

## AUGUST

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## Two overhyped security threats— Foreign Attacks and Mobile Hacking

You can't go a day without hearing about yet another act of cyberterrorism or digital hacking. In 2014 alone, we heard about at least 3 major cyberattacks against 3 major U.S. companies; Target (personal information stolen from an estimated 110 million accounts), J.P. Morgan Chase (83 million accounts compromised) and Home Depot (payment system breach, compromising 56 million accounts). With major corporations being hacked so simply, it's easy to see why small businesses have become paranoid when it comes to their data safety.

But there's something important to remember, you're more likely to get your data compromised through a mass email phishing attack than to have your network or mobile fleet specifically targeted. It's easier for hackers to send out spam emails containing infected attachments or links to malware-filled sites (phishing) or to slip malware-filled ads onto unsuspecting websites (drive-by download). Unless you're a very important figure either financially or politically, the bad guys won't invest the time to go after your specific machine. Rather, it's more feasible to take a scattered approach.

Be on the lookout for malware such as ransomware which locks up your computer and gives crooks access to your blackmail-worthy photos and messages, unless you pay a hefty return fee. In some cases, the thieves never give access back. Banking Trojans impersonate you as if you were on your own system to drain your funds while botnets trap your computer into infection-filled networks that send out spam or launched coordinated

DDoS (distributed denial of service) attacks. But nearly all of these threats are well-known, making it easy for your IT provider to safeguard your system with up-to-date antivirus and anti-malware software.

While malware has increased on the computer side, it has also increased in the mobile space, especially for Android devices. According to a report by antivirus maker, G Data, there have been 440,000 new Android malware strains since the first quarter of 2015. But these high numbers don't necessarily affect you. Most of this malware originates in Asia and the Middle East and is distributed through unofficial Android app markets such as Mumayi, AnZhi, eoeMarket and liqcn. If you stick with the Google Play store app, your chances of infection are drastically reduced.

iPhones and iPads on the other hand, experience even less of a threat to their iOS operating system because Apple's app store is more strictly controlled than Google Play. In addition, Apple puts more restrictions than what Android does on what and how apps can access your system. According to Robert Hansen, VP of White Hat Security, "The bad guys know it's not economically friendly to attack mobile devices," says Hansen. "Whereas it's easy to send out a bunch of (infected) emails and hope somebody clicks on them."

So before you head running for the hills when it comes to your data security, take a deep breath and give the team here at Memphis IT Solutions a call. We'll help you safeguard your system based on your individual business needs.





## Debunking 3 Productivity Myths

We've all been there before. Stuck working on a project when you just have no energy and no passion. It makes it that much harder to complete the tasks ahead of you when you're just no into it. While it's easy to go out and do a Google search for productivity hacks and pull up a million articles that tell you the same thing in a trillion different ways. But we know that can be a load of crock.

So we're going to debunk a few of those infamous productivity tips so that you can discover what really works for you.

**1. Work on the most important things first:** It's 8 AM. You've got your breakfast on your right and your coffee on the left. You give a sigh and begin taking a glance over your to-do list for the day. You've got 5 tasks ahead of you and one of them is a doozy. You know that it will take you most of the day to complete, forcing you to stay late to finish your other tasks. Now the traditional productivity tip says to work on that big task first. But in all actuality, this isn't the best way to go about taking on this list. What you need is the psychological boost of a few small wins before you take on that beast of a project. In his book *The Power of Habit* Charles Duhigg addresses how these small wins are able to set off a positive chain reaction, fueled by dopamine, which is a key chemical in helping you feel motivated. So go ahead and print off that flyer, respond to Suzy's email or get down to inbox-zero. It's all about the little things.

**2. Create a master to-do list:** Admit it, you've done this before. You've sat down and contemplated all the tasks you have ahead of you and proceeded to make a list. 350 tasks later and you feel overwhelmed and pessimistic. There's no way you're going to accomplish everything and on, time no less. That's why the advice of creating a master list doesn't work. All it does is raise your blood pressure and leave you frustrated. Instead, create a list of exactly what you need to do next. Does that mean that you need to make a daily task list? Most definitely. You can only do one task at a time, so focus on accomplishing your daily tasks versus an overall list. This way you'll be able to manage your time as well as your productivity, to ensure that you're meeting weekly expectations and goals.

**3. Power through the low points:** You've heard it. "Oh, you're in a work funk? Just power through it. Your thoughts will come back to you." We're going to be honest here, this advice stinks. If you find yourself hitting slumps in your work that are lasting a bit longer than usual, what you could be facing is the onset of burnout. If this is the case, then continuing down the path that you're on won't do you any good. The best way to tackle burnout is to recognize the stressors that are causing the problem. Is it too many demands at work? Not enough sleep? Family troubles? Whatever the stressors are, identify them and work on eliminating or minimizing them. Remember to take breaks and allow yourself time to refresh and recharge.

## Has your car been hijacked lately?

Cyber threats have officially strapped into the backseat of your car. It's not just your identity, reputation or data that's vulnerable anymore. Your physical self may be in for a cyber-ride, as well.

Two security researchers, Chris Valasek and Charlie Miller, opted to demonstrate a very important point: **Your car is just as susceptible to a cyber-threat as your phone, tablet or laptop may be.** Back in 2013, they showcased how simple it is to hijack a vehicle by physically connecting to the car's dashboard. From here, nearly all of the vehicle's core functions can be controlled and manipulated to do as the hacker intends. The windshield wipers, AC, brakes and even the engine itself can be commandeered... a very dangerous and frightening notion.

Within the last month, Valasek and Miller decided to take this idea a bit further. From the comfort of their own home and equipped with their personal laptops, the security experts wirelessly hacked into a Jeep Cherokee. The driver of the vehicle was a [Wired](#) reporter who volunteered for the experiment. With

no physical connection required and from miles away, the car was hijacked and driven into a ditch.

Imagine driving on the freeway during mid-hijack. The end result could be lethal. However, the manufacturer of the automobile, Chrysler, asserts there is no risk and the vehicles will not be recalled. Since the demonstration, Chrysler has released a [software update](#) to eliminate the threat. The update has to be downloaded and installed manually by the owner and specifically affects a vehicle utilizing Uconnect over the Sprint network such as the Jeep Cherokee and Dodge Ram.

Valasek and Miller have not tested any other vehicles from varying manufacturers; however, they are asserting that the threat is just as present with other companies as it is with Chrysler. And, while this threat lies specifically with Uconnect (affecting nearly 500 thousand vehicles), there are most likely many others types of threats present that have yet to be uncovered.

Within hours of these findings, new [legislation](#), the SPY Car Act (Security and Privacy in Your Car Act of 2015), was passed. Higher standards and rating system have been established and must be upheld by the auto industry.





## Gadget of the Month Dell Latitude 12 Rugged Tablet

Your technology is precious to you. It's expensive, delicate and breakable and should be handled with nothing less than a large helping of TLC.

But, what happens when you decide to go on vacation? Better not take that tablet down to the beach. Sand might touch it. And, what if by trade your profession just so happens to be away from a desk? Best to leave it at home. A drop of water may land on it.

Well, Dell has decided to take a slightly different approach to this. Their latest edition to their long line of tablets has been coined the Rugged Tablet—The Latitude 12 Rugged Tablet to be precise. Throw it out the 2nd story window. Take it down to the battlefield with you. Go into a raging fire with it. The Rugged Tablet was designed for extreme environments. Firefighters, soldiers, welders, police officers, scientists, mountain climbers... this tablet was made for you.

Rugged's 11.6" display can be seen in the brightest of suns and responds to the touch of the roughest of gloves. Its QuadCool thermal management system will keep your tablet functional despite the heat and its built-in, layered security will keep your data private despite your location.

Dell claims Latitude 12 was built for real situations and intended to handle anything life may throw its way. With dual hot-swap batteries, this tablet allows for all day use, untethered and unstoppable. Wi-Fi, mobile broadband and dedicated GPS gives the tablet instant connectivity from most any location.

So, if it's a mountain you're climbing up or a criminal you're chasing down, Rugged would like to join you.

## Coffee Addicts Beware: That innocent cup of Joe could cost you more than you're willing to pay

The debate as to whether coffee is good or bad for you is always on the table. There have been claims that coffee reduces the risk of certain health problems, increases overall awareness, and burns fat. On the other side of the spectrum, coffee has been linked to heart disease, poor indigestion, and high cholesterol.

Lately, new research has revealed that your morning cup of Joe may be damaging your productivity and harming your sleep habits.

### **Caffeine is a temporary reversal of your current state of mind**

When drinking that mid-afternoon cup of coffee you may feel it's giving you a heightened sense of awareness and a burst of energy to make it through the rest of the work day. The only thing it's really doing is bringing you back up to a normal level of productivity. The afternoon slump you feel is really just a symptom of caffeine withdrawal. Try not drinking any caffeine for a few days. Soon, you won't be counting down the minutes until your 2:00 coffee break. Instead, you'll experience more even productivity throughout the day.

### **You won't exactly be calm and collected**

That afternoon caffeine withdrawal we just mentioned? It doesn't just leave you tired. You may become cranky, irritable, and grouchy, which in most cases makes you a much more difficult person to work with and be around. Your mood is negatively impacted and your chances

of productivity are greatly diminished. While the first few days without caffeine may bring up a slew of these unpleasant symptoms, the long term effects are much better on your body.

### **Caffeine consumption creates a vicious cycle.**

You're sleepy because you drank too much coffee, and you're drinking coffee because you're too sleepy. You probably see where this one is headed. It takes a while for caffeine to leave your system and by the time you decide to go to bed, it'll most likely still be there. Because of this, it's harder for you to fall asleep, stay asleep, and successfully complete your sleep cycle.

When the following afternoon approaches, you're tired because you were unable to complete your sleep cycle. As a result, you drink more coffee.

### **So, what to do?**

It's all up to you. There's both good and bad when it comes to that cup of coffee you love so much. It really just depends on what information you've read lately. It seems the research is always changing, and it's best to make the decision that makes the most sense to you.

Resources:

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