

IT NEWS:

- More than 1,000 Android apps harvest data even after you deny permissions ([more](#))
- Warning: free hotel wifi is a hacker's dream ([more](#))
- 25 Million Android Phones Infected With Malware That 'Hides In WhatsApp' ([more](#))
- US Coast Guard warns about malware designed to disrupt ships' computer systems ([more](#))

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"There are no secrets to success. It is the result of preparation, hard work, and learning from failure."

-Colin Powell

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Time is running out on Windows 7

Windows 7 was one of Microsoft's best-loved computer operating systems. And although Microsoft has been notifying users of the impending demise of Windows 7 for almost four years, the latest figures from Netmarketshare show nearly 36% of PC owners are still hanging on to Windows 7. With the January 14, 2020, end of life looming near, if you're one of the users still on Windows 7, it's time to make plans to move on.

Windows 7 will continue to work after the end of life date, but it's risky to do so. Microsoft will no longer issue bug-fixes, security patches or new functionality, making your computer significantly more susceptible to malware attacks. And, if a large number of people continue to use Windows 7 after the end of life date, it becomes a big incentive to malicious hackers to target Windows 7. ([more](#))

Hit by Ransomware Attack, Florida City Agrees to Pay Hackers \$600,000

MIAMI — The leaders of Riviera Beach, Fla., looking weary, met quietly this week for an extraordinary vote to pay nearly \$600,000 in ransom to hackers who paralyzed the city's computer systems.

Riviera Beach, a small city of about 35,000 people just north of West Palm Beach, became the latest government to be crippled by ransomware attacks that have successfully extorted municipalities and forced them to dig into public coffers to restore their networks. A similar breach recently cost Baltimore \$18 million to repair damages.

Even large cities, however, have had to pay smaller ransoms than Riviera Beach. On Monday, the City Council unanimously agreed to have its insurance carrier pay the hackers 65 Bitcoin, a hard-to-trace digital currency, amounting to about \$592,000. By making the payment, the City Council hopes to regain access to data encrypted in the cyberattack three weeks ago, though there is no guarantee the hackers will release the data once payment is received. ([more](#))

Microsoft stirs suspicions by adding telemetry files to security-only update

As expected, Windows Update dropped off several packages of security and reliability fixes for Windows 7 earlier this week, part of the normal Patch Tuesday delivery cycle for every version of Windows. But some hawk-eyed observers noted a surprise in one of those Windows 7 packages.

Under Microsoft's rules, what it calls "Security-only updates" are supposed to include, well, only security updates, not quality fixes or diagnostic tools. Nearly three years ago, Microsoft split its monthly update packages for Windows 7 and Windows 8.1 into two distinct offerings: a monthly rollup of updates and fixes and, for those who are want only those patches that are absolutely essential, a Security-only update package.

What was surprising about this month's Security-only update, formally titled the "July 9, 2019—KB4507456 (Security-only update)," is that it bundled the Compatibility Appraiser, KB2952664, which is designed to identify issues that could prevent a Windows 7 PC from updating to Windows 10. ([more](#))