

THURSDAY MORNING: FAST AND FURIOUS EDITION



[image (modified): Adam Wilson via Flickr]

Insane amount of overseas news overnight. Clearly did not include me winning \$1.5B Powerball lottery. Attacks in Jakarta and Turkey are no joke.

Let's move on.

Some U.S. utilities' still wide open to hacking

Dudes, how many times do you need to be told your cheese is still hanging out in the wind? Some heads should roll at this point. US government's Industrial Control Systems Cyber Emergency Response Team's Marty Edwards sounded pretty torqued about this situation at the S4 ICS Security Conference this week. I don't blame him; if a utility gets hacked, it's not like your grandmother's PC getting held ransom. It means the public's health and safety are at risk. Get on it.

Your cellphone is listening to your TV – and you

Bruce Schneier wrote about the Internet of Things' expansive monitoring of consumers,

citing the example of SilverPush – an application which listens to your television to determine your consumption habits. Bet some folks thought this was an app still in the offing. Nope. In use now, to determine current TV program listings and ratings. Listening-to-your-consumption apps have now been around for years.

Wonder if our pets can hear all this racket inaudible to humans? Will pet food companies embed ads shouting out to our pets?

But you may be able to hide from devices

...depending on whether you are using location-based services, and if you can use the app developed by Binghamton University. A paper on this technology was presented last month at the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE) GLOBECOM Conference, Symposium on Communication & Information System Security. The lead researcher explained the purpose of the app:

“With Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and others we provide a huge amount of data to the service providers everyday. In particular, we upload personal photos, location information, daily updates, to the Internet without any protection,” Guo said. “There is such a chance for tragedy if that information is used to in a bad way.”

The app isn’t yet available, but when it is, it should prevent personally identifying location-based data from being used by the wrong folks.

VW emissions scandal: Well, this is blunt

I think you can kiss the idea of nuance goodbye, gang.

“Volkswagen made a decision to cheat on emissions tests and then tried to cover it up,” said CARB chair Mary Nichols in a statement.

“They continued and compounded the lie, and when they were caught they tried to

deny it. The result is thousands of tons of nitrogen oxide that have harmed the health of Californians.”

Yeah. That.

The last bits

Nest thermostats froze out consumers after a botched update. (Do you really need internet-mediated temperature controls?)

Phone numbers may become a thing of the past if Facebook has its way. (Um, hell no to the Facebook. Just no.)

Senator Al Franken quizzes Google about data collection and usage on K-12 students. (Hope he checks toy manufacturers like Mattel and VTech, too.)

That’s a wrap, hope your day passes at a comfortable speed.