



Talal Abu-Ghazaleh Information Technology International

Newsletter



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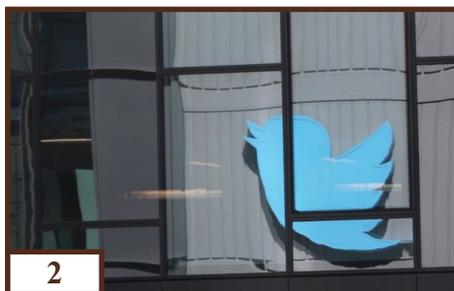
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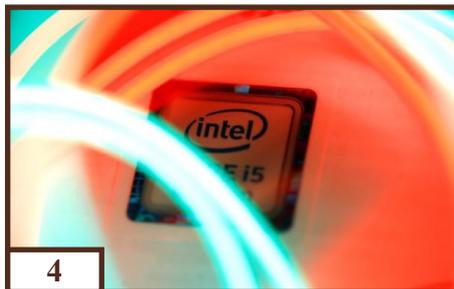
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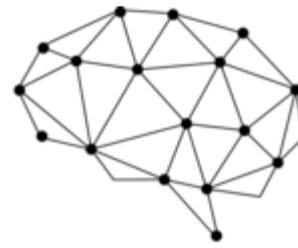


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Cambridge Analytica is shutting down

After the far-reaching scandal over mishandled Facebook user data, Cambridge Analytica is shutting down.

The news was reported earlier by The Wall Street Journal. The company soon said in a press release that the affiliated United Kingdom-based company SCL Elections has filed for insolvency, and that bankruptcy proceedings will begin soon for Cambridge Analytica as well. The data analytics company's United Kingdom-based parent organization, SCL Group, will also be shuttered, according to the Journal.



Cambridge Analytica

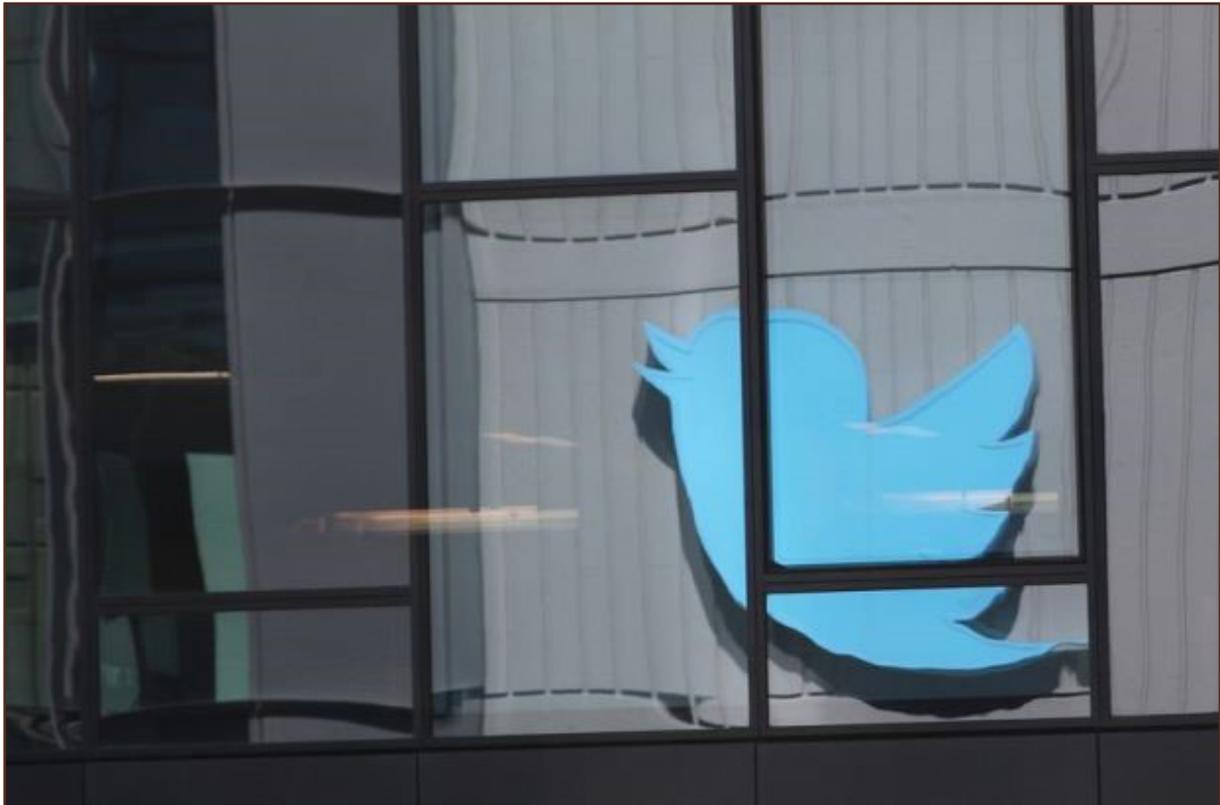
Cambridge Analytica, which gained fame by working on data analytics for the Trump presidential campaign, was engulfed by controversy after reports that it obtained data on millions of Facebook users through a seemingly innocuous personality test app. The revelation has triggered government hearings in both the United Kingdom and the United States and forced Mark Zuckerberg to testify before Congress. Cambridge Analytica's CEO, Alexander Nix, resigned after further reporting showed him discussing the possibility of entrapping politicians for clients.

The overwhelmingly bad press generated by the news cycle appears to have been too much for the company. In today's statement, it said, "The siege of media coverage has driven away virtually all of the Company's customers and suppliers."

In its statement, the company continued to defend itself in the face of controversy and said an internal investigation did not substantiate wrongdoing. "Over the past several months, Cambridge Analytica has been the subject of numerous unfounded accusations and, despite the Company's efforts to correct the record, has been vilified for activities that are not only legal, but also widely accepted as a standard component of online advertising in both the political and commercial arenas," the statement said.

<https://www.theverge.com/2018/5/2/17311892/cambridge-analytica-us-offices-shutting-down-facebook-scandal>

Security flaw: Twitter warns all users to change passwords



Twitter is warning its 330 million users to change their passwords, after a security flaw led to an encrypted list of passwords being made visible as plain text. — dpa

Twitter is warning its 330 million users to change their passwords, after a security flaw led to an encrypted list of passwords being made visible as plain text.

Twitter says there are no immediate signs that hackers had taken advantage of the flaw, but is still prompting Twitter users to update their passwords upon login.

Platforms such as Twitter will typically encrypt user passwords so as to protect them from being read by anyone who can get their hands on the data, even Twitter employees.

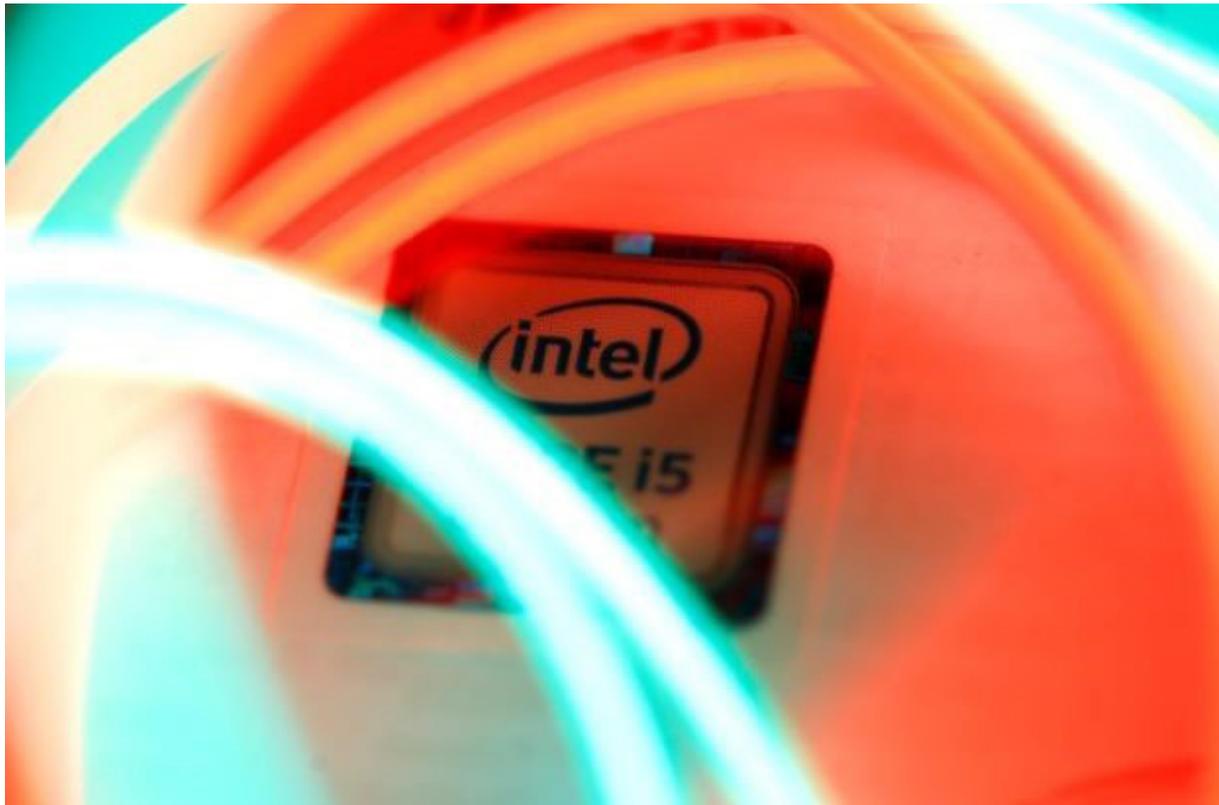
The software flaw that led to the passwords being unencrypted has since been patched, Twitter's Parag Agrawal wrote in a statement.

This isn't the first call to password updates from the social media site. Just two years ago, Twitter announced a database of 33 million usernames and passwords had been stolen by hackers.

In cases like these, experts say it pays to have different passwords for each account, as stolen usernames and passwords can be used to gain access to other accounts using the same password

<https://www.thestar.com.my/tech/tech-news/2018/05/06/security-flaw-twitter-warns-all-users-to-change-passwords/>

Next generation' flaws found on computer processors: magazine



Researchers have found eight new flaws in computer central processing units that resemble the Meltdown and Spectre bugs revealed in January, a German computing magazine reported on May 3.

The magazine, called c't, said it was aware of Intel Corp's plans to patch the flaws, adding that some chips designed by ARM Holdings, a unit of Japan's Softbank, might be affected, while work was continuing to establish whether Advanced Micro Devices chips were vulnerable.

Meltdown and Spectre bugs could reveal the contents of a computer's central processing unit – designed to be a secure inner sanctum – either by bypassing hardware barriers or by

tricking applications into giving up secret information.

C't did not name its sources because researchers were working under so-called responsible disclosure, in which they inform companies and agree to delay publishing their findings until a patch can be found.

The magazine said Google Project Zero, one of the original collective that exposed Meltdown and Spectre in January, had found one of the flaws and that a 90-day embargo on going public with its findings would end on May 7.

Intel shares closed down slightly to US\$52.28 (RM205.70), in line with a decline in the Nasdaq Composite Index.

An Intel representative declined to comment on the vulnerabilities described in c't magazine.

In a statement on its website, Intel said it routinely works closely with customers, partners, other chipmakers and researchers to mitigate any issues that are identified, and that part of the process involved reserving blocks of CVE numbers.

“We believe strongly in the value of coordinated disclosure and will share additional details on any potential issues as we finalise mitigations,” the statement said.

AMD said it was aware of the media reports and was examining the issue. Google declined to comment. ARM representatives could not immediately be reached for comment.

The German magazine gave few details about the reported new flaws. When the Spectre and Meltdown flaws emerged, researchers said that additional similar

flaws were likely to be found and would require patches.

“Considering what we have seen with Meltdown and Spectre, we should expect a long and painful cycle of updates, possibly even performance or stability issues,” said Yuriy Bulygin, chief executive officer of hardware security firm Eclipsium and a former Intel security researcher. “Hopefully, Meltdown and Spectre led to improvements to the complicated process of patching hardware.”

While no proof has yet emerged that Spectre or Meltdown were ever used by hackers in the real world, similar attacks have “become a hot, new area of research. Bad actors have probably already invested in such attacks by now”, Bulygin said. — Reuters

<https://www.thestar.com.my/tech/tech-news/2018/05/04/next-generation-flaws-found-on-computer-processors--magazine-updated/>

WhatsApp Billionaire Cofounder Plans To Leave Facebook

Jan Koum, the cofounder of WhatsApp, announced on Monday he would be leaving Facebook, four years after the social media giant acquired the messenger app he built with Brian Acton for \$22 billion.

WhatsApp billionaire cofounder Jan Koum announced on Monday via his Facebook account he will be leaving the company, four years after Facebook acquired the messenger app he built with Brian Acton for \$22 billion in cash and stock.

“It’s been almost a decade since Brian and I started WhatsApp, and it’s been an amazing journey with some of the best people. But it is time for me to move on,” Koum wrote. “I’m leaving at a time when people are using WhatsApp in more ways than I could have imagined...I’ll still be cheering WhatsApp on – just from the outside. Thanks to everyone who has made this journey possible.”

Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg responded with a comment of appreciation as well as an acknowledgment of WhatsApp’s core identity of preserving user privacy and security. “I’m grateful for everything you’ve done to help connect the world, and for everything you’ve taught me, including about encryption and its ability to take power from centralized systems and put it back in people’s hands,” Zuckerberg wrote. “Those



values will always be at the heart of WhatsApp.”

Zuckerberg’s response comes amid a report in The Washington Post that Koum is leaving Facebook due to the social network’s attempts to access WhatsApp user data and weaken its signature end-to-end encryption. Representatives for WhatsApp could not be reached for comment.

This is not the first instance of reported tension between the WhatsApp cofounders and its parent company. During the Cambridge Analytica scandal in March, which revealed that the London-based data firm had harvested Facebook data from as many as 87 million users, Brian Acton tweeted in support of the #DeleteFacebook movement.

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/angelaueung/2018/04/30/whatsapp-billionaire-cofounder-jan-koum-plans-to-leave-facebook/#54f90f06c424>

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