Welcome to the Cyveillance Weekly Trends Report

Greetings from Cyveillance, the leader in open source threat intelligence. Since threat intelligence is constantly evolving, we publish this newsletter to keep our customers updated on the latest threats to various industries. Each week, we'll send you highlights from our analyst research reports. You can unsubscribe at any time. For the latest security news stories throughout the day, you can also follow us on Twitter, or to view the latest security articles from Cyveillance experts, subscribe to our blog.

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2015 Security Trends Webinars
Join us in February for a three-part webinar series on mobile, information, and physical security trends.

Dates:
February 24, 25, & 26

Time:
10:00 AM PT | 1:00 PM ET

Top Incidents

**Energy**

- Large groups of demonstrators have spread across Algeria after authorities announced the approval for drilling the first shale gas wells in the country. Many of the groups believe that the environmental cost is too high and not worth the risk to the virgin deserts. “Fracking will have disastrous consequences for the Algerian desert. It threatens scarce water reserves and provides a new rent for the authoritarian Algerian regime that oppressed and imprisons the Algerian people,” says Hamza Hamouchene, President of Algeria Solidarity Campaign (ASC) that signed a collective solidarity statement by more than 80 organizations worldwide. He adds: “The British government and British companies are supporting this push to exploit Algerian shale gas. No multinationals should be allowed to frack in Algeria and we stand in solidarity with the inspiring resistance movement in Algeria.” Tens of thousands joined anti-fracking
protests and marches across Algeria.

**Agribusiness**

- Bund.net reported that in Berlin, Germany, 50,000 people took to the streets on January 17, 2015 to participate in the "WE ARE FED UP" demonstration calling for the halt of the TTIP, GMOs and factory farming. In Berlin, for the fifth year, farmers, beekeepers and consumers joined on the streets to demand a fundamentally different agricultural policy. The alliance demanded that the federal government reject the US/EU TTIP trade agreement (Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership); protect agriculture and the food industry against Genetic Engineering; as well as calling for an immediate halt to the further expansion of factory farms. Around 50,000 participants marched from Potsdamer Platz to the Federal Chancellery and were led by a convoy of vehicles with more than 90 tractors.

**Insurance/Healthcare**

- Federal authorities are continuing to ramp up a new program of requiring fingerprint-based criminal background checks for the owners of durable medical equipment, home care, and hospice care provider organizations who want to serve Medicare patients. The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services and the FBI are collaborating on the effort, aimed at cracking down on fraudulent Medicare claims, which historically have been more common in these two sectors.

**Financial Services**

- A yet-to-be-patched critical zero-day vulnerability known as CVE-2015-0311 exists in Adobe Flash Player version 16.0.0.287 and earlier for Windows, Macintosh and Linux. The vulnerability could allow a remote attacker to plant malware and take control of vulnerable computers. The bug is being distributed through the malicious Angler Exploit Kit to recruit computers into botnets or to commit click fraud. Adobe says it hopes to have a fix this week.

**Global Intelligence**

- Chinanews.com reports that the majority of Chinese websites with .com in their domain name are out of service due to the outage of several foreign DNS providers. According to the article, the DNS outage is suspected to be the result of hacker attacks.

**Legal and Regulations**

- On January 15, 2015, the Federal Trade Commission announced revised thresholds for premerger filings under the Hart-Scott-Rodino Antitrust Improvements Act (HSR Act). These thresholds determine whether companies are required to notify federal antitrust authorities about a transaction. The new thresholds, which go into effect 30 days after publication of the Federal Register notice.

**Pharmaceuticals**

- According to sources close to the matter, GlaxoSmithKline will eliminate around 1000 jobs in China this year following a downturn in sales after a recent bribery scandal, Caixin Online reported. “In the first quarter, 450 employees will be cut, and the number will be higher in the second quarter,” one of the people said, adding that staff is waiting details of compensation plans.

**Retail**

- Leading up to the NFL Super Bowl XLIX, activist groups such as Sum Of Us are targeting sponsors. A YouTube video which has gone viral negatively portrays PepsiCo’s Doritos product.

**Technology**

- Microsoft confirmed that its Outlook email service was targeted by hackers in China, the latest setback for the software giant in the country, where it is already being investigated for alleged anti-competitive practices. China’s Ministry of Commerce this week unveiled a draft legislation that could change how the government is regulating a corporate structure that has allowed companies in sensitive industries like the Internet,
telecommunications and education to court foreign shareholders.

**Telecommunications**

- The U.S. Federal Communications Commission issued a $1.12 million fine against Viacom and a $280,000 fine against ESPN January 20 for using Emergency Alert System warning tones for non-emergency purposes while promoting a movie on cable networks in 2013.

**Defense**

- Recent disclosed NSA documents by former US NSA intelligence contractor Edward Snowden suggests that China’s cyber-espionage activities resulted in 50 terabytes of stolen sensitive key design information relating to the Joint Strike Fighter (JSF) - also known as the Lockheed Martin F-35 Lightning II.

**Law Enforcement**

- The FBI is investigating a bomb threat made in a tweet that prompted the U.S. military to send F-16 fighter aircraft to escort two jets bound for Atlanta on Saturday. The threats involved a Southwest Airlines flight from Milwaukee and a Delta Air Lines flight from Portland, Oregon. Authorities scoured the planes and found no evidence of bombs.

**Energy**

- Activists disrupted a group of Kinder Morgan employees during dinner at local seafood restaurant to demonstrate the impacts the Trans Mountain expansion project. Demonstrators stood silently inside the restaurant holding photos of the damage Kinder Morgan has done to communities along its pipelines. Images included deformed fish from the indigenous community of Fort Chipewyan in Alberta where contamination from oil extraction has poisoned much of the food chain. Kinder Morgan employees were also shown photos of the typhoon-ravaged Philippines where climate change, largely the result of the fossil fuel industry, caused the death and displacement of thousands of people last year.

- Large groups of demonstrators have spread across Algeria after authorities announced the approval for drilling the first shale gas wells in the country. Many of the groups believe that the environmental cost is too high and not worth the risk to the virgin deserts. “Fracking will have disastrous consequences for the Algerian desert. It threatens scarce water reserves and provides a new rent for the authoritarian Algerian regime that oppressed and imprisons the Algerian people,” says Hamza Hamouchene, President of Algeria Solidarity Campaign (ASC) that signed a collective solidarity statement by more than 80 organizations worldwide. He adds: “The British government and British companies are supporting this push to exploit Algerian shale gas. No multinationals should be allowed to frack in Algeria and we stand in solidarity with the inspiring resistance movement in Algeria.” Tens of thousands joined anti-fracking protests and marches across Algeria.

- A Letter to the Editor, from Dan Kaufman and published in the New York Times’ opinion section, argues that environmentalists should turn their gaze towards Enbridge’s Line 61 pipeline. The post explains that the Line 61 pipeline runs the length of Wisconsin carrying tar sands crude, and that Enbridge is seeking to expand its capacity threefold. Kaufman explains that the last real line of defense against this expansion is a zoning committee in Dane County, Wis., which is scheduled to meet on January 27, 2015 to decide whether to attach conditions to Enbridge’s permit for a new pump station. Voting to do so would risk a lawsuit from Enbridge, which maintains that the county has no legal right to impose such conditions.

- Seven freight cars hauling fracking sand have derailed just feet away from homes in Uniontown, Pennsylvania in Fayette County, closing down nearby roads. Uniontown police say no injuries were reported in the derailment near East Penn and Locust streets at about 7:40 a.m. Thursday. Officials don’t believe the wreckage will be cleared before the Friday morning rush, so school bus routes were being changed to keep them out of the area. It wasn’t immediately clear what caused the derailment.
Southwestern Pennsylvania Railroad has crews and investigators at the crash scene. Uniontown Police Lt. Tom Kolencik said railroad police have jurisdiction over the investigation.

- HazMat crews have cleared the scene of an oil spill in northwest Houston. An 18-wheeler was involved in an accident at Fairbanks North Houston at Beltway 8 North. The spill caused a traffic backup as crews worked to clean up the mess. No injuries were reported.

- Colorado Sen. Cory Gardner is under fire from conservationists for voting Wednesday against an amendment stating that humans contribute to climate change. Fifteen Senate Republicans, including 2016 presidential contender Sen. Rand Paul, joined Democrats in backing the amendment, but not Gardner. The vote took place amidst a flurry of amendments to the Republican bill to build the Keystone XL pipeline and were part of an effort by Senate Democrats to bait Republicans into a number of politically risky votes on the subject of climate change. Gardner did join with almost every senator in voting yes on another amendment to the Keystone XL pipeline bill that states that “climate change is real and not a hoax,” which was approved on a 98-1 vote. Most Republicans who voted that they believe humans contribute to global warming balked at another Democratic amendment stating that humans “significantly” contribute to climate change.

- Consumer advocates and anti-smart meter groups in Ohio are opposed to a plan that would permit at least one Ohio utility to cut off service without an in-person disconnection.

- An Earth First! chapter in California has joined local activists in a fight to stop the Oakland Zoo from expanding onto Knowland Park.

- New Zealand’s annual Seaweek will be held on February 28 - March 8, 2015. Seaweek is organized by the New Zealand Association for Environment Education, in order to publicize issues of marine pollution and sustainable fishing.

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### Agribusiness

- Costa Rica’s Constitutional Chamber of the Supreme Court (Sala IV) has ruled that the country’s government approval process of GMO’s is unconstitutional. The courts determined that the secrecy behind GMO companies violates Costa Ricans' right to freedom of information. The decision does not ban GMO’s, however, nor does it halt any GMO cultivation already in progress.

- Hungarian farm minister Sandor Fazekas commented on plans to create an alliance of EU member states in opposition of GMO cultivation and consumption. The comments came this weekend at the Global Forum for Food and Agriculture, held in Berlin on January 17-18. The plans we discussed in light of recent legislation passed by the European Parliament allowing for member states to opt out of allowing GMO’s. Hungary along with France, Germany, Luxembourg, Austria, Bulgaria, Greece, Poland, and Italy have already passed measured prohibiting GMO cultivation within their borders.

- Russia’s Commission on Legislative Activities approved a bill which further strengthens existing limits and bans on GMO’s. The bill was introduced by the Ministry of Science and Education. Most notably, the bill gives the government the right to ban the import of GMO’s and products containing GMO’s “based on the results of monitoring and scientific research.” The law was drafted at the request of President Vladimir Putin. The bill has now been moved on to be considered by the whole Russian government.

- On January 19, 2015, gmwatch.com reported that grain farmers are increasingly switching to non-GMO varieties for the “many failures” of GMO crops. Additionally, livestock farmers are also switching gradually to non-GMO feed. According to Iowa farmer and crop and livestock advisor Howard Vlieger, farmers are acknowledging the improved health of animals fed on non-GMO feed.

- SB-60 was introduced by Indiana Senator Dennis Kruse to the state senate. The bill would require the labeling of products containing GMO’s and would further prohibit the...
use of the term “natural” in a product containing GMO’s. Lawmakers are preparing for vigorous opposition to the proposed bill.

- The city of Margate, Florida has passed a resolution in support of Florida legislation requiring the labeling of GMO’s. This is the fourth such resolution passed in the state.

- According to the 12th annual Food Study from Hunter PR, the top five food stories overall were: The drought that drove up prices of beef and many other products; the shrinking bee population; the war on sugar; new food labeling standards; and genetically modified organisms/GMOs in food and beverages. This year, slightly fewer Americans overall said that they consider food stories to be “very important (28%, versus 32% last year). But at the same time, Americans reported a higher level of behavioral change overall based on food news stories than in 2013.

- Bund.net reported that in Berlin, Germany, 50,000 people take to the streets on January 17, 2015 to participate in the “WE ARE FED UP” demonstration calling for the halt of the TTIP, GMOs and factory farming. In Berlin, for the fifth year, farmers, beekeepers and consumers joined on the streets to demand a fundamentally different agricultural policy. The alliance demanded that the federal government reject the US/EU TTIP trade agreement (Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership); protect agriculture and the food industry against Genetic Engineering; as well as calling for an immediate halt to the further expansion of factory farms. Around 50,000 participants marched from Potsdamer Platz to the Federal Chancellery and was led by a convoy of vehicles with more than 90 tractors.

- Arizona introduced HB 2462, a GMO labeling bill that would label GMOs and also prohibit the use of the word “natural” to describe food produced from genetic engineering.

- Sustainable Pulse reported that the Russian Government’s Commission on Legislative Activities has approved a bill introduced by the Ministry of Science and Education aimed at improving Russia’s regulation of genetic engineering. The bill imposes a ban on the cultivation and breeding of genetically modified plants and animals in Russia, except for when used in scientific research.

- Sustainable Pulse reported that Hungary will initiate a joint alliance of European Union member states rejecting the use of genetically modified organisms in farming with the aim to make the entire European Union free from GMO crops, Hungarian farm minister Sándor Fazekas said on the sidelines of the Global Forum for Food and Agriculture in Berlin at the weekend.

- Agfax reported that CHS and Northern Partners Cooperative (NFC), Mendota, Illinois, announced today plans to build 47,000 ton capacity fertilizer warehouse in Peru, Illinois, with product blending capabilities that will be operated by Northern Partners Cooperative. Additionally, they plan to form a joint venture to build and operate a grain barge loading facility that will handle corn, soybeans and wheat for export through the CHS terminal at Myrtle Grove, Louisiana.

- Bakers Journal reported that George Weston Ltd. announced on Monday that Maplehurst Bakeries LLC, a subsidiary of Weston Foods, has agreed to the purchase of Creative Occasions Inc., a manufacturer of decorated cakes based in Nashville, Tenn. The transaction is expected to close by the end of January.

Insurance/Healthcare

- Federal authorities are continuing to ramp up a new program of requiring fingerprint-based criminal background checks for the owners of durable medical equipment, home care, and hospice care provider organizations who want to serve Medicare patients. The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services and the FBI are collaborating on the effort, aimed at cracking down on fraudulent Medicare claims, which historically have been more common in these two sectors.

- Northwest Territories MLAs are reviewing legislation that would allow the territory to start regulating health professions such as naturopaths and psychologists, but the Information and Privacy Commissioner says the proposed bill could violate people's
privacy. Bill 36, which also applies to licensed nurse practitioners and emergency medical service providers, spells out how complaints against practitioners will be investigated. But in the process, it gives people investigating those complaints access to any information they need, including confidential health records.

- CISOs are taking on expanded leadership roles at many healthcare organizations, moving from being entrenched in technical issues to becoming more involved in top-level business-related matters. Increasingly, CISOs - as part of the "CIO suite" - are being asked to address the board of directors without the CIO being present as cybersecurity gains board-level attention.

- The government's health insurance website is quietly sending consumers' personal data to private companies that specialize in advertising and analyzing Internet data for performance and marketing. The Obama administration says HealthCare.gov's connections to data firms were intended to help improve the consumer experience. Officials said outside firms are barred from using the data to further their own business interests. There is no evidence that personal information has been misused. But connections to dozens of third-party tech firms were documented by technology experts who analyzed HealthCare.gov and then confirmed by AP; a handful of the companies were also collecting highly specific information.

- New York State Attorney General Eric Schneiderman proposes to update state law to require businesses serving New York consumers to implement safeguards to protect stored personal consumer data, including medical, biometric, health insurance information, and more.

- Some privacy and security experts are concerned that the Department of Health and Human Services' Office for Civil Rights isn't taking bold enough action in its promised efforts to step up HIPAA enforcement. They cite ongoing delays in the startup of OCR's next phase of federal HIPAA compliance audits, as well as the relatively small number of OCR HIPAA enforcement settlements in 2014 involving financial penalties.

Financial

Financial Services

Activism

- Housing activists protested on January 18 outside the home of a local homeowner facing eviction from her bank-owned property in Springfield, MA. Approximately 40 activists attended the demonstration and said they will use civil disobedience to prevent the eviction, if needed.

- Activists organized rallies in cities across the U.S. on January 21 demanding an amendment to reverse the Citizens United v. FEC decision by the Supreme Court five years ago. Activists claim that the Supreme Court’s decision opened the floodgates for corporate spending on political campaigns under the notion that corporations enjoy "the rights of personhood."

- An ‘Emergency Protest’ against “Secret TPP Negotiations” will occur in NYC on January 26 starting at noon EST.

- A protest demanding the immediate release of a former Ukrainian army officer who was captured by pro-Russian insurgents last year will occur at a leading U.S. bank branch in in San Diego, CA on January 26.

Information Security Risk

- Cybercriminals targeting online bankers developed a software package called FraudFox VM that makes spoofing a browser fingerprint much easier. The software is a special version of Windows with a heavily modified version of the Firefox browser that runs on VMware's Workstation for Windows or VMware Fusion on OSX. It's for sale on online contraband markets for 1.8 bitcoins, which is about US$390. According to researchers, FraudFox can make it faster and easier to change a browser's fingerprint to one that matches that of the victim whose bank account they're going to exploit, or simply mix up their own digital crumbs when browsing.
A Texas-based restaurant chain began notifying an undisclosed number of customers that malware was found on point-of-sale (POS) systems at four of their locations, and it could have enabled attackers to capture customer payment card information. A location in Corpus Christi, TX and a location in Union City, CA each had malware on their POS systems from June 4, 2014, to July 31, 2014. One report of suspicious activity that occurred around the same time period involved 20 customer payment cards used at a location in Lubbock, TX. A location in Grand Prairie, TX had malware on its POS system from May 5, 2012, to June 27, 2012, as well as from November 11, 2012, to December 9, 2012. The company said evidence of malware on the POS systems of other locations has not been detected.

A new report by a leading UK security management company showed the number of reported vulnerabilities in Microsoft products almost doubled over the past year, representing 47% of all flaws on private PCs, although it was Oracle that claimed responsibility for the most exposed program at the end of the year. The report claimed that the number of vulnerabilities originating from Microsoft programs in 2014 equaled that of third-party vendors (47%), with the remaining 6% accounted for by operating systems. However, other vendors' software was rated as having a greater risk exposure – that is, % market share multiplied by % of unpatched PCs. Oracle Java JRE 1.7./ 7 came top in that regard, followed by Apple QuickTime 7 and then Adobe Reader X 10.

Approximately 11% of the payment apps available globally for Android phones and tablets contain malware or suspicious binaries. Researchers found that 40,000 of the 350,000 apps which reference banking had security issues and another 40,000 contained dangerous permissions.

The Heartbleed bug remains present on about 250,000 servers and other systems that connect to the Internet. Heartbleed remains a serious flaw that an attacker can use to access the memory of systems that run the open source cryptographic tool and eavesdrop on communications, steal data, as well as impersonate sites, services or users, all without leaving a trace. The flaw can also be exploited to launch distributed denial-of-service attacks.

A yet-to-be-patched critical zero-day vulnerability known as CVE-2015-0311 exists in Adobe Flash Player version 16.0.0.287 and earlier for Windows, Macintosh and Linux. The vulnerability could allow a remote attacker to plant malware and take control of vulnerable computers. The bug is being distributed through the malicious Angler Exploit Kit to recruit computers into botnets or to commit click fraud. Adobe says it hopes to have a fix this week.

Legal, Litigation, Regulatory Risk

The founder of a leading U.K. hedge fund was sentenced to 13 years in jail by a London judge for fraud, forgery and furnishing false information in relation to the 2009 collapse of his $600 million hedge fund.

A leading U.S. bank based in San Francisco, CA agreed to pay $34.8 million to settle federal and state allegations it received cash payments from a real-estate firm in exchange for referrals of business. As part of the same action, another mega bank, headquartered in NYC, agreed to pay $900,000 over similar allegations.

The New York State Attorney General filed a renewed series of allegations against a leading U.K. bank over its dark pool share trading exchange after an initial complaint was lodged in 2014. The AG states the bank violated New York’s Martin Act, an anti-fraud law. The initial claim was that “predatory” high-frequency traders (HFTs) were allowed into the bank’s dark pool without the knowledge of users, who had turned to the facility and others like it in part to protect themselves against the “toxic” and “aggressive” practices HFTs have allegedly engaged in. The AG claimed that the bank “did not police” the pool, and that it told investors that between 6-9% of trading activity within it was “aggressive” when it knew the amount was closer to between 25-30% aggressive.

One of the big three U.S. credit-rating agencies agreed to be suspended from rating the biggest part of the commercial-mortgage bond market and pay almost $80 million to state and federal authorities over claims it bent criteria to win business. The agency
misled investors about the methodology it used in 2011 to rate eight commercial-mortgage backed securities, the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission said in a statement on Wednesday in Washington. The company will pay about $58 million to the SEC and an additional $19 million to the attorney generals for New York and Massachusetts to settle the matter.

- U.S. securities regulators accused two former data analysts at a leading U.S. bank with engaging in insider trading based on sales data the credit card issuer had collected from millions of its customers. The U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission on January 21, 2015, filed a lawsuit in federal court in Philadelphia against the two saying the analysts used the nonpublic data to trade in the shares of consumer retail companies ahead of sales and earnings reports.

- The U.K. Financial Conduct Authority issued its first fines for interest-rate rigging against individuals and barred the former chief executive and compliance officers at a leading wholesale brokerage firm from the industry.

**Operational Risk**

- An article reported that U.S. banks are cutting off payday lenders' access to a database of account information used to evaluate potential borrowers as regulators seek to rein in abusive practices.

- An article reported that Wall Street banks shed fifty thousand jobs and reduced bonuses and expenses as profits continue to dry up. One bank analyst said that bank revenues appear to be the weakest in eight decades and predicted they’re likely to worsen given the current economic climate.

- An article reported that several leading U.S. payment services companies and a popular online auction company are cutting thousands of jobs. At the online auction company, which also operates a digital wallet based e-commerce business, the drop in traffic was partially blamed on the company prompting shoppers to reset their passwords following the disclosure of a cyber-attack, and a change to Google search engine optimization that hurt traffic to their auction listings. The auction site’s most loyal customers came back after resetting their passwords, but its occasional customers did not resume their previous levels of activity.

**Reputational Risk**

- The CEO of a leading U.S. hedge fund said at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland that public anger at financial institutions has been “understandable” and acknowledged that Americans remain concerned about whether public policymakers have adequately protected the country from another financial crisis. The CEO later told reporters that he believes financial regulatory reforms passed in the wake of the 2008 bank crisis should be implemented by Congress.

- An article reported that employees of a leading U.S. investment bank are now getting paid more of their bonuses upfront rather than having to wait for deferred compensation. In the most recent quarter, the bank’s compensation expense rose by 28% to $5.1 billion from the year before, as it changed the way it doles out pay. Coming out of the financial crisis, the investment services juggernaut had deferred up to 100% of employee bonuses but is now working their way to 50%.

- An article claimed that a leading U.S. investment firm has been making investments that are prohibited by the Volcker Rule. The investments have rankled some of the firm’s big clients, which complain privately that the bank is supposed to help its clients buy companies and other assets but instead ends up competing for those assets. The article claimed that the regulators who were responsible for putting the Volcker Rule into practice have given banks room to continue making purchases with their own money through their merchant banking arms. Other big banks have essentially stopped this activity, but the investment firm’s merchant banking business is upsetting some regulators, who worry that such investments do not follow the spirit of the law.
Brazil

- Brazil’s economy barely added jobs in 2014, government data showed on Friday, with job creation slowing to the worst pace in 15 years as investment plunged. Excluding seasonal adjustments, Brazilian companies created a net 152,714 payroll jobs in 2014, the Labor Ministry said. That was the smallest number since 1999 and a far cry from official forecasts for up to 1.5 million new jobs last year.

- Rio de Janeiro will not make good on its Olympic pledge of slashing the flow of raw sewage and garbage into the Guanabara Bay, where the 2016 games’ sailing and wind surfing competitions are to be held, the state’s top environmental official acknowledged Friday.

- The taps have run dry and the lights have gone out across swathes of Brazil this week as the worst drought in history spreads from São Paulo to Rio de Janeiro and beyond. More than four million people have been affected by rationing and rolling power cuts as this tropical nation discovers it can no longer rely on once abundant water supplies in a period of rising temperatures and diminishing rainfall.

- Brazil’s economic growth will be “almost flat” in 2015 amid a series of tax increases and spending cuts at home, as well as slower global growth, Finance Minister Joaquim Levy said in an interview at the World Economic Forum in Davos.

- Brazil’s central bank raised its benchmark interest rate Wednesday to the highest level in more than three years to combat expectations for surging inflation as the government hikes taxes and unwinds some price controls. The bank lifted its so-called Selic rate by half a percentage point to 12.25% after an increase of the same size in December.

China

- An article identified on Sina.com.cn reports a study shows that China has become the country with the most malware infection on Android devices. According to the study, the malware targeting Android devices are mainly to obtain online banking information.

- Newmobilelife.com reports five new Hidelcon strains of malware disguised as five different applications on GooglePlay.

- Chinanews.com reports that the majority of Chinese websites with .com in their domain name are out of service due to the outage of several foreign DNS providers. According to the article, the DNS outage is suspected to be the result of hacker attacks.

- A posting identified on 360.cn reports that the ransomware CTB-Locker has been detected in China. The ransomware is able to lock a user's document and picture files, while at the same time demanding a user to pay 8 bitcoins that cost roughly 10,000 RMB in 96 hours, or else the files will not be able to open again. According to the posting, this ransomware is targeting enterprises’ high-level executives. This posting also contains analysis of the ransomware.

Germany

- Germany’s leading politicians are struggling how to address right-of-center populist anti-immigration movements like PEGIDA (Patriotic Europeans Against the Islamization of the West), with representatives of the ruling coalition in Berlin apparently not being able to agree on a common approach. While some politicians argue for and engage in a dialog with representatives and organizers of the large-scale protest rallies, others favor the idea to marginalize those groups. German news magazine Der Spiegel wonders whether the protests are running finally “out of steam” after a rally in Dresden on Sunday saw 17,000 participants, down from 25,000 a week earlier. The earlier demonstration was the first one after the recent terror acts in Paris; a rally scheduled for the Monday following the Charlie Hebdo terror attacks was cancelled after terror threats targeting the protests were issued.

North America

- Forbes reported that American Express will cut slightly more than 4,000 jobs over the course of the year.
Vietnam

- Vietnam.net reported that Vietnam’s Prime Minister Nguyen Tan Dung issued a new shortlist of prioritized technologies and hi-tech products following National Assembly approval of the new Law on Investment. The new regulation of criteria and shortlist of high technologies actually include significant changes in luring hi-tech investments from foreign companies to Vietnam, especially multinational companies. While the new Law on Investment replaces all the criteria related to research and development (R&D) expenditure and ratio of workforce working in the R&D activities regulated by the Law on High Technology, the new shortlist also replaces the outdated list issued in 2010. This also means that from July 2015, it will be easier for domestic and foreign companies to enjoy preferential incentives granted to hi-tech firms. Currently, only a few companies have been recognized as hi-tech firms. Even well-known hi-tech firms like Intel, Samsung, and Nokia have failed to meet the criteria set out in Vietnam’s Law on High Technology. Instead these firms had to be specifically recognized as hi-tech enterprises by the prime minister. According to the Law on High Technology, companies would be recognized as a hi-tech enterprise when it satisfied all criteria, including manufacturing hi-tech products listed by the government, and spend an average 1 per cent of the total annual turnover on R&D activities in Vietnam during the first three years, and over 1 per cent of its total turnover from the fourth year.

Legal and Regulations

- Congressional Republicans are attempting to beat the FCC to the punch by passing legislation that would determine net neutrality rules. Sending a bill to the White House prior to the FCC’s decision next month, however, appears unlikely since a draft GOP measure has garnered little Democratic support and because President Barack Obama has voiced his preference for reclassifying internet service providers as utility companies. Morning Consult’s Fritz T. Burgher reports.

- Lawmakers are calling on the FCC to publicly release the text of proposed net neutrality rules before the commission holds its vote on February 26, 2015. Julian Hattem from The Hill has the latest.

- Congressional Republicans see legislation advancing “early this year” to address the problem of “patent trolls,” and advocates are gearing up for the fight. Legislative action has support from both parties and President Obama, raising the prospect that a bill could become an early bipartisan achievement of the new Congress.

- Google Inc. and Cablevision Systems Corp. are preparing new cellphone services that would turn the wireless industry’s business model on its head, increasing pressure on companies already dealing with an intensifying price war. Google’s service would hunt through cellular connections provided by Sprint Corp. and T-Mobile US Inc. and Wi-Fi “hot spots,” picking whichever offers the best signal to route calls, texts and data, according to people familiar with the situation. The service could be rolled out in the first half of this year and would likely be offered nationwide.

- On January 15, 2015, the Federal Trade Commission announced revised thresholds for premerger filings under the Hart-Scott-Rodino Antitrust Improvements Act (HSR Act). These thresholds determine whether companies are required to notify federal antitrust authorities about a transaction. The new thresholds, which go into effect 30 days after publication of the Federal Register notice.

- President Obama says he will introduce legislation to create a single national standard designed to protect Americans from identity theft. The President proposes that companies notify consumers of a breach within 30 days, regardless of what their state laws require. It’s not clear whether the important caveats for breach investigation will remain in place. The President also hopes to enact federal legislation governing consumer privacy. Various congress members have made efforts in this area over the years, but there is no single federal privacy law in the U.S. For the most part, consumer privacy in the U.S. is governed by a patchwork of sector-specific federal
laws, state laws, case precedent, and industry practices. The President wants to cut through some of that confusion and enact a Consumer Privacy Bill of Rights. The Bill of Rights would give consumers the right to decide what personal information is collected and how it will be used, shared, and stored.

**Healthcare**

- On January 8, 2015, the U.S. House of Representatives passed a bill changing the definition of a full-time employee under the Affordable Care Act (ACA) from a person who works 30 hours per week to one who works 40 hours per week. This change is significant because the ACA requires businesses with 50 or more employees to offer health insurance to their full-time employees or pay a penalty. The 40-hour per week definition would bring the ACA in alignment with other state and federal laws, such as the Fair Labor Standards Act.

**Worldwide**

- Cyber hackers supporting ISIS attacked the Malaysia Airlines website, taking customer information in the process.

**Pharmaceuticals**

- A study by Dr. Sandy Boyson on cyber supply chain risk management claims that pharmaceutical manufacturers are "particularly vulnerable because good manufacturing practice requirements." The study suggests that certain types of attacks or malware do not involve network breaches, making systems that are not even connected to a computer network vulnerable. Furthermore, as cyber supply-chain risks become more strategic business factors, issues over IT breaches can lead to revenue loss, weakening customer confidence, and reputational damage.

- A group of animal rights activists has launched an online petition opposing a proposed AstraZeneca animal research lab in Cambridge, U.K.

- The U.S. pharmaceutical industry finished 2014 with a total 17,636 announced jobs cuts, which is down 20% from 22,161 in 2013.

- According to sources close to the matter, GlaxoSmithKline will eliminate around 1000 jobs in China this year following a downturn in sales after a recent bribery scandal, Caixin Online reported. "In the first quarter, 450 employees will be cut, and the number will be higher in the second quarter," one of the people said, adding that staff are awaiting details of compensation plans.

**Retail**

- Walmart will open 11 supercenters in Canada by January 29. Walmart currently has 394 stores in the country.

- Family Dollar Stores Inc. stockholders voted in favor of the proposed merger with Dollar Tree Inc.

- A study conducted by IHL Group revealed that 28 percent of retailers who added in-store Wi-Fi reported increased customer loyalty.

- Leading up to the NFL Super Bowl XLIX, activist groups such as Sum Of Us are targeting sponsors. A YouTube video which has gone viral negatively portrays PepsiCo’s Doritos product.

- Luxury labels have improved the digital experience they offer to customers by eight percent in the last quarter of 2014, according to new research released this week by the digital direct marketing firm ContactLab, and Exane BNP Paribas.

- The majority of U.S retailers appear unlikely to meet the October deadline for the transition to chip-enabled credit cards.
• BBC News reported that e-commerce giant eBay is planning to cut 2,400 jobs in the first quarter, approximately 7% of its workforce. The announcement comes ahead of a plan to split from its online payment PayPal business this year.

• Bloomberg reported that Cache Inc. is preparing to file for bankruptcy, said people with knowledge of the situation. The move is expected as soon as next week, said the people, who didn’t want to be identified because the matter isn’t public. Cache said last month that it was exploring options and had received an inquiry from a potential buyer.

• CNBC reported that Amazon has struck a deal to fund the construction of a wind farm in rural Indiana, as part of plan announced by the company in November to power its massive cloud computing business with renewable energy.

• Tampa Bay Business Journal reported that Kroger Co. may be expanding operations to Florida, Chicago, the Northeast, the upper Midwest and Oklahoma.

• CNet reported that Google is allegedly in talks to buy the mobile-payments company Softcard. The deal would involve a joint venture between carriers AT&T, Verizon, and T-Mobile and is said to be for less than $100 million.

• GameSpot reported that Sony is shutting down all its stores in Canada in the next six to eight weeks, and that it will redirect all of its business through its national network of Sony retailers, its online stores, and the "Sony-trained Telesales team," which handle sales by phone.

• Some time ago, Kaspersky discovered and reported a new type of malicious program called Tyupkin, which targets ATM machines by moving beyond targeting consumers with card skimmers that steal debit card numbers to directly getting cash from an ATM without the need for a counterfeit or stolen card. At the heart of the Tyupkin exploitation of ATMs is the simple fact that it requires physical access to an ATM. The attacker would need a bootable CD to install the malware in the ATM. Because of this, physical security elements should be seriously taken into consideration. According to Kaspersky, this malware was active on more than 50 ATMs in Eastern Europe, but from VirtualTotal submissions, we consider that this malware has spread to several other countries, including the US, India and China.

### Technology

- Malware trends to expect in 2015 include more major vulnerabilities such as shellshock, POODLE, and heartbleed, increase data breaches, and more ransomware.

- Versions of Oracle's E-Business suite contain a "major" misconfiguration flaw that allowed anyone to fully compromise the database server. Oracle released patches for 169 problems affecting products including Java, Fusion Middleware, Enterprise Manager, and MySQL.

- After occurrence of the Charlie Hebdo attack in Paris, hackers have leverage the "Je Suis Charlie" trend to lure potential victims to click on the malware.

- Microsoft confirmed that its Outlook email service was targeted by hackers in China, the latest setback for the software giant in the country, where it is already being investigated for alleged anti-competitive practices. China’s Ministry of Commerce this week unveiled a draft legislation that could change how the government is regulating a corporate structure that has allowed companies in sensitive industries like the Internet, telecommunications and education to court foreign shareholders.

- Broadband is defined by the FCC as 4Mbps down and 1Mbps up, which FCC Chairman Tom Wheeler noted as "yesterday’s broadband". Interested parties have been submitting comments on proposal of Section 706 report that broadband should be updated to be defined as 25Mbps down and 3Mbps up.

### Telecommunications
• The U.S. Federal Communications Commission issued a $1.12 million fine against Viacom and a $280,000 fine against ESPN January 20 for using Emergency Alert System warning tones for non-emergency purposes while promoting a movie on cable networks in 2013.

• Incumbent service providers and industry trade groups back a proposal by a group of Republicans to thwart a potential move by the FCC to reclassify broadband Internet service providers as common carriers under Title II in the 1996 Telecom Act.

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**Defense**

• According to a GAO report, the DHS has virtually no strategy and no personnel in place to define, assess or address the risk posed by cyberattacks targeting building access control systems at more than 9,000 federal facilities protected by the Federal Protective Service (FPS).

• Recent disclosed NSA documents by former US NSA intelligence contractor Edward Snowden suggests that China’s cyber-espionage activities resulted in 50 terabytes of stolen sensitive key design information relating to the Joint Strike Fighter (JSF) - also known as the Lockheed Martin F-35 Lightning II.

• The Department of Energy (DOE) will provide a $25 million grant over the next five years to support the creation of a new cybersecurity consortium consisting of 13 Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), two DOE labs, and the Charleston County (SC) School District.

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**Law Enforcement**

• Sheriffs are campaigning to pressure Google Inc. to turn off a feature on its Waze traffic software that warns drivers when police are nearby. They say one of the technology industry’s most popular mobile apps could put officers’ lives in danger from would-be police killers who can find where their targets are parked. Waze, which Google purchased for $966 million in 2013, is a combination of GPS navigation and social networking. Fifty million users in 200 countries turn to the free service for real-time traffic guidance and warnings about nearby congestion, car accidents, speed traps or traffic cameras, construction zones, potholes, stalled vehicles or unsafe weather conditions.

• The Justice Department has reached a $134,000 settlement with a New York woman after federal drug agents used information from her cellphone to set up a fake Facebook page in her identity, a tactic that raised privacy concerns and led to a federal government review of the ruse. The settlement resolves allegations that the Drug Enforcement Administration took photos and other information from a woman’s cellphone to create a fake Facebook page in hopes of tricking her friends and associates into revealing incriminating drug secrets. The fake social media page, which included photos of her posing on the hood of a sleek BMW and a close-up with her young son and niece, was created by a DEA agent after the authorities arrested the woman in a 2010 drug bust and seized her cellphone.

• The FBI is investigating a bomb threat made in a tweet that prompted the U.S. military to send F-16 fighter aircraft to escort two jets bound for Atlanta on Saturday. The threats involved a Southwest Airlines flight from Milwaukee and a Delta Air Lines flight from Portland, Oregon. Authorities scoured the planes and found no evidence of bombs.

• The Los Angeles Times reports Microsoft took less than one hour to provide the FBI with data connected to the Charlie Hebdo investigation, an attorney for the software giant said Tuesday. After concluding the request was “proper,” Microsoft gave the FBI the information in within about 45 minutes.