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### Connected Devices: Can We Handle Their Proliferation?

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Posted by [Neal Leavitt](#) on July 25th, 2011 at 2:03 pm

An organization called The Amphion Forum has been spearheading a series of invitation-only executive roundtables that this year have been held in Las Vegas, Chicago, and most recently, Washington, DC. I was extended an invitation to last week's Washington event and found the forum both elucidating and informative.

Participating organizations included a welter of public and private sector entities that have a vested interest in Internet security-related issues.

Some included the U.S. State Department, the U.S. Army, Cardinal Health, Cryptography Research, Mocana, Symantec, and VeriSign, to name a few.

The presentations were quite varied – 'Federal Devices in Critical Contexts' talked about how engineers and scientists in the medical, industrial, military and utility sectors have tended to lag behind the consumer electronics industry in adopting connected smart devices and how they'll have to ramp up quickly to connect

everything.

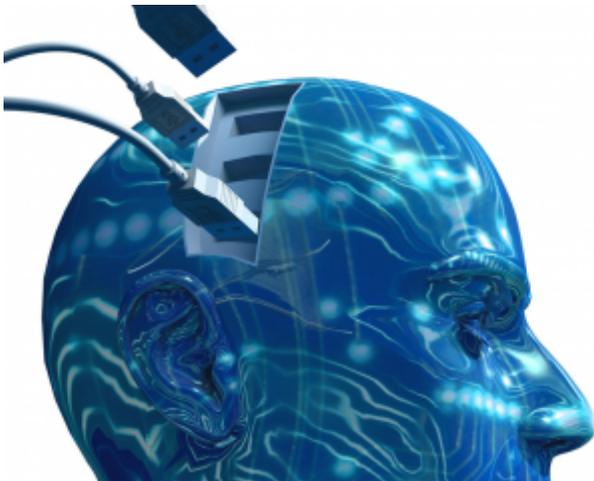
‘Attacking the Device/App Security Problem with Collaboration Models’ focused on the importance of making innovative inroads in device security and what’s being done in the public and private sector to defeat security threats targeted at (or via) connected devices.

‘Security, the Internet of Things, and Federal Law’ brought together experts who expounded upon what kind of international legal framework is needed to handle a global information architecture that will not only provide adequate security, but also protect the privacy and digital property of device users.

Panelists for the ‘Internet 2016: A Whole New ‘Net’ session, talked about how five years now, both our business and personal content will follow us even more seamlessly and intuitively from device to device.

One of the panelists from Internet security firm Mocana, Senior Analyst Robert Vamosi, also recently authored a book, *When Gadgets Betray Us*. All attendees were given a copy of his book; sections of two paragraphs of the inside cover flyleaf particularly grabbed my attention:

“How many of us actually stop to think about potential threats to our privacy? Keyless entry systems in many high-tech car models make auto theft easier than ever. Commercial photocopiers are equipped with hard drives that can document everything we ever copied on it. And our digital photos, even after they’re cropped, can expose the entire original image...from iPads to Blackberry devices, online banking to keyless entry systems, we’re increasingly giving over the management of our crucial information to the latest and greatest electronic gadgets.”



So between listening to what the panelists had to say, reading snippets of Vamosi’s book and networking with other attendees, it gave me pause for concern on how widespread our security problems are, what needs to be done, and how we go about resolving these issues.

In a related IEEE *Computer* story I authored on mobile security in last month’s issue (<http://www.leavcom.com/pdf/Mobilesecurity.pdf>), I quoted Mocana VP-Marketing Kurt Stammberger (who invited me to attend this Amphion Forum session).

A reprise of one of his remarks is especially apropos to conclude this posting:

“Our dependence on an always-on, connected, mobile device environment is going to be profound in critical contexts that we can’t imagine today. We have to be able to trust these devices, but we can’t now. There’s still a lot of work that needs to be done to get to the point where that trust is warranted.”

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