(Approx. 472 words)

Security Tips - March

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This article from The Verge caught my attention: “ji32k7au4a83 is a surprisingly bad password.” How bad could that be, I thought? See for yourself--

https://www.theverge.com/tldr/2019/3/5/18252150/bad-password-security-data-breach-taiwan-ji32k7au4a83-have-i-been-pwned

“Smart” homes are both a new challenge and a new opportunity for those who can commit the resources to update to this technology. The security concerns that come along are often overlooked in the process. A smart home is SO TEMPTING! Imagine telling your bedroom lights to turn off as you get drowsy in your bed. How convenient! There ARE security challenges that tag along. One is the poaching of your security protocols by an outsider.Your physical keys are under your control and likely cannot be copied unless they are stolen, lost, or brought to a licensed locksmith.Your wireless world is another story.The media has stories of “hacked” cars. Any wireless communication between devices is subject to interception. Unless extraordinary steps are taken to encrypt these signals, they are subject to theft and use by another.

One aspect of this is your smart TV. If it sends back info as to what you watch, companies find value and others find invaded privacy. Kim Komando writes about this and TV spying court settlements: https://www.komando.com/tips/544540/stop-your-smart-tv-from-spying-on-you

Another aspect is the use of a smart home hub that is not manufacturer supported, or out of date, or from a company that is defunct. In particular, the Securify Almond router, demoed at one of our workshops and which has some really interesting features, is mentioned in this article as a potential issue. See this: https://www.howtogeek.com/405197/4-smarthome-hubs-youve-never-heard-of-and-why-you-shouldnt-use-them/

On the malware front, PC Mag has this article which Check Point says can affect 500 million users at risk: https://www.pcmag.com/news/366678/winrar-has-serious-flaw-that-can-load-malware-to-pcs Credit to David Lerner.

On the PUP (potentially unwanted programs) front, see this article from Popular Science Mag on your PC installing PUPs, also from David L.- https://www.popsci.com/stop-laptop-installing-software

On the iOS front, certain apps are collecting info from you and, unknown to you, sharing them with Facebook and others. This article is behind a paywall but may be accessed by subscribers and other sources. https://www.wsj.com/articles/you-give-apps-sensitive-personal-information-then-they-tell-facebook-11550851636?ns=prod/accounts-wsj

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