

THURSDAY THOUGHTS

Today is the start of the European Cyber Security month with the focus this year being 'Think Before U Click' #ThinkB4UClick. Talking of which there is a new Linked In email scam doing the rounds. There have also been issues with outlook and office 365 – no it wasn't just your computer!

The NCSC have awarded Bronze Silver and Gold Status to schools participating in their CyberFirst schools initiative and will be shortly allowing more schools to participate. The latest cabinet office report into Huawei has been released, the Finnish authorities have fined a company for sending direct marketing without consent and Google have announced the release of Flutter 1.22 which should make Apps work a bit more smoothly. Google were also in the news because they have asked staff to return to the country in which they were employed by year end.

I also feature the Channel 4 report on the use of Social Media in the 2016 Presidential election.

My "Blogs of the Week"

Tim Clements - How do you avoid over-exerting your own bias towards data protection?

Aytekin Tank - How to refresh your work-from home-routine for the next season

October is European Cybersecurity Month - #ThinkB4UClick

Every October the EU organises a month-long campaign to promote cybersecurity. Providing up-to-date online security information, awareness raising and an opportunity to share good practice. This year's theme is 'Think Before U Click'. The first two weeks in October will concentrate on Cyber Scams and the last 2 weeks the focus will be on developing digital skills. There are a range of activities and insights on current and potential cyber threats including those COVID19 threats that have been circulating. You can find out more here <https://cybersecuritymonth.eu/about-ecsm/>

"Acknowledged by LinkedIn" email Scam

There is a scam targeting LinkedIn members. What happens is the email address linked to the LI account is scraped from the internet and an email generated with "Acknowledged by LinkedIn" in the title. This email is then sent to the recipient with some "bait". Sadly these emails still work because SOME folks actually think that they will get 4 million Euro's for doing nothing more than answering some questions or that they can get something for nothing. Please keep vigilant and if in doubt check; especially if the message in the email is "time limited" or "threatening".

Outlook and Office 365 Problems? – You are not Alone

Outlook and Office 365 online users around the world (particularly those in UK, France, Germany, Netherlands, Belgium, Norway, Sweden, and India) have had difficulties accessing the service this week. The problem has been identified as being in Exchange Online accounts via Outlook on the web. This latest incident follows a six-hour Office 365 failure earlier in the week which was due to an authentication error. This prevented users from signing into Office.com, Outlook.com, Teams, Power Platform, and Dynamics365. Microsoft has announced that it is investigating whether recent updates are the source of the problem but have given no indication of when the issue will be resolved. Microsoft have said "Users may experience problems with various Exchange Online



protocols, including Outlook desktop, mobile devices as well as those dependent on REST functionality". If you haven't done so already it would be a good idea to check that all Microsoft Patches are up to date.

CyberFirst Schools' initiative

Thirteen schools in Gloucestershire and Wales are the first in UK to achieve gold, silver or bronze status as part of the NCSC 'CyberFirst Schools' initiative. These schools and colleges have participated in a programme designed to address the cyber skills gap and inspire young people from all backgrounds to pursue a career in the field. There were a range of initiatives including an all-female competition to develop a gaming computer and one which saw the building of a 'Mars rover' which was sent into near space. The initiative will be opened up for other schools in the UK to take part in very soon.

Flutter 1.22 released

Google has announced the release of Flutter version 1.22 (an open-source cross-platform user-interface framework which is used for building apps on Android and iOS) The update allows developers build an interface for multiple platforms from a single codebase and fixes a number of issues. It follows the introduction of iOS 14 which stopped the iOS from leaking precise location information to apps from the clipboard which caused problems for some Flutter developers. Google advise app developers "If you're targeting iOS 14 with your Flutter app, we strongly encourage you to rebuild it with Flutter 1.22 and deploy it to the App Store now to ensure that your iOS 14 users have the best experience".

Finnish Authorities fine

The Finnish Data Protection Ombudsman has fined Acc Consulting Varsinais-Suomi (Independent Consulting Oy) €7000 for sending electronic direct marketing messages without prior consent AND neglecting the rights of the data subject. The company was unable to prove that it was processing personal data legally. During the spring and summer of 2019 the company sent out direct marketing (details of courses, such as hot work and asbestos removal) to data subjects without obtaining their consent beforehand. When the data subjects requested that the controller stop sending this direct marketing the controller continued to do so. This serves as a warning to all of us of the need to be scrupulous in our direct marketing efforts obtaining prior consent and keeping a clear "do not contact" list.

Huawei Cyber Security Evaluation Report

The Cabinet Office has published the latest oversight board report into Huawei's presence in the UK (covering January to December 2019). The report is an analysis of the company's software, engineering and cyber security processes and details the actions required of the company as a result. You can read it here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/huawei-cyber-security-evaluation-centre-oversight-board-annual-report-2020>

Staff Asked to Return to the Country Where They are Employed

According to reports Google has asked employees who temporarily left the country during the COVID19 pandemic to return by year end. This is apparently for tax and legal reasons. Employers



have begun to consider the costs and corporate risks of having employees working remotely around the world. It really isn't just a case of being able to work anywhere as long as there is Internet. It is also a good time for businesses to look at amending their working from home guidance to include the need to ensure they don't unwittingly infringe tax rules and security protocols. You can read more here: <https://www.irishtimes.com/business/technology/google-tells-workers-to-return-to-country-where-they-are-employed-1.4367674>

Channel 4 – The US 2016 Election Social Media Campaign Report?

There are mounting calls for regulation in the political sphere after the Channel 4 report on the use of Social Media in the 2016 Presidential election. If you haven't seen the video this is well worth a watch. It is shocking that despite whistle-blowers, the Cambridge Analytica scandal and Senate hearings (especially Zuckerberg's) nothing has changed. We knew that there were issues with the use of targeted social media ads in the 2016 US Election and BREXIT/ European Elections. But the wholesale use of social media to target certain users in one a segment of the population (in this case to the black community), to dissuade them from voting is another thing entirely. Where are the moral and ethical codes of practice within the political parties and social media companies. The link is here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=2&v=Klf5ELaOjOk&feature=emb_logo

Blogs of The Week

Tim Clements - How do you avoid over-exerting your own bias towards data protection?

This week I saw a great LinkedIn post from Tim Clements about avoiding over-exerting your own bias towards data protection. Whether you come from a business management, compliance, legal, information security, IT or records management background data protection is a business issue. Tim calls it a "team sport - No one vocation should monopolize the "data protection profession". Everyone has a part to play. Tim recommends breaking down key enablers so that they reveal the work required for each specialisation. He believes this will help ensure that decisions are "informed" rather than a bias-driven gut feeling. You'll find a great infographic on his linked in feed.

Aytekin Tank - How to refresh your work-from home-routine for the next season

The Fast Company article by Aytekin Tank explores whether it is now time to take another look at our working from home habits. At the beginning of the pandemic working from home was a novelty. People were happy to improvise, maybe balancing the computer on the nearest surface or answering emails from bed. After half a year spent living with the pandemic Aytekin makes some simple suggestions for some "at-home strategies". These are:

- Uphold boundaries
- Turn to alternate work spaces within your home
- Invest in a comfortable setup
- Consider if working from home is the right fit for you

You can read the article here: <https://www.fastcompany.com/90550762/how-to-refresh-your-work-from-home-routine-for-the-next-season>

