SHARP INCREASE IN STATE-SPONSORED CYBER ATTACKS

Term of the month: Botnet

A botnet is a number of internet-connected devices ranging from security cameras to computers that have been breached and the control of the device has been taken over by a third party. Each compromised device is know as a "Bot". The malicious actor is then able to direct the bots and use this control to launch Distributed Denial-Of-Service attacks.

BRIEF UPDATE

Covid-19 vaccine research facilities are increasingly attacked. UK NCSC reports that Russia has attempted to hack organisations in UK, US and Canada, with Cozy Bear, an arm of Russian intelligence, blamed. Previous attacks were also by China and Iran. Similar attacks reported in Germany. TikTok under increasing focus for harvesting data. Following separate investigations, TikTok is banned in India, Japan and the US Army, with a full US ban being considered. US SofS Pompeo has stated 'download TikTok only if you want your private data to go to Chinese Intelligence'. When TikTok app is downloaded, it immediately starts collecting data from camera, mic, contact list, GPS, photos, and address book. TikTok and China deny that any of this data goes to China. N Korean hackers targeting Indian space agency, and also blamed for ties to Lazarus global skimming activity. Facebook, Google and MS have stopped processing Hong Kong data requests. Ransomware attacks world-wide increase by 20% in first half 2020, with 121.2 million attacks reported. Recent targets included 6 universities in UK, US and Canada, and 2 charities, hit by Blackbaud attack. 31 US companies targeted by EvilCorp (ties to Russia), including Garmin Services. Phishing attacks increased to hitting 9% of UK businesses in 2019 (costing them £87 bn) and this proportion is likely to be similar across major economies. Group-1B has uncovered a Bitcoin scam exposing the personal details of 1/4m people. Mozilla has suspended Firefox Send due to major malware abuse.

CYBER SECURITY IN THE NEWS

- Cybercriminals disguising as top streaming services to spread malware
- BlackRock Android malware can steal passwords and card data from 337 apps
- Frightening new ransomware attacking Macs
- Garmin confirms ransomware attack took down services
- Argentine telecom company hit by major ransomware attack
- Compromised employee accounts led to most expensive data breaches over past year
- US accuses Chinese hackers in targeting of COVID-19 research
- A hacker used Twitter's own 'admin' tool to spread cryptocurrency scam
- DDoS attacks surge 542% amidst COVID-19 pandemic
- Ransomware attacks jump as crooks target remote working