

Your fridge could be behind an attack on you

WASHINGTON, USA: The surge in Internet-connected devices, like TVs, refrigerators, thermostats, door locks and more, has opened up huge opportunities for cyber-attacks because of weak security, researchers say.



Fortify's Mike Armistead says that eight out of ten devices failed basic security tests. Image: [Fortify](#)

A study by the Hewlett-Packard security unit Fortify found 70% of the most commonly used "Internet of Things" devices contain vulnerabilities, including inadequate passwords or encryption, or slack access restrictions.

"While the Internet of Things will connect and unify countless objects and systems, it also presents a significant challenge in fending off the adversary given the expanded attack environment," said Mike Armistead, Vice-President and General Manager for Fortify's enterprise security.

"With the continued adoption of connected devices, it is more important than ever to build security into these products from the beginning to disrupt attacks and avoid exposing consumers to malicious threats," he said.

The study comes amid recent security warnings about hacking of medical devices, cars, televisions and even toilets that have an Internet connection.

Eight out of ten devices fail

The researcher scanned the most popular devices and their cloud components and found on average 25 vulnerabilities per device. These products included TVs, webcams, home thermostats, remote power outlets, sprinkler controllers, hubs for controlling multiple devices, door locks, home alarms, scales and garage door openers.

The study said eight out of 10 devices tests leaked private information that could include the user's name, email address, home address, date of birth, credit card or health information.

Most of the devices lacked passwords, making it easier for hackers or others to gain access while some included simple default passwords such as "1234."

About 70% of the devices analysed failed to use encryption for communicating with the Internet and local networks, another weakness that makes for easy outside access.

HP said that while demand for these devices is climbing, security has failed to keep pace with growth in sales, opening the doors for security threats from a variety of sources.

The study said some estimates suggest as many as 26bn devices will be connected to the Internet by 2020.

"Fortunately, there's still time to secure devices before consumers are at risk," the report said.

Source: AFP via I-Net Bridge



Smart devices, such as this fridge from LG, are full of security holes that could reveal private information. Image: [Newsroom](#)