

Request for Ideas

Source: <http://www.derkeiler.com/Mailing-Lists/securityfocus/security-basics/2008-05/msg00360.html>

- *From:* Adriel Desautels <adriel@xxxxxxxxxxxxx>
 - *Date:* Thu, 29 May 2008 16:16:41 -0400
-

All,

Our team has been searching for useful topics for educational white papers that will help consumers of IT Security Services solve specific problems. Are there any particular subjects that people are interested in reading about?

Regards,
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Netragard Whitepaper Downloads:

Choosing the right provider : <http://tinyurl.com/2ahk3j>
Three Things you must know : <http://tinyurl.com/26pjsn>

Kelly Keeton wrote:

I have never seen this happen I just hooked up a unknown microsoft model and typed on my keyboard and there was no transmission from the RF (i have equipment to watch this)

Unless in line I have never seen a OS that would take a keyboard input from PS2/USB and spit it back out to another device. Dont mean someone could but unlikely.

On Tue, May 27, 2008 at 12:03 PM, <krymson@xxxxxxxxxx> wrote:

Chad, I was thinking the same thing. But after a while, I wonder...

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BASE -----> wireless mouse

STATION ----> wireless keyboard (not present)

-----> wired keyboard

I guess the question is whether the base station is smart enough to turn off the wireless transmit if no wireless keyboard is present. Or whether wired keyboard inputs (key press -> system) is repeated on the wireless port (not sure why it would need to be). But, while it doesn't make sense to me, I *could* envision that a simple, dumb base station could do exactly as described. Few consumer products are vetted as well as we'd like to think!

Sergio: If the person you talked to is still available, definitely ask him for his source for that info.

Sounds like an excellent research opportunity.

<- snip ->

On Mon, May 26, 2008 at 04:24:26PM -0500, Sergio Castro wrote:

All sorts of electromagnetic emissions can be intercepted straight from devices.

Check out <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/TEMPEST>

While true, that doesn't really answer the question. The question was whether the base unit for a wireless mouse/keyboard combination would transmit keystrokes from a "wired" keyboard.

The answer might be "it depends", but unless there's something actually wrong with the way the base unit's controlling software was designed, this probably doesn't actually happen. No reason for a wireless keyboard base unit to broadcast keystroke data occurs to me at all, other than

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design flaws. To be certain, however, I guess you'd have to use an RF receiver (assuming it's an RF wireless base unit) to capture any emissions and examine them for the presence of keystroke data.

I tend to think it would be more likely that using a wireless keyboard might involve broadcast of (unencrypted) keystroke data, since wireless peripheral device manufacturers probably don't put nearly enough effort into making sure your system is secure. It is for this reason that, while I may use a wireless mouse with a system where I'll be entering passwords, I will **not** use a wireless keyboard with such a system at this time.

OP is below:

-----Mensaje original-----

De: listbounce (at) securityfocus (dot) com [email concealed]
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nombre de cleo_str8 (at) hotmail (dot) com [email concealed]

Enviado el: Lunes, 26 de Mayo de 2008 03:25 p.m.

Para: security-basics (at) securityfocus (dot) com [email concealed]

Asunto: Wireless mouse basestation transmitting wired keystrokes ?

I taked to a guy who were claiming that if you have a wireless mouse, with a basestation that also is able to use a wireless keyboard. Then if a wired keyboard is used instead, there is a risk for the basestation to transmit the keystroke onto the wireless, as some kind of acknowledge to the non-existing keyboard.

I'm not sure this is the right list to ask this, but am very interested in a answer to this claim. Does anybody know if this is true or false ?

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Thanks, Peter