



SEPTEMBER 2015

In this issue...

Is your printer
spying on you?

Is Edge the
secure browser
we've been
searching for?

5 Habits that
are Killing Your
Productivity

A, B, C, G: Google
is changing the
Alphabet

Gadget of the
Month: Touchjet
Wave



Is your printer spying on you?

A group of dedicated security researchers known as Red Balloon Security actively work to detect and resolve threats to your imbedded systems. Basically, they discover new ways to hack into your connected devices—all those things that you use daily within the Internet of Things—with the intention of preventing this from actually occurring. Red Balloon Security realizes the constant, yet, oftentimes overlooked threat that devices like printers and phones pose to your business. Every day they're discovering how to access the Internet of Things and transform your devices into “little eyes and ears surrounding you.”

Their latest find has been coined “Funtenna.” In short, their Funtenna can transform your printer into a radio or, what's more commonly referred to as a “bug.” From your printer, they can extract data using audio waves that are undetectable to the human ear.

In theory, after malware is installed, they can turn any modern device into a transmitter. This includes devices such as your washing machine, kitchen appliances and thermostat. Without being detected and without tripping any legitimate ‘security wires’, they can move from your printer or phone straight

through to your workstations. From here, they can extract any amount of data they want for an extended period of time.

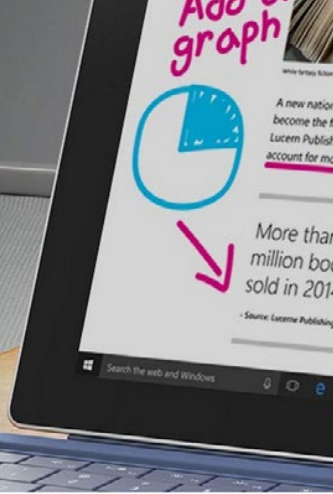
Ang Cui, the Chief Scientist of Red Balloon Security, says all of this is accomplished through electromagnetic radiation and a series of 1s and 0s that are subsequently translated into computer code. Cui also says Funtenna could help explain various attacks that have occurred throughout the last few years—ones that many analysts have yet to wrap their heads around. For instance, [badBIOS](#) is malware that's designed like “[a strain of bacteria.](#)” It can infect multiple devices, for many years, for no apparent reason. Funtenna's ability to infect devices connected to your network could potentially explain the confusion surrounding badBIOS.

While this new research is undoubtedly exciting for the world of network security, it also raises a very serious concern to companies everywhere. Are your devices safe? Are they more vulnerable to outside threats than you once thought? Are there little eyes and ears in your office taking little bits of your business for themselves?

Introducing Microsoft Edge

Go beyond browsing. Experience a more personal and productive web on Windows 10.

Try Windows 10



Search faster

Cortana provides instant search results without ever leaving your page.

Learn more

Is Edge the secure browser we've been searching for?

The release of Windows 10 hasn't exactly been smooth sailing. Quite a few errors, issues and glitches have popped up that could easily drive a user to madness. Many are experiencing a seemingly endless cycle of 'download-crash-reboot-download-crash-reboot' for days on end. Then, there's also the [Something Happened error](#), where literally all it says is "something happened." Funny, yes. Fun to deal with, no.

Despite all these issues, though, the Windows 10 tagalong browser, Edge, is getting some major nods of approval for their innovative security features. This is certainly a significant departure from its predecessor, Internet Explorer. This was the whole idea, though. Microsoft vowed to make security their highest priority. In fact, Microsoft claimed that "security is a process, not a destination" and that they "will continue to work on browser security improvements" long after the launch of Windows 10.

But, they've done more than just talk about their intended marriage with security. A few months back they launched their [Bug Bounty Program](#) and asked the public if they would take cash for bugs. Long story short, Microsoft says they'll pay

a minimum of \$500 to anyone that can "uncover significant vulnerabilities" for them.

All vulnerabilities aside, one of the major security perks is that Edge is actually a universal Windows app that operates within a sandbox. To simplify this, imagine a literal sandbox and Edge is smackdab in the middle of it. This means that all browsing activity never touches anything outside of the sandbox—your operating system included. Because of this, if your browser is attacked, everything else will remain uncompromised. That's certainly good news because it's probably safe to say that most, if not all, malicious activity stems from your browser.

On top of all the other 'standard' security features—blocking cookies, private browsing, popup blockers—Edge also combines its sophisticated Passport and SmartScreen technology to authenticate and verify credentials. These two add-ons will make it significantly more difficult for you to accidentally install malicious software or to venture into unfriendly browser territory.

All in all, Edge is a pretty safe browser and its security features can definitely go head-to-head with any other browser out there. But, if it's not security you're looking for, then here's a [list](#) of some other pretty neat features within Edge.

"Go beyond browsing. Experience a more personal and productive web."

5 Habits that are Killing Your Productivity

You may wake up in the morning and tell yourself, "Self, today is going to be a great day. I'm going to be so ridiculously productive." But, unfortunately, no matter how many times you tell yourself this, your most productive part of the day may end and begin with you waking up.

It's not that you don't try. You do. You've just picked up a few bad habits and they're killing your productivity.

Are you physically able to utter the word 'no'?

Saying no every now and then doesn't make you a bad person. It makes you realistic.

You can't say yes to absolutely every request. If you did this, you'd never, ever finish anything on your plate.

Would you rate your ability to plan at say... a negative 2?

If you aren't able to plan effectively, then you may as well just stay in bed all day.

You can't go to work and just 'take what life throws at you.' Because if life had its way, you'd be taking bullets all day long, working on projects that don't matter and forgetting things that do matter.

Do the sounds of chirping birds signal the end of your work day?

Many people tend to think that working afterhours is the greatest thing since sliced bread. But, how far do those long nights really get you?

If you're staying at work until the birds start chirping, you have problems. You're going to be burnt-out before you know it and moving further and further away from productivity.

Does the word 'priority' mean anything to you?

Not everything on your to-do list holds the same weight. Larger doesn't necessarily mean more important.

To be legitimately productive, you need to work smart and utilize your time wisely. Prioritize your tasks by value and urgency.

Do you openly welcome ADD?

Do you welcome distractions with open arms? Is your cellphone above silent and your inbox maximized eight hours a day?

Don't allow devices or people to kidnap your attention and hold it for ransom. Your quality will suffer and your productivity will all but disappear.





A, B, C, G: Google is changing the Alphabet

In a blog post released on August 10th, Google CEO, Larry Page announced the creation of a new parent company called Alphabet. While the news came as a shock for many, Page felt that it was a long time coming. He says, “From the start, we’ve always strived to do more, and to do important and meaningful things with the resources we have...our company is operating well today, but we think we can make it cleaner and more accountable.”

Alphabet is thought to be the solution to do just that.

Alphabet will be a collection of companies, with Google being the largest. With this new switch up, Google will be able to focus on search and advertising entities while Alphabet will represent other Google ventures such as Google’s health efforts: Life Sciences that is working on the development of glucose-sensing contact lenses and Calico, which is Google’s independent research and development biotech company built for longevity.

The separation will allow for Page and Google co-founder, Sergey Brin to manage their other ventures as independent companies, leaving Google to be run by Sundar Pichai, who was recently named CEO. New Google CFO, Ruth Porat will control the financials for both Alphabet and Google.

Google’s current directors will remain in their positions while each company under the parent firm will have its own CEO.

Sergey Brin will become president of Alphabet and Eric Schmidt will be executive chairman.

Alphabet Inc. will replace Google Inc. as the publicly-traded entity and all shares of Google will automatically convert into the name number of shares of Alphabet, with all of the same rights.

“This new structure will allow us to keep tremendous focus on the extraordinary opportunities we have inside of Google,” Larry Page said in a blog post.

How much effect will the invention of Alphabet have on Google’s businesses? It’s too early to say and it’s possible that the bottom line will be subtle. But as a business owner, you can expect to see more emphasis placed on Google’s side projects such as [Google Fiber](#) (Google’s gigabit connection provider), the [self-driving car](#), and many others.

We will keep you informed of new developments as Alphabet makes its official launch later this year.

Sources

<http://www.businesspundit.com/meet-alphabet-googles-new-parent-company/>

http://www.fastcompany.com/3049693/the-invention-of-alphabet-is-the-ultimate-larry-page-move?utm_source=mailchimp&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=fast-company-weekly-newsletter&position=4&partner=newsletter&campaign_date=08142015

<http://www.forbes.com/sites/jacobmorgan/2015/08/14/why-googles-recent-alphabet-announcement-is-pure-genius/>

<http://googleblog.blogspot.com/2015/08/google-alphabet.html>

Gadget of the Month: Touchjet Wave

Would you like to turn your TV into a giant touchscreen but don’t want to spend the money to do it? Well, Touchjet Wave may be just the gadget for you.

Starting this March and for only \$99, you can turn your TV into an oversized Android tablet courtesy of Touchjet Wave.

Touchjet is a tiny device that clips onto the top of your TV. To make this work, you’ll need an HDMI input and your screen will need to be between 20 and 60 inches wide. Using infrared technology, it detects your movements and interprets these into ‘presses.’ You can physically touch the screen or, you can keep things smudge-free and simply gesture near the screen.

Don’t worry, though. Your settings are completely private and no data is captured, stored or sent to partner companies. You can thank the infrared technology for that.

It also works with a tagalong application that allows you to remotely control your TV from your couch, conference table or workstation. Or, you can use the soft touch stylus to easily draw charts, calculate figures or swipe between screens.

The Touchjet app gives you the ability to share images, brainstorm with team members or pitch a sale’s presentation. All in all, the Touchjet Wave is an affordable way to promote collaboration and creativity in the office.

<https://www.indiegogo.com/projects/touchjet-wave-turn-your-tv-into-a-touchscreen#/story>

<http://www.touchjet.com/wave/>

