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November in Tampa

Meeting

Exploit Kits

by

Dave Palmer

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Meeting Preview: Dave Palmer will tells us about Exploit Kits, a relatively new way to deliver malware. There will be the usual Windows SIG preceding the presentation.

Editor's Comments

By William LaMartin, Editor, Tampa PC Users Group
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This newsletter belongs to Merle with his two articles, one long and one short. It is good to not have to write anything other than this brief paragraph or two here on the front page.

The big news for me is that Microsoft is opening a full-scale store on the Second level of International Mall on November 5. As everyone knows, Apple has had a store there for several years, and all Microsoft had was a kiosk. Now it appears that Microsoft is getting serious about becoming a hardware vendor with their new laptop, the Surface Book, in addition to their Surface Pro 4. They will also have Windows computers from vendors such as Dell, Lenova and Acer on sale.

I was in Manhattan recently and saw the large presence Apple has there in retail with their flagship store at Fifth Avenue and 59th Street. But I also saw, about five blocks to the south on Fifth Avenue a five story Microsoft Store scheduled to open two days after I left. It will be interesting to see how this plays out. ◆

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December Meeting: Holiday Party

Travelling With Tech

By Merle Nicholson, Secretary,
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We just completed a 7,500 mile cross country road trip by car. We equipped ourselves to use the Internet as much as we could for the route planning, reservations and scouting for resources – food, lodging, supplies and all the necessities of a month long trip. By “we”, I mean my spouse Valerie, our dog Guinness and me traveling in a recent Honda CR-V. Our farthest stop was Seattle from Tampa FL.

The technology devices we used were: 1) The car, 2) two Android smartphones, 3) an Android tablet, 4) a Windows 7 notebook, 5) a GPS tracker on Guinness’ collar and 6) an Aircard/wifi router combination. Plus software and apps for all of these.

We started out with no idea of what our physical capabilities were going to be – how many miles we could manage in a day and sustain that for a month. That complicated things making it impossible to make hotel reservations more than a day in advance. That and the desire to avoid being tied down to a schedule. In the “old” days we would land in a city and start looking for a place to stay, then look for meals. That’s hugely time wasting, making it necessary to depend on fast food. The further complication is Guinness and needing a dog-friendly hotel and dog-friendly places to eat, being determined to eat well and not in the car.

It took about three days to determine a daily distance goal. That number ranged from 350 miles to 450. We accomplished that with one exception – extending the distance for an additional two hours of night driving just once – and had some serious consequences.

We needed a flexible range because when you get into low-population western states, there just may not be a town with dog-friendly hotels at the distance we wanted. So we tried to use the technology at hand to make the best choices we could.

The Car – 2013 Honda CRV. How is the technology in a car a factor? We used my smartphone on a car mount with Google Navigation and voice commands. The microphone and speakers connected via Bluetooth and Honda “Hands-FreeLink”. It handles phone calls hands-free while navi-

gating. While driving, Google Nav gives you continuous distance to destination remaining and estimated arrival time of day. The car displays miles of fuel remaining and can be compared to the navigation distance from destination, making fuel stop decisions easy. It has two trip odometers and an average MPG for the current tank since filling. The Google navigation app uses voice for turns and directions through the car speakers, temporarily killing any music playing.

Smartphones. We used one of the two phones continuously for navigation, telephone and information from the Internet. In addition to Google Nav, we used Google Now, Google Maps, and voice communications (“Ok Google, distance Denver to Hays, Kansas”). I set the Nav app to the next city’s hotel’s exact address, just a finger poke on a Google map. Once the route was selected and saved, I could then (“Ok Google, navigate to Starbucks nearest me”), get coffees on the way out of town and return to the original navigation route while we were waiting in the drive-thru. The Nav adjusts to the current location and gives us miles remaining and estimated arrival time. I found the estimated arrival time to be extremely accurate, and we came to depend on it. It told us how much time we could afford at rest stops and breaks and puppy-walking time. We tried to arrive as close to 5:30PM as we could, and we were very successful.

The other telephone was used intermittently through the day. Valerie had an app called “rest stops” which gave us the location and minimal informations about all the interstate rest stops. It was current location-based, but needed manual input for direction (southbound lane). It gave the location in mile-markers so it was easy to do the distance math. We do not recommend the app because it was ad-supported and had really vicious ads (“Your phone is infected ...”). Val would use the phone occasionally - once to cancel a reservation. It was used mainly for Internet information. (“Ok Google, distance current location to Mobile Alabama”).

Data Plan. Ok, time to talk Verizon data plan. My standard plan provided 2GB/month of data, plenty for our family’s three phones. We do not *ever* stream video, music or internet radio to our phones. Our intention was to use the phone data as necessary to make life easier on the road, but never use it for entertainment. This fits in with our normal lifestyle in any case.

I was certain that 2GB would be inadequate for the trip. We

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were to leave two days before the turnover of my account, so to avoid 2-day prorating we took off with somewhat less than 2GB with intent to raise the plan in a couple of days. With Verizon of course if you exceed the allotment, they automatically start charging overages at 1.5 times the normal data rate. Not really a disaster, but something easily avoided, since you can monitor the data usage real-time on a Verizon phone app. But surprise, I blew through nearly all the 2GB in the first two days, and we had another 28 days to go. After getting over the shock I realized that without thinking I had included the “satellite” layer on Google Nav. This is the way I normally use it, and I didn’t think about it. So of course there was a constant stream of data for perhaps 10 hours. I simply turned that off. It certainly is not needed.

In my panic I upped the plan to 4GB using my phones app, and a couple of days later as I monitored the usage I was fairly confident I needed 12GB. They had just revised the rate schedule and the current cost for 12GB was \$80. I raised it to 12GB and found that it did not show as increased on my account so I called them. The on-line system assumed that I was changing it for the following month instead of immediately, and they fixed that by backdating it to the time I changed it to 4GB, all fine with me. \$80 seems quite a lot, but I looked at it as a one-time vacation expense. I changed it down to 3GB as we were returning to Tampa, effective the following month. The 2GB plan I was on had disappeared from their offerings, but the cost differential was minimal. I had about 3GB unused at the end of the month when we returned.

Android Tablet: A new Google Nexus 9, 32GB WiFi only. I used a couple of very valuable apps on the tablet in hotels and sometimes at rest stops. Use of the tablet grew during the trip, and the use of the notebook decreased. This Nexus tablet has a large enough screen with a very high resolution that made it a pleasure to use. The apps we used made it invaluable for the trip. The first being AAA travel. We used it exclusively to search for and book hotels. There is a complete map of the US to zoom into and out and a (difficult to use) trip route system where you can highlight your entire highway route. Then zooming in on an area of interest, we used a search criteria for hotels included pet-friendly, our #1 concern. Once we selected a city (or town) suitable for one day travel distance, then windowing on a map area, selecting hotels produces a list of all AAA-rated hotels and their location on the street map. The information gives pictures, ratings, facilities, reviews and booking details down to the type of room, a typical picture of that room, smoking or non. This data is real-time so you can book right from

the app, and we did this most of the time. We did find an advantage to phoning the booking directly to discuss the dog and the resultant extra fee, and we did that in a few cases while using the information from the app.

The AAA app has the capability to transfer the hotel address and phone number directly to Google Maps. When Google Maps appears, I only had to “save” it as a favorite location. Since all the Google data is saved to my Google account, that location appeared on my phone as well. So Google Nav used in the car has the next day’s destination. This reduces time for setting the days destination to just seconds, and you never have to use the keyboard.

The tablet was used for many searches for eating establishments, self-serve dog washing facilities, the Seattle bus system and ferry (both are dog friendly). The tablet was used for other Internet things such as handling my email and for the Kindle reader. It has the apps needed for the GPS dog tracker, and we even ordered an item from Amazon and tracked delivery to our son’s house.

Obviously, we needed WiFi to do all this. All activity except for the Kindle needed an Internet connection.

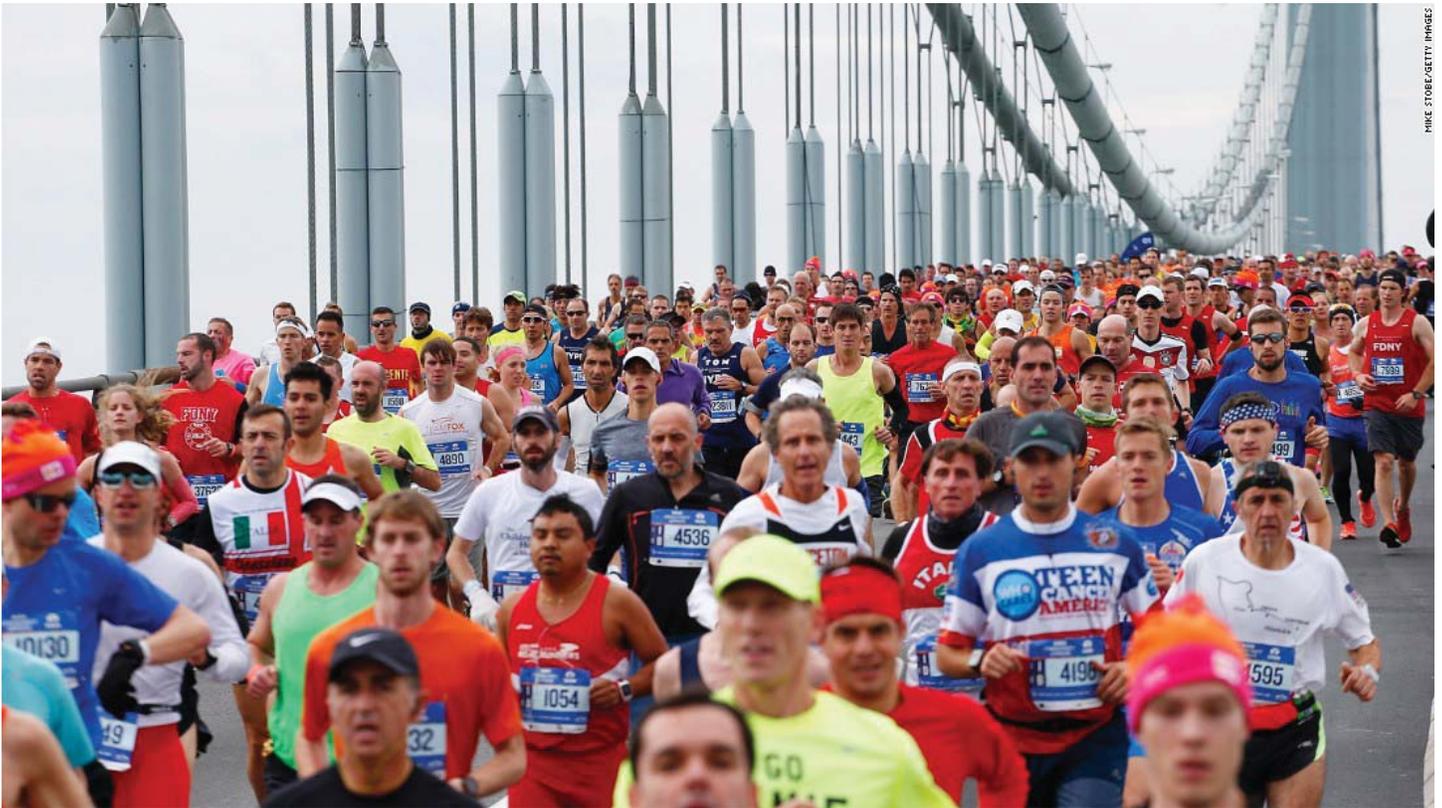
During the trip, all hotels had free WiFi access, and in Seattle, WiFi was abundant. As a rule, we never connected the tablet or PC to public WiFi, preferring our own aircard system for security. The aircard uses Verizon data, but we had planned on that as a vacation expense. More about the aircard later.

Notebook. I have a three-year old HP 14 inch Ultrabook that has served me well. It’s small and fairly thin, about the size of a 13” notebook because of the very thin screen bezels. In retrospect, we could have left it home, but we did make use of it. It has Delorme Street Atlas 2015 (SA) software which we have used for real-time navigation in the past, using a small USB-attached GPS.

One of SA’s real strengths, besides being completely off-line, is its trip planning capability. During our planning stages we established routes out and back based on where our family lives but also to make the route as interesting as possible and sometimes routing to areas we have not seen (Western Montana, wow!). With SA you can set daily mileage or driving time goals, your expected speeds for the various types of highway, fuel capacity, miles per gallon, starting days tank level and the level that you expect to fill your tank. The software then puts symbols on the route and

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Internet Picture of the Month



2015 New York City Marathon

This past Sunday, November 1, 2015, was the running of the New York City Marathon. The photo is of the runners crossing the Verrazano-Narrows Bridge near the start of the race. The photo is from <http://www.cnn.com/2015/11/01/world/gallery/new-york-city-marathon-2015/index.html>

November's Links

Tampa PC Users Group (that's us)
Free legal documents templates
Largest website devoted to recipes
This Old House
Bloomberg Business (free)

<http://www.tpcug.org>
<http://www.formswift.com>
<http://www.allrecipes.com>
<http://www.thisoldhouse.com>
<http://www.bloomberg.com>

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the routing instructions to designate overnight stops and fueling positions. This was uniquely valuable in the early stages. We were prepared to use the notebook full time for navigation in case the phone's Google Nav did not work out, but we were happy with the Google Nav capability right away.

We did use the notebook for our online banking. We paid several recurring bills as we always do when home, moved money and constantly checked our credit card accounts for current charges, making sure the charges corresponded to the receipts we accumulated. While some of this could have been done on the phone or tablet, we are most comfortable doing these with a full size computer, screen and mouse. We used the aircard for this exclusively. The notebook was never connected to a public WiFi.

Google Navigate (Google Nav): It needs to be pointed out that while Google Nav is truly excellent for point-to-point navigation over even long distances, it can't program a mid-route side stop. It isn't designed for handling multiple routes or multiple stops, something I suspect would be easy for Google to do. The current route must be interrupted, the route to the stop selected and then after that stop, restart the original route. So it was used for one day at a time; point-to-point with interruptions.

It was sometimes interesting when we didn't like the route it selected. The route is always based on the expected minimum driving time. So you may find yourself on a non-interstate road to save four minutes (or an hour) driving time over a five hour trip. This happened only a couple of times, but we were alert to that and just kept going on the interstate and let the Nav eventually adjust to our new location. It was always spot on to point out slow or stopped traffic, and in a couple of cases an estimate of the delay time and the cause (accident). It adjusted the ETA accordingly.

The destination locations failed us three times. Twice in towns in Colorado it routed us to Walmarts that had moved locations. Valerie went into an existing business to ask and found that it had moved ten years earlier. Once, in Hays Kansas (pop. 20,000) it routed us to a Starbucks that did not exist. We suspected it was there once. My advice, if you find yourself in Hays Kansas, forget your latte', but it has a truly remarkable brewery/restaurant downtown, found by an online search.

Tagg dog collar GPS attachment (now "Whistle"): The Tagg company produced an attachment for an animal collar

with a battery-powered GPS receiver and cellular phone-based communications device for \$80 (now \$60) and \$10/month. It has an Android or iPhone app that allows you to query the current location on a map (Google-based), and also a system that activates a map based report every 30 seconds in case the animal needs retrieving immediately. It has several features such as monitoring the battery, notifying you when the tracker is out of range of the base charger and also if the device gets detached from the collar.

It was the availability of this device that made it possible to have our dog travel with us. Guinness was in and out of the car many times every day in areas that we were experiencing for the first time ourselves. We simply considered it a necessary one-time travel expense. We have no intentions of keeping the service now that we're home. During our trip, another company, "Whistle", bought Tagg and issued new tracking software. Although they did provide the same basic service as Tagg their "social media" approach on their app was disturbing to us; we lost some email notifications and multiple phone SMS notifications, the basic usefulness did not change. We still recommend this product. <http://www.whistle.com>. The only dislike is a battery that we felt needed charging every other day.

Aircard/WiFi: We needed to take the Internet with us and provide WiFi service for the tablet and PC. With Verizon policy no longer restricting hotspot use, my current phone, a 2013 Moto X with Android OS 5.1 Lollipop has a "Tethering and Mobile Hotspot" switch in settings and a "Verizon Hotspot" app. This turns the WiFi receiver off and uses it as a WiFi receiver/transmitter using data from the cellular network. You configure it with an SSID and a WPA2 security password. There are a few disadvantages in using my phone for this; the most important is that it's a huge battery drainer. If the screen is on because you're using it for full time navigation, the battery charger will not keep up, and obviously if the battery is low to begin with you're risking use of the phone as a phone. With the right careful planning you can get around this by making sure you start the day out with a full battery charge, keep it on charge while in the car and limiting the time hotspot is actually on. The other disadvantage is that obviously you can't fiddle with turning it on and off hands-free while driving.

An alternative is to purchase a portable hotspot or USB device from Verizon and add it to your account. Currently, they offer four devices, three WiFi hotspot units and one USB receiver. The pricing is simple; \$200 each, plus tax and \$10/month, and the one-time activation fee for the de-

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vice on your account has risen to \$40. So no, it's not for me when it's really a luxury item to be used because the phone hotspot is not ideal.

Spending enough time researching, I found an affordable solution. First, a USB Modem/Aircard for \$50. It's a Verizon-branded 4G USB device LG VL600. After I activated it (\$40!) at a Verizon store, I am able to plug it into a USB port on the PC and have 4G data networking. The Verizon guy just shook his head when I told him where I got it for 50 bucks. At the same time I bought a TP-Link 4G Wireless portable router (battery powered model) for \$30. This is an amazing little device that has a USB port to attach a USB Modem, a 10/100Mbps WAN/LAN port and a micro-USB charging port with a power adapter, USB cable and an Ethernet cable. Configured for 3G/4G, I have a choice of an Ethernet connection or WiFi. It can also be used as a portable Access Point.

After setting it up, I carried it in the car (charging) and also in my day-pack when on foot or in a hotel room. It was simple to just flip the switch on and have internet service within about 30 seconds. The battery is good for just a couple of hours, but I had it on only when needed and never ran it down. On Amazon: TP-LINK TL-MR3040

A side note: Somewhere above I mentioned some night driving with consequences. We went over a deer carcass on the interstate at about 70 mph. We assume it was killed by a truck that continued on because there was no car wreckage nearby. The car seemed OK so we continued. This was in South Dakota, and even in daytime you can drive for a while and see no cars in either direction. Three days later in Seattle I took it to a Honda dealer and had some deer meat removed, a missing undercarriage panel and some fasteners, a leaking drive seal and drive shaft replaced. Close call.



Microsoft Update KB3035583 Problems

By Merle Nicholson, Secretary, TPCUG
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On 5/29/15, my computer became unresponsive for a while. I tracked the problem down to a new Microsoft Update, uninstalled the update and got

my system back. Some research turned up some interesting things about the update that applies to all Windows 7, 8 and 8.1. Update 10/19/15: It also provides the "Install Windows 10" nag in the system tray, and it acts as the conduit to signal MS to download the Windows 10 update to your PC.

Windows 10 is not for everyone. If you use Windows Media Center software, Windows 10 will uninstall it. If you are using WMC as your DVR, Do not install Windows 10. The Windows 10 Start Menu really can't be called a menu without a lot of work or by installing a third party menu program. Office 2003 is disabled, and can be revived only with a lot of technical work.

The offending task that was killing my computer is GWX-ConfigManager.exe. It was trying to send data to the Internet, and my Vipre Firewall was blocking it causing the computer to bog down. It's located in the Windows\System32\GWX folder. I had never heard of that so I did some research on the Internet. It's a program that is installed on your computer relating to upgrading to Windows 10. You can find it in Windows Update>Installed Updates.

I looked at my other Windows 7 computers and it was installed there too. Microsoft wasn't being very forthcoming about what it was for at the time. Going to Windows Update > Installed Updates (click on the text near the bottom left of the Windows Update). If you sort by category, under Windows System updates it should be in order of most recent, so it should be near or at the top. Look for KB3035583, right-click and select Uninstall. But there's a catch.

On the next Windows Update, it will appear again and if you have automatic install set, it will just install again. Here's how to fix that. You have to set that particular update as hidden. Just "Check for Updates" and you'll get at least one "Important" update KB3035583. On that update, right-click and hide. If you do another "Check for Updates", you'll see that it does not appear. If you later "Restore Hidden Updates" for any reason, it will appear again.

Here's all the information available from Microsoft:
 Update for Windows 7 for x64-based Systems
 (KB3035583)

Download size: 517 KB - 601 KB

You may need to restart your computer for this update to take effect.

Update type: Recommended

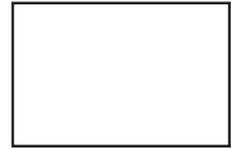
Install this update to resolve issues in Windows. For a com-

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Tampa PC Users Group, Inc.

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First Class Mail

Member: Your membership is up for renewal

Minutes.....Continued from page 2

design. An APU is a combination of a CPU and GPU wherein the GPU provides the greater power needed for graphics.

More information is available at Steve's website:

[Http://moreValu.com](http://moreValu.com). ◆



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plete listing of the issues that are included in this update, see the associated Microsoft Knowledge Base article for more information. After you install this item, you may have to restart your computer.

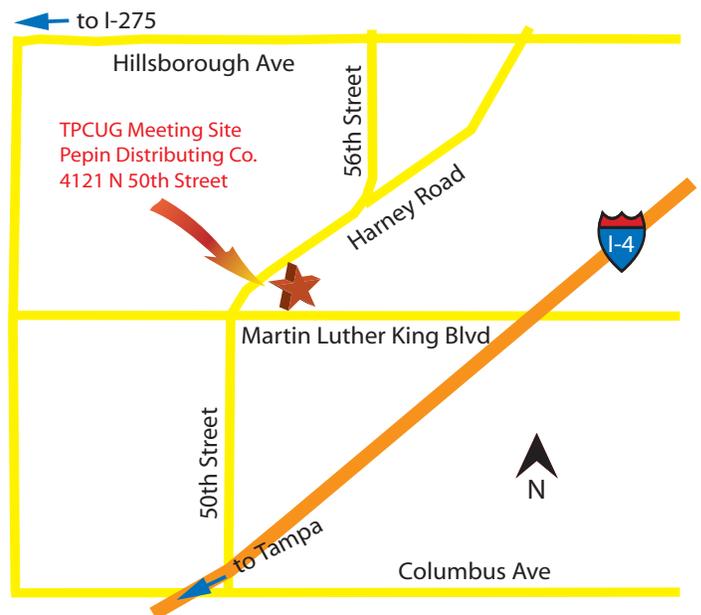
More information:

<http://support.microsoft.com/kb/3035583>

Help and Support:

<http://support.microsoft.com>

Update 10/19/15: Even though I marked the update on my computers as "Hidden", I found it installed on my four Windows 7 computers all over again. Microsoft made a change so that the Hidden status will be ignored. I have repeated the uninstall and hidden process once again. This is very disconcerting to me. It appears that Microsoft views



my personal computers as their property to install anything they want. ◆