

Check Point discovers vulnerability in Android

Check Point Software Technologies Ltd., global pure-play security vendor, has announced that its mobile security research team discovered a vulnerability in Android that affects devices made by major manufacturers and disclosed its finding during a briefing session at Black Hat USA 2015 in Las Vegas, NV.



JordiMorella via pixabay.com

"Certifi-gate" is a vulnerability that allows applications to gain illegitimate privileged access rights which are typically used by remote support applications that are either pre-installed or personally installed on the device. Attackers can exploit Certifi-gate to gain unrestricted device access, allowing them to steal personal data, track device locations, turn on microphones to record conversations, and more.

Android offers no way to revoke the certificates that are providing privileged permissions. Left unpatched, and with no reasonable workaround, devices are exposed right out of the box. All affected vendors were notified by Check Point about Certifi-gate and have begun releasing updates. The vulnerability cannot be fixed and can only be updated when a new software build is pushed to the device - a notoriously slow process. Android also offers no way to revoke certificates used to sign vulnerable plugins.

It's time to take mobile security seriously

In July, Vodacom, South Africa's largest telecoms service provider, reported that it had 6.1 million Android users on its network, far more than the second-placed BlackBerry, with 2.2 million users, and reflecting a massive increase from the 1.4 million Android users it reported in 2013. This represents more than 60% of its subscriber base and places Android in the top position among service providers in South Africa.

"Every day, people around the globe use mobile devices to manage important aspects of their lives: they access work email, manage bank accounts and track health information," said Doros Hadjizenonos, country manager of Check Point South Africa. "The problem is, they rarely stop to think about whether their data is secure. This vulnerability is very easily exploited and can lead to the loss and dissemination of a user's personal data. It's time to take mobile security seriously."

Android users can check to see if their device is vulnerable to Certifi-gate by downloading this [free Check Point Certfi-gate scanner app](#) in Google Play.

The company launched Check Point Mobile Threat Prevention, a new mobile security solution enterprises can use to battle the evolving mobile threat environment and to detect threats such as Certifi-gate, malicious apps, Man-in-the-Middle attacks and more. With the highest level of security for stopping threats on iOS and Android, the solution delivers real-time visibility and threat intelligence into an organisation's existing security and mobility infrastructures. Deployment is easy and not only has integration into an organisation's mobility and security infrastructure, but it also provides a transparent user experience that maintains privacy and performance.

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