the more your network's users socialize and shop on *their* smartphones, the greater the risk of a damaging breach on *your* network.

Fake apps look just like real apps. They masquerade as apps from legitimate merchants of all stripes, from retail chains like Dollar Tree and Footlocker, to luxury purveyors such as Jimmy Choo and Christian Dior. Some of the more malicious apps give criminals access to confidential information on the victim's device. Worse yet, they may install a Trojan horse on that device that can infect your company's network the next time a user logs in.

(Continued on page 2)

What's New

May 25
**WEBINAR
Tech Talk:
Browser Face Off**
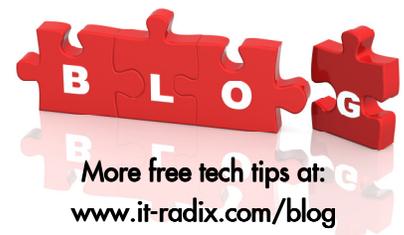www.it-radix.com/webinar
Starts @ 12:10 sharp

June 23
**WEBINAR
10-Minute Tech Talk:
Cool and Useful Things in Office 365**
Starts @ 12:10 sharp

If you would rather receive our newsletter via email, sign up on our website or send an email to resource@it-radix.com

**More free tech tips at:
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Making a Break for It

The keepers of the Parrot Gardens at the Vancouver Zoo thought they had it all under control in 2009. Clip the wings of all the birds and none can escape. Well, Chuva the Macaw found her way out and got pretty far down the road without flying—she found a nice spot to lounge, nestled in the engine of an RV parked in the lot. She was found 50 miles away. A nice venture without wings! No one expected that.

Most employers do not expect it when one of their employees—whether colorful like a parrot or wise like an owl—escapes the fold. But when they do, unlike Chuva, you cannot usually bring them back. You have to deal with the consequences. And one of these consequences is dealing with important company information that the employee may have on their personal phone, tablet or laptop. The easiest way to deal with this is to have a policy in place. Such a policy must be enforced to protect your sensitive data. And that policy must state that the business/organization has the right to delete information and applications on the personal device of an employee who has left.

That policy should also include the following: the ability to change the employee email account and password so that company-related email will no longer flow to an employee-owned device along with a process in place for an organization to prove its ownership of any devices (that facilitates password resets when the employee leaves, but does not share their login credentials). Such a policy should also be clear about ownership of phone numbers. If the company provided a device to an employee, ensuring company ownership of such a phone number is vital for a host of reasons.

Larger organizations of today are putting in place Enterprise Mobility Management (EMM) solutions. EMM is the set of people, processes and technology focused on managing mobile devices, wireless networks and other mobile computing services in a business environment. Putting in place such a program controls licensing; it allows only vetted, tested and approved applications to coexist with company-related data; and it ensures company ownership of devices, data and applications.

So while most organizations do not want to cage in their employees, like the Vancouver Zoo, it is imperative for all to enclose and protect their data, their hardware, and their applications so that when an employee flies the coop, everything can be recouped.

Chameleon-Like Apps Steal Identities

Anyone can be easily tricked unless you know what to look for. So, what can you do? Keep yourself and your team from being fooled. Take a moment and share these online safety tips with your team:

1. When in doubt, check it out. Ask other users *before* downloading it. Visit the store's main website to see if it's mentioned there. Find out from customer support if it's the real deal.

2. If you *do* decide to download an app, first check reviews. Apps with few or bad reviews raise a red flag.

3. Never EVER click a link in an email to download an app. Get it from the retailer's website or from the Microsoft Store, Apple's App Store, iTunes or Google Play.

4. Offer as little information as possible if you decide to use an app.

5. Think twice before linking your credit card to any app.

6. Consider segregating your company's internal Wi-Fi network—only allow phones to attach to the guest Wi-Fi network, and isolate them from your internal computer network.

Most importantly, get professional help to keep your network safe. It really is a zoo out there! New cyber scams, malware and other types of network security threats are cropping up every day. Call us today for a free Security Assessment to bring out any fake chameleon apps' true colors.

OUR CLIENTS SPEAK OUT:

THE BUZZ

"As an environmental consulting firm for over 40 years, we have seen the documentation of our studies evolve from typewritten pages to entirely digital formats. IT Radix has been supporting our transition. Since their involvement, we've had little-to-no downtime or information loss due to technical anomalies—unlike many of our peers."

Michael Kovacs, Senior Vice President – EcolSciences, Inc.

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Cleaning Out Our IT Habitats (Part II)

Protect or purge digital files as you do important paper files. Sensitive materials such as hard drives, disks and memory cards should be shredded.

- Clean out your old email and empty deleted folders. If you need to keep old messages, move them to an archive.
- Delete or archive older files and out-dated financial statements.
- Unsubscribe to newsletters, email alerts and updates you no longer read.
- Update your online photo album by deleting or backing up old photos.
- Update online relationships by reviewing friends on social networks and all contacts lists.
- Copy important data to a secure cloud site or other drive.
- Password protect backup drives. Keep in a different location off the network.
- Permanently delete all old files.

Stay tuned for more "digital" spring cleaning tips next month.

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SPECIAL OFFER

Come Out of Your Shell

Sign up for a year of IT Radix Management and Support during the months of **April, May** and **June**, and receive tickets to Turtle Back Zoo.

Visit www.it-radix.com to learn more about what's included in each of these proactive maintenance plans. Offer for new managed service clients only. Some restrictions may apply. Call IT Radix today to learn more!

VoIP: The Call of the Wild

Senior IT Consultant, **Mike Oster**, shares his thoughts on VoIP…

I have been in the IT industry for over 30 years, so it takes a lot for a technology to impress me. VoIP (Voice over Internet Protocol) is a technology that impresses me. Maybe it's because I remember the early days of the Internet, when things were as slow as a sloth. In order to facilitate a data connection over mostly slow and unreliable connections, error correction had to be built into the protocol (the IP in VoIP). So, if a system detected an error in a data packet it could simply ask for the packet to be resent—brilliant—unless of course that data packet is in the middle of a LIVE stream of data from a phone conversation. Then an errored packet can be catastrophic. Imagine trying to have a phone conversation and hearing the words that were meant to be at the end of a sentence before the words that were intended to be at the beginning of the sentence. While that is not exactly what happens if the data packets of a VoIP conversation arrive out of order, you get the idea.
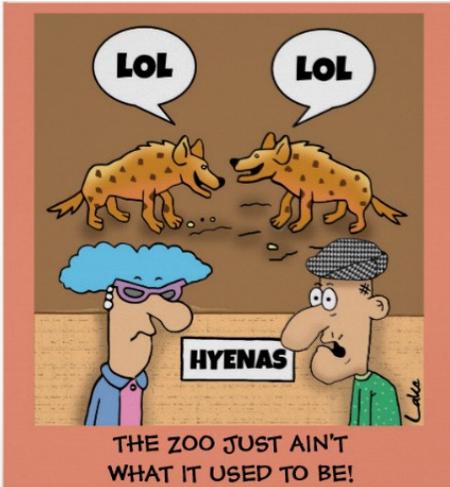
So, when considering VoIP as part of your phone system solution, there are certain things you must consider to prevent you phone conversations from sounding like a trip to the monkey house at the zoo.

- If at all possible you should consider a dedicated Internet connection for your VoIP service. This will ensure your Internet data usage is not competing with your VoIP needs. The more you can segregate your voice traffic from your data traffic, the better. In an environment where there are multiple network cables at every user's desk, you can implement a completely separate physical network for your phones. This will provide the best VoIP experience since there would be no competition for network bandwidth or resources.

- If you just can't dedicate an entire network to your VoIP solution due to technical or financial obstacles, don't fret. There are still things you can do to provide a quality VoIP experience for your users. The first is to ensure you have an Internet service of sufficient quality and bandwidth to support both your data and voice requirements. Most VoIP providers have a test you can run on your Internet connection to ensure it meets the requirements for good voice quality.

- Using an enterprise-class firewall and switches is preferred as well. Most of these devices have configuration options that will allow VoIP traffic to be prioritized above standard data traffic.

So, if you don't want your phone conversations to sound like a troop of babbling baboons, don't monkey around. Give IT Radix a call and we can help get you on the path to a quality VoIP experience.

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"Before anything else,
preparation is the key to success."
— Alexander Graham Bell

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THE ZOO JUST AIN'T WHAT IT USED TO BE!

HYENAS

"Zoo: An excellent place to study the habits of human beings."

— Evan Esar

Fun Zoo Facts!

- Lions are the only social cat and live in social groups called prides.

- Anteaters in the wild can eat up to 30,000 insects in one day.

- Chimpanzees are one of the few non-humans that use tools. Chimps use sticks to draw termites out of termite mounds and use rocks and branches to crack palm nuts.

- The giraffe has the same number of vertebrae in their neck as a human—seven!

- The orangutan has the strength of eight men.

- Kangaroos are the best jumpers of all mammals and can jump over 30 feet in one hop and 6 feet high, with a speed up to 40 mph.

From the desk of: Cathy Coloff

I don't know about you, but I enjoy people watching…whether it's in a zoo or elsewhere. Over the years, the things I've seen have changed—more and more, people are not looking at each other, but rather they are looking down at their electronic devices. Now, I know I'm guilty too. Somewhere on the WWW, I saw a post by a mom who taught her son to look and see the world all around him. They played games and made up fun stories about the people they saw. As a mom and a heavy technology user, this post really struck home. So, now while dining out or at an event, I've made a conscious effort to put my phone down. Instead, I smile and observe the people around me—guessing at what they might be doing or imagining a fun adventure that could be underway. When I see a group of teenagers all sitting together, texting under the table, barely conversing, I start to despair until I notice that there is usually at least one who is talking, nudging the rest to put down their phone and be in the moment. When I see this, I know it's because the need for human connection is strong and has been since the beginning of time, and I'm grateful that this one teen has what it takes to encourage and make that connection happen. On the flip side, I love that through technology, I'm getting glimpses into the lives of my family and friends who are far away—learning things about them that I might not otherwise. Where does all this leave me? I guess with a tricky balancing act of tech and non-tech in my life. The same holds true at IT Radix. We love to develop strong relationships with our clients—so that we can better help them use their technology to achieve their goals. This means that we have to learn about their business as well as their personal needs and wants…never easy but always so rewarding when we do. So, if you catch me with my "nose-in-my-phone," feel free to give me a nudge and remind me to look around and see the beauty in our world. I hope you will too!

Orangutans…Thinkers of the Jungle

Orangutans are unique in the ape world. Of the four kinds of great apes, only the orangutan comes from Asia; the others all come from Africa. Orangutans are born with the ability to think and reason. In fact, this large, gentle red ape is one of humankind's closest relatives, sharing nearly 97% of the same DNA. Orangutans are the world's most intelligent animal and are known as the "Thinkers of the Jungle." It's not surprising that in the original *Planet of the Apes* film series, the orangutans were the intelligent doctors, administrators and lawyers of the ape society.

Does technology enhance zoo experience? If you ask the orangutans, they'd say a resounding yes! Last year, the Melbourne Zoo partnered with researchers from the Microsoft Research Centre for Social Natural User Interfaces (NUI) to collaborate on ground-breaking research to better understand the way orangutans learn, interact with technology and make social choices. NUI enables the orangutans to interact with a computer or game console via gestures and voice commands instead of keyboard, mouse, or game controller. The projected screen acts like a touch screen, thus eliminating the need for a tablet to be physically inside the enclosure where the orangutan's strength could actually break the device, and they can engage with full body movements whenever they want to play. It is well-recognized that great apes in general require considerable enrichment including problem-solving tasks designed to challenge their highly evolved cognitive skills. "Furthermore," states Microsoft's Dr. Marcus Carter, "research has demonstrated orangutans enjoy interacting with and watching visitors, meaning there is opportunity to encourage this interaction as part of their enrichment program." The findings from this research will be applied to other animals in zoos around the world.

So, the next time you visit your local zoo, remember to wave "Hi" to the orangutans!