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Google Chrome could be open to hackers after flaw revealed

More than one billion Google Chrome users worldwide could be at risk of fraud, identity theft, malicious surveillance and remote access as a result of a major flaw embedded in the browser's software.

Paul Foster, Group Chief Information Officer at Cybersec Innovation Partners (CIP), discovered a revoked certificate while conducting an exercise utilising his company's certificate management tool Whitethorn®. Foster alerted Google Chrome developers on May 16 that a root certificate from Baltimore CyberTrust had been revoked on January 20 2018 and asked them to take immediate action.

Foster, former global head of cyber security at HSBC, said: "They notified me on May 24 that this will not be fixed as it would possibly break certificate compression and the only benefit would be reducing the binary size (size of the software driver).

"Potentially this could open the door to identity spoofing leading to installation and trust of malware as if it came from the vendor itself. So, a user could think they were accessing the log-in page for their internet banking and be on a fraudulent site instead. This is a risk that just shouldn't be taken when the remediation is simple enough to do.

"This could still leave all Chrome users open to attack and certainly shouldn't be trusted as it breaks the whole chain of trust validation. If users want to be safe, there are alternate browsers in the meantime that could be used until this is remediated."

Last month Foster discovered a revoked certificate of Taiwanese origin in Microsoft's operating system using CIP's Whitethorn® software.

CIP is the UK-based cyber security company that provides Whitethorn® – the next-generation digital certificate detection and management software which was developed to discover certificate breaches in a military environment.

NOTE TO EDITORS

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Whitethorn® is the only software to be able to provide full digital certificate and key discovery, management and automation. No rogue, illegal or expiring certificate can hide and cause damage or havoc now that CIP's Whitethorn® NextGen certificate and key discovery and management platform is available.