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BT steps up battle against cyber-crime by sharing malware data with ISPs

March 2018

BT first to start sharing cyber-security data on a large scale and urges other ISPs to follow its lead

BT has become the first telecommunications provider in the world to start sharing information about malicious software and websites on a large scale with other ISPs, and has urged UK broadband providers to follow its lead. BT has launched a free collaborative online platform to share its threat intelligence data across the ISP community in a secure and trusted way, as it continues its efforts to protect consumers and businesses from the global cyber-crime industry. This is in direct response to an initiative led by the National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC) to enable ISPs to share detection events, as outlined in its new report -'Active Cyber Defence – One Year On' - which details its ongoing efforts to disrupt millions of online commodity attacks against the UK.

This development sees BT alert other ISPs in the UK to any malicious domains associated with malware control that it identifies using its advanced threat intelligence capabilities. ISPs can then choose whether to take any action to protect their customers by blocking such harmful malware. As a result of the growing industrialisation of cyber-crime, and the increasing complexity of malware, BT has identified and shared over 200,000 malicious domains since initiating the sharing of threat information at the end of last year. BT's global team of more than 2,500 cyber security experts are currently preventing the delivery of 50 million malicious emails with 2,000 unique malicious attachments every month – that's almost 20 malicious emails every second.

Domain Name System (DNS) filtering is a key plank of the Government's Active Cyber Defence Strategy, and BT has been supporting this by automatically blocking tens of millions of malware infections which try to cross its infrastructure every week. Such action is preventing millions of BT's customers from being

harmed by malicious code and bogus websites. These everyday cyber threats can often result in the theft of personal data, financial losses, fraudulent activity and users' computers being infected with ransomware.

Mark Hughes, CEO BT Security, said: "This is an important step in helping the Government achieve its aim of making the UK the safest place to live and do business online. We believe that only by working together with Government and the rest of the telecommunications industry can we collectively succeed in stemming the tide of cyber-crime. That's why we're urging other ISPs to join us in sharing threat information in a more open and collaborative way. We've been taking a more proactive and automated approach to blocking malicious code and harmful website content on our infrastructure for some time, in line with the NCSC's Active Cyber Defence strategy. This allows us to mitigate a high volume of cyber threats before they have a chance to take hold and impact our customers. By sharing our malware data, we're empowering other ISPs to provide their customers with the same level of protection, should they choose to take action."

Dr Ian Levy, Technical Director for the National Cyber Security Centre, said: "This is a fantastic initiative that will help provide broader protection of cyber threats facing the UK. Networks will be able to exchange detections in real time so that UK citizens can be protected by their ISP by default and for free, as part of the National Cyber Security Centre's Active Cyber Defence programme. This unprecedented level of sharing and exchange will have a positive impact across the whole security community by helping us to collectively understand our adversaries and reduce the impact of cyber attacks."

BT has taken the step of sharing data relating to malware because it believes that the most effective way to bolster the UK's defences against cyber-crime is through greater collaboration and the exchange of information. If other ISPs join BT in actively sharing threat intelligence data, this will help the entire industry to develop and strengthen a collective shield which will help to protect all customers by taking action within the UK's communications networks.

BT combines threat intelligence data provided by the NCSC and its Domain Name System (DNS) security provider partners with its own data generated by its Cyber Security Platform, which uses big data analytics to proactively identify threats before they occur. This provides the business with a comprehensive view of the cyber threat landscape in the UK and globally. In order to exchange this information with industry, BT has built a Malware Information Sharing Platform (MISP) which enables the data to be shared in a secure and trusted way with its partners and other ISPs. BT will also continue to share this threat information with the NCSC and with law enforcement organisations such as INTERPOL, as announced by the company in October.

New Institute of Coding to boost digital skills

March 2018

BT is joining forces with universities, businesses and industry experts to tackle the UK's digital skills gap

BT is part of a consortium set to receive £20m of government funding for a new Institute of Coding (IoC) to train the next generation of digital specialists. Speaking at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Prime Minister Theresa May outlined how the IoC will create new degree-level courses to equip people of all ages with the digital skills they need. The Government's investment will be matched by a further £20m from industry, including in-kind contributions such as training and equipment.

Gavin Patterson, Chief Executive, BT said: "Digital skills are crucial to BT's current and future success, but no company can fix the UK's digital skills shortage on its own. By working together across industry and academia, the Institute of Coding will unlock access to a bigger and more diverse workforce, and support skills development for people at different stages of their careers. We're particularly pleased that industry will have the opportunity to build on its work within the Tech Partnership and our existing degree apprenticeship schemes, setting standards and promoting degrees that are aligned to employer needs."

Other businesses in the consortium include IBM, Cisco and Microsoft, as well as SMEs, 25 universities, and professional bodies such as the British Computer Society and the Consortium for Research Excellence, Support and Training (CREST). The Prime Minister also announced a £10m investment for retraining courses to help workers adapt to the effects of automation and artificial intelligence.

New BT survey reveals procurement lagging behind NHS digital transformation plans

March 2018

Procurement process within the majority of NHS trusts is lagging behind their digital ambitions – according to a new survey by BT

Sixty – eight per cent of NHS trusts have plans to integrate their IT systems with other local health and care systems within one to two years as they prepare to migrate to the new Health and Social Care Network (HSCN), yet just 38 per cent of organisations surveyed have a procurement plan in place to manage the transition. The survey of senior executives and IT leaders across 50 NHS organisations provides an insight into the state of connectivity across the NHS, including the level of preparedness for migrating to HSCN, which went live last year and is replacing N3 as the nationwide 'backbone' network for the NHS.

HSCN will provide a new network connecting health and social care organisations for the first time, allowing providers in both sectors to access and share information more reliably, flexibly and efficiently. HSCN suppliers will be procured locally by health and care organisations, reflecting the shift away from the centrally funded and managed IT infrastructure contracts of the past.

The survey reveals relatively low levels of preparedness for migrating across to HSCN, with less than one fifth (19 per cent) of NHS trusts at the more advanced 'adoption', 'implementation' and 'roll-out' stages of the transition. Most organisations (46 per cent) are at the beginning of the journey – the 'scoping' stage. This is only to be expected perhaps given accredited suppliers are still in the process of entering the market, while the transition process itself is expected to take up to 12 months. The preferred procurement route for around one third of the respondents (33 per cent) is to collaborate with other health and social care organisations. Just 6 per cent are planning to run their own procurement process, while 19 per cent intend to join a centrally managed procurement plan.

There is also a high level of confidence amongst NHS leaders regarding the benefits of HSCN, with 73 per cent citing greater collaboration between health and social care providers amongst the top three benefits to their organisation. The response to the survey also suggests that NHS organisations are increasingly looking towards mobile solutions to underpin their digital transformation and provide faster, more flexible and responsive services to patients.

64 per cent of organisations surveyed have a mobile strategy which enables healthcare professionals to

access applications and information wherever they need to work. Meanwhile, 84 per cent believe levels of mobile adoption will increase over the next 24 months. However, concerns about security issues and costs loom large, with 88 per cent citing both factors as a high-mid level concern when considering their mobile strategy.

The move towards cloud-based services is also underway across the NHS, with 40 per cent of organisations surveyed implementing either private, public or hybrid cloud solutions. Jason Hall, Director of Health at BT, said: "This survey reveals that, with many trusts preparing to make the leap to HSCN, the NHS is at a pivotal point with regards to its digital transformation. HSCN opens up the possibility for NHS trusts to deliver new products and services to make a step change in digital transformation, while its introduction will result in a seamless infrastructure for health and social care. Accessing cloud services via the internet will become much more straightforward, while extending the network reach by using 4G and Wi-Fi will give NHS staff access to the information, tools and applications they need to provide high quality care. With 17 accredited suppliers now active in the marketplace, including BT, NHS Trusts can now develop their procurement plans with confidence - safe in the knowledge that the network and IT industry stands ready to help them achieve their digital ambitions."

BT is an accredited Consumer Network Services Provider (CNSP) for the HSCN and offers a range of simple-to-procure network solutions which ensure that health and social care professionals can access the right information at the right time, no matter where they are working. From ultrafast fibre and Ethernet connectivity, 4G mobility and Wi-Fi to cloud and managed security solutions, BT provides a range of options to enable health and social care organisations of all types and sizes to make a smooth transition to HSCN.

Fan link-up service wins BT search for new sport innovations

March 2018

The winner of the BT Infinity Lab competition, Sceenic, will now be trialled by BT Sport

A service which allows sports fans to create virtual living rooms, enabling friends and families to watch TV together, has won a global BT search for new sports media innovation. The competition builds on BT's rich history of engaging with start-ups and encouraging open innovation by providing a route for entrepreneurs to realise their ideas and innovations. London-based Sceenic's solution claims to increase audience engagement for broadcasters by enabling users to enjoy a group viewing experience.

BT Sport has been at the heart of innovation since its launch in 2013. It was the first broadcaster to show live content in 4K UHD and the first to adopt Dolby Atmos audio. BT Sport has also embraced social media, broadcasting the UEFA Champions League and UEFA Europa League finals on YouTube and showing content such as BT Sport Score live for free on Twitter and Facebook. This is the second time the BT Infinity Lab has helped BT Sport to run the competition and Sceenic could follow in the footsteps of previous winners, Seenit, who are now a key and pivotal part of BT Sport's Premier League Tonight show. The round-up show covering all Premier League matches has a particular focus on engagement with fans. Using Seenit's video collaboration platform, it involves fans sending in questions for BT Sport pundits to answer as well as supporters summarising matches they've been watching across the country on video and sending their films to BT Sport for host Jake Humphrey to show.

This year, entries were encouraged to focus on disrupting traditional broadcast approaches, including capturing the in-venue experience; encouraging interaction between sports fans; uses of data; ways of making live sports more accessible for impaired viewers; and new technologies such as virtual reality (VR). The competition was backed by BT Sport presenter Craig Doyle and Jamie Hindhaugh, Chief Operating Officer of BT Sport, who both featured on the "Dragon's Den" style panel which interviewed the final shortlisted companies at the BT Sport studios in London.

Jamie said: "Sceenic reflects what BT Sport is all about – which is bringing our audiences into our content, driving engagement and being a broadcaster that speaks with our fans." Paul Bojarski, CEO at Sceenic, said: "The idea came from me trying to watch sport over distance with my dad. We're about togetherness, and BT has so much live content it will be amazing to test our technology with its users."

The winner will now also receive six months' membership at TechHub with access to their workspace and

events. More information about BT's Infinity Lab competitions is available at
https://www.btplc.com/btinfinitylab/

Youngsters mark Safer Internet Day at BT Centre

March 2018

BT hosted an interactive, youth-led event to mark Safer Internet Day in the UK

More than 50 young people attended the UK Safer Internet Centre event, held at BT Centre in London to mark Safer Internet Day. They shared their online experiences with more than 100 key policymakers, including Margot James, the Minister for Digital.

The discussions centred round about how digital technology plays a key role in young people's lives and how industry, schools, parents, carers and young people themselves can help promote children's wellbeing online. And attendees learned more about how BT is supporting internet safety in schools through it's Barefoot Computing programme and its new campaign, Safety Snakes.

BT supported Safer Internet Day alongside hundreds of organisations across the UK uniting to empower children to use technology safely and positively. BT are also supporting online safety organisation Internet Matters as it launches a series of step-by-step control and privacy guides to make it easier for parents to get their child's device Set Up Safe. BT is one of its key partners.

And EE marked Safer Internet Day by rolling out specialist training – created in partnership with Internet Matters – for thousands of its customer service employees across more than 600 UK retail outlets. It means they'll be able to provide mobile and online safety expertise to parents. That will include the best advice on safety options and filters as well as directing them to resources to help deal with subjects like cyberbullying.

Marc Allera, Chief Executive, BT Consumer said: "We hope Safer Internet Day will inspire parents and carers to have open and honest conversations about online safety and highlight the ongoing work to make the internet a better and safer place for children."

Tech4Good Awards 2018 officially open for nominations

March 2018

The awards are open to award those who have inspired and used digital technology to improve the lives of others

The Awards which were launched at the BT Tower, celebrate the companies, charities and individuals that use the empowering influence of digital technology – whether it's at home, at work, in education – to benefit the community. BT and AbilityNet use the awards to identify and nurture ideas and individuals. The launch included past winners of the BT awards, who thanks in part to their involvement in the Tech4Good awards, have gone on to become some of the UK's brightest tech-talent.

The awards include BT Connected Society Award and the BT Young Pioneer Award for those aged under 18. BT will be providing prizes for the winners including mentoring support for the winners of the BT Connected Society Award. The winners of last year's BT Young Pioneer award were two 15 year old inventors, Kiera McKillop and Sinead McKeown, from St Killian's College in Northern Ireland, who invented Dyslexic Aid, a multi-sensory learning technology for children with all forms of dyslexia. Skybadger, last year's winner of the BT Connected Society award, is a charity that connects disabled children with each other and local support and has helped over one million children and their families.

BT has supported the Tech4Good Awards since its conception in 2011. Liz Williams, Director of Tech Literacy and Education at BT, said: "At BT, we are committed to building a culture of tech literacy, starting with the next generation. We are proud to be a founding supporter of the Tech4Good Awards, and celebrate young people who have used tech to solve community issues."

For further information on how to enter the awards, please visit: https://www.tech4goodawards.com/enter-now/

New report says community fibre broadband schemes boosts the economy

March 2018

Faster broadband boosts house prices and business success as well as providing a range of social benefits for rural communities

An independent study, by Regeneris Consulting, highlights the huge business, residential and social benefits provided by Community Fibre Partnerships (CFP), which are calculated to be worth, on average, £800,000 to each community.

Across the UK more than 500 communities have already signed up to the CFP programme.The CFP programme enables communities wanting faster speeds, but not included in any fibre broadband roll-out plans, to jointly fund an upgrade to fibre alongside Openreach, the business responsible for Britain's largest phone and broadband network.

The report 'The Impact of High-Speed Broadband for Communities' examines the economic impact of Community Fibre Partnerships on businesses and households over 15 years and the social benefits over seven and a half years.

It states that businesses will see improvements in productivity, efficiency, flexible working, innovation and finding new markets and customers. The boost to the value of a residential property when fibre broadband is provided is highlighted. For the UK as a whole, it is estimated to account for £100 million of the £340 million economic boost expected to be generated by Community Fibre Partnerships nationwide.

Positive social benefits as a result of the CFP programme include better access to employment opportunities and on-line healthcare. More information on community fibre partnerships with Openreach is available at www.communityfibre.openreach.co.uk

Simon Hooton, Director at Regeneris Consulting, said: "Despite delivery challenges in more rural areas, high speed broadband is vital to the prospects of communities across the UK. This report shows the breadth and scale of benefits generated when you bring high speed connectivity into those communities for the first time. The evidence from the latest research, and from residents and businesses themselves, is that broadband opens up new opportunities which enhance people's lives and can have a positive impact on their health and the environment around them."

The full report is available at www.communityfibre.openreach.co.uk/resources/

Openreach launches major recruitment drive

March 2018

Chancellor welcomes boost to Britain's digital economy with largest recruitment drive in Openreach history

The Chancellor of the Exchequer, Rt Hon Philip Hammond MP, has welcomed the news that Openreach, Britain's leading digital network business, will hire 3,500 new trainee engineers over the next 12 months. The largest recruitment drive in the company's history will see recruitment in communities from Penzance, in Cornwall to the Orkney Islands and follows an announcement last month that Openreach will accelerate plans to build more Fibre to the Premises (FTTP) broadband infrastructure across the country.

The new roles will be located throughout Britain, with trainees joining the UK's largest team of telecoms engineers working to expand, upgrade, maintain and install new services over Openreach's national broadband network. Taken together, with an expected expansion in its supply chain, this will support the creation of around 5,000 new jobs in Britain over the coming year.

Openreach's 'Fibre First' programme will deliver expanded FTTP networks in up to 40 towns, cities and boroughs, setting it on a trajectory to reach ten million British premises by the mid-2020s. It has committed to making FTTP available in three million British homes and business by the end of 2020 and, if the conditions are right, intends to go significantly further, bringing the benefits of FTTP technology to the majority of homes and businesses in the UK. The build will commence in eight cities: Birmingham, Bristol, Cardiff, Edinburgh, Leeds, Liverpool, London and Manchester. Twelve new regional fibre training centres will be built to support the rollout.

Chancellor of the Exchequer, Philip Hammond said: "It's great news that Openreach is creating 3,500 new permanent jobs rolling out full fibre broadband. This digital infrastructure will be welcomed by families and business across the country, and these new highly skilled jobs will be a boost to our talented workforce as we build an economy fit for the future."

Clive Selley, Chief Executive of Openreach, added: "These trainee engineers will be playing a vital role in the future success and prosperity of the UK. Over the last year our 22,200 engineers have been the driving force behind Government reaching its target of making 'superfast' broadband available to more than 95% of the country, whilst also improving our customer service performance - but we want to do more. Every day, Openreach engineers are working in all weathers across the length and breadth of Britain, connecting homes and businesses and making sure people can access the high quality broadband services they need. We are already investing in upskilling our engineering team and today's announcement of new jobs underlines our commitment to make our 'Fibre First' programme a reality –

future-proofing Britain's broadband network and supporting emerging mobile technologies like 5G. I'm confident that our twin investment in people and infrastructure will help the UK achieve the societal and economic benefits that come from better, more reliable, faster broadband services."

Kevin Brady, HR Director, Openreach, said: "We want men and women from all walks of life to apply for roles at Openreach so we're keen to engage with the aspiring engineers of tomorrow and to build a diverse workforce that reflects the hugely diverse communities we serve throughout Britain.

Becoming an engineer can be an incredibly rewarding career, and we're constantly improving our training and recruitment programmes to make sure we attract and keep the best engineers in the business. This year we've invested heavily in upskilling our people, so they can now do more for customers in a single visit and we recently launched new career pathways to give our engineers a clear sense of the skills, accountabilities and experience they need to get where they want to be. We're committed to helping people realise their potential so we're also delighted to be offering 500 work experience placements, under the Movement to Work programme, to 18-24 year olds who are currently not in education, employment or training."

Find out more about our Trainee Engineer Scheme.