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Email Wiretapping– Don't be a victim

By Neville French

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On the face of it, does email wiretapping sound scary? Yes? Yes it is scary and you should now how it's done and how to combat it.

A little while ago the known (but not known with a load presence) organisation called "The US based Privacy Foundation" became aware of a as un–yet widely known security hole in the latest incarnations of email clients produced by Microsoft and Netscape.

The security loophole essentially allows the sender of an email message to see what has been written when the message is forwarded with comments to other recipients. This procedure has been nickname "email wiretapping". As you can imagine this leads to surreptitiously monitoring of written messages attached and/or forwarded messages. Some not so pleasant uses involve:

- 1) In a sensitive business negotiation conducted via normal email, one party can learn inside information from the other parties as the proposal is discussed through the recipient company's internal email system.
- 2) A seeded email message could capture thousands of email addresses as the forwarded message is sent around the world.

Seeded with what? JavaScript is the answer and it can easily hide in any HTML email. Of course the JavaScript capability has to be enabled within the email client. Typical email readers with JavaScript functionality include Outlook, Outlook Express, and Netscape 6 Mail. Earlier versions of the Netscape mail readers

are not affected because they do not fully support all the intricacies of JavaScript. Eudora and the AOL 6.0 series of email readers are not affected because JavaScript is turned off by default (but are vulnerable if turned on of course). Hotmail and other web-based email systems automatically strip out JavaScript programs from incoming email messages and therefore are not vulnerable.

The loophole is made possible because JavaScript is able to read text in an email message. If a message is forwarded to someone else, the hidden JavaScript code can read any text that has been added to the message when it is forwarded. This JavaScript code

executes when the forwarded message is read. The JavaScript code then silently sends off this text using a hidden form to a web server belonging to the original sender of the message. The original sender can then retrieve the text at their convenience and read it.

A "wiretapped" email message is difficult to detect. An individual can avoid the email wiretap by turning off JavaScript in the email reader. However, if the individual forwards the message to someone who has JavaScript turned on, that recipient's forwarded messages can still be "wiretapped". Additionally, copying the original message into a new email, rather than forwarding it, may not defeat the problem.

What can users can do?

It is possible to partially eliminate the email wiretapping problem by turning off JavaScript in HTML email messages. You can visit the home webpage for your appropriate browser package if you are not sure on how to do this.

Switching off the JavaScript is only a partial solution because a "wiretapped" message will still work if it is replied to, or forwarded, to someone whose email program is vulnerable to the malicious JavaScript. The best policy is some form of group or corporate agreement on how to tackle this, especial where commercially sensitive material is involved.

Neville FrenchE–Inform is centred around email marketing, producing it's ownsoftware products and resources + bespoke solutions for adiverse range of clients.<http://www.1einform.com>

Domestic Wiretapping – Surveillance Equipment To Protect Your Privacy

By Andy Jones

Domestic wiretapping authorization by our President George W Bush has put the privacy of all Americans at a state of risk. The New York Times released information that President Bush authorized the National Security Agency (NSA) to conduct warrant-less wiretaps. The Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act limits warrant-less wiretaps during the war to the first fifteen days after war is declared, and makes warrant-less wiretapping illegal after that period. In 1974 the articles of impeachment against President Nixon included the authorization of warrant-less wiretapping and illegal surveillance.

The constant feeling of "you are being watched and heard at all times" subjects citizens to a high degree of discomfort in their day to day lives. Surveillance and vigilance is good to a certain extent that it should not invade other's privacy. This is one side of the story. Looking at the other side of the coin, how is that our National Security Agency (NSA) going to be prepared and be more vigilant without getting the right information? Fighting the terrorists is not like waging a straight war using military and know who we are fighting with, it is more like a fighting the invisible. In this kind of a war we need to do our best keeping the security of the country as a top priority.

The constant feeling of being overheard by someone would put us to lot of stress and may lose our peace. These are the questions which come across anyone's mind:

· Are my conversations secure from eavesdropping? · Is it not our personal privacy important? · Don't we have to safeguard and secure it? · Don't we have the right to privacy? If yes then....

What is that we should do?

There are ways we can protect our privacy by choosing the right surveillance equipment available on the market to secure our phone lines. There is a broad variety of surveillance equipment available and many claim to be the best but only few meet the claims and really work.

A phone line analyzer will make sure that the telephone line is secure in order to protect your data and telephone conversations. The unit will alert you to any tampering on your phone line with an audio alert during your phone call and will also keep a log of any tampering that occurred while the phone line was not in use. If you need to keep track of all calls that are made from your home, a telephone number monitor will store up to 2,000 numbers, along with the time and length of each call.

Audio surveillance equipment like from bug detectors to data guards, there is huge variety of surveillance equipment available that you need to make sure that no one is eavesdropping on your conversations. In medical buildings, cellular phone usage is strictly forbidden—but that may not deter some people from carrying on conversations. Offices and movie theaters that do not allow video recording can also benefit from using RF signal detector. It can also be used to determine the best location to install wireless surveillance equipment.

If you need to make sure that your meetings will remain private, our mini bug detectors are an easy

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solution. This detector is small enough to fit in your pocket, so no one has to know that you are monitoring for bugs. If an RF signal is detected, the unit will subtly vibrate, and you can continue the

meeting elsewhere or steer the conversation away from sensitive subjects.

Your privacy is your right. The use of surveillance equipment to safeguard your privacy does not prohibit any laws. Surveillance equipment is an effective alternative to complaining against the domestic wiretapping program by the National Security agency (NSA). Let us make an educated decision by choosing the right surveillance equipment we need to protect our invaluable privacy.

More information about surveillance products is available at

Note: This article neither supports nor acts against George W Bush's authorization of domestic wiretapping. The author is not responsible for the interpretation of the reader.

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