

## **This Week's Stories**

[news.cnet.com](http://news.cnet.com)

### **Fake Android App Steals Data, Takes Shot at Pirates**

March 30, 2011

A malicious Android app that masquerades as a free version of a legitimate app steals data and sends spam text messages and a warning that chastise the user for trying to get around paying for the actual app, Symantec said today.

The app, available on several file-sharing sites in North America and Asia that are known as clearinghouses for pirated software, is called Walk and Text. That's also the name of a legitimate app--available on the Android Market for \$1.53--that uses a device's camera to let people see what's in front of them as they text while walking. However, the bogus app is labeled as version 1.3.7, which doesn't exist yet, according to a Symantec blog post.

Once the fake software--which Symantec has dubbed "Android.Walkinwat"--is downloaded and running, it displays a dialog box that indicates that the app is in the process of being compromised or cracked, ostensibly to scare the person who thinks they're getting the legitimate app for free. Behind the scenes, the software is gathering sensitive data--including username, phone number, and unique device identifier--and trying to send it to an external server, Symantec says.

The app also sends out a text message (rife with misspellings and errors) to all the numbers listed in the user's contact list: "Hey, just downloaded a pirated App off the Internet, Walk and Text for Android. Im stupid and cheap, it costed only 1 buck. Don't steal like I did!"



The app also displays a message that says "Application Not Licensed" and warns: "We really hope you learned something from this. Check your phone bill;) Oh and don't forget to buy the App from the Market." It includes buttons for buying the app or exiting.

### **Kansas City, Kan., to be Google's Broadband Test Bed**

March 30, 2011

There's some rough news for Topeka, Kan., the city that courted Google's ultra-high-speed municipal broadband project by changing its name to Google. The Mountain View, Calif., tech giant announced Wednesday that the lucky city that gets to be its broadband guinea pig not only isn't Topeka, but it's Kansas City, Kansas--just an hour's drive away. Ouch.

More than 1,100 communities had applied since the call for applicants was announced about a year ago. Kansas City will first see the new developments next year, and Google is already looking for additional communities to join the test.

"Over the past decade, the jump from dial-up to broadband has led to streaming online video, digital music sales, videoconferencing over the Web, and countless other innovations that have transformed communication and commerce," a post on the official Google blog explained. "We can't wait to see what new products and services will emerge as Kansas City moves from traditional broadband to ultra high-speed fiber optic connections."

Keep in mind that this is the smaller of the two cities known as Kansas City--the bigger and more famous one is across the state line in Missouri, and is likely a larger test bed than what Google was looking for. The Kansas City that's actually in Kansas (Google, did you intend this to be confusing so that more people would Google it?) has a population of about 150,000 and is generally considered a suburb of its Missouri sibling.

"In selecting a city, our goal was to find a location where we could build efficiently, make an impact on the community, and develop relationships with local government and community organizations," Google wrote. "We've found this in Kansas City. We'll be working closely with local organizations including the Kauffman Foundation, KCNext, and the University of Kansas Medical Center to help develop the gigabit applications of the future."

Google commemorated the decision with the release of a YouTube video featuring soundbites from Google executives like co-founder Sergey Brin and Chief Financial Officer Patrick Pichette, along with prominent Kansas City citizens ("this is probably going to be the most buzzed event in the history of Kansas City," one said).

"It is a privilege for us to deploy this high-speed network together with the hard-working people of Kansas City," Brin said at the conclusion of the video.

[news.cnet.com](http://news.cnet.com)

## Google Voice Comes to Sprint

March 29, 2011

I've always been a fan of Google Voice. For those of you unfamiliar with this particular feature, it is the free Google service that allows, among other things, the transcription of voicemails via email through a number that Google assigns. We all know how annoying checking our voicemail can be, and Google Voice allows lazy cell phone users like me to alleviate the aggravation of this chore.

And now, Google Voice and Sprint are collaborating in order to bring this great Google service to Sprint customers!

AT&T had barely snapped up smaller rival T-Mobile USA – outbidding Sprint in the process – when Sprint responded with the announcement of its new partnership with Google. It is possible that Sprint is looking to expand its influence in the wake of reports that Verizon and AT&T's Long Term Evolution (LTE) 4G network will soon outstrip Sprint's own WiMAX network. With this move, Sprint hopes to retain existing subscribers and attract some of the myriads of Gmail users.

The Sprint and Google Voice partnership will also feature call forwarding to multiple devices. Sprint is allowing current Google Voice users the opportunity to condense their existing Google number and Sprint number into one, further alleviating the hassle tied to the general voicemail experience.

As reported by Cnet, Sprint Vice President of Product Kevin McGinnis relayed that the joint venture "is a strategic pillar to drive growth and strength in the brand." McGinnis continued that while Sprint may lack the resources and innovation to offer this wide range of services, Google does not. Furthermore, the cost of research and development falls squarely on Google's shoulders.

An astute move on Sprint's part.

[www.goingwimax.com](http://www.goingwimax.com)

## Products & Services

### Amazon Offers Cloud Storage Locker, Player

March 29, 2011

It's not often someone beats Apple to the punch, but that's exactly what Amazon.com just did with today's launch of its new cloud storage offering.

Amazon today officially launched a trio of products – Amazon Cloud Drive, Amazon Cloud Player for Web and Amazon Cloud Player for Android – which offer users 5GB of cloud storage with Amazon, as well as the tools to play their music while on the go or from any computer.

Customers automatically start with 5 GB of Cloud Drive storage to upload their digital music library, and those who purchase an Amazon MP3 album will be upgraded to 20 GB of Cloud Drive space. The company says that new MP3s purchased from Amazon and saved directly to user's Cloud Drive are stored for free and do not count against a customer's storage quota.

Amazon also released an upload client that will automatically detect music on a person's computer and save it to the user's cloud drive. Files can be stored in AAC or MP3 formats and will be uploaded to Cloud Drive in the original bit rate. Customers can hand-pick particular songs, artists, albums or playlists to upload or simply upload their entire music library.

The Cloud Drive can also be used to store documents, videos and photos as well as music and additional storage can be purchased.

While iPhone users won't be able to access their music from Amazon's cloud, Android users can take advantage of the company's new Cloud Player for Android app. The mobile application allows users to stream music from their Amazon Cloud Drive directly to their Android phones.

The move to a cloud-based music offering follows closely on the heels of the Amazon App Store launch and appears to put the online retailer in direct competition with Apple's iTunes service.

When taken as whole, Amazon appears to be offering the equivalent of iTunes for Google's Android platform. Amazon now sells digital books, newspapers, magazines, movies, music and applications, all of which are available on mobile devices.

Apple has yet to announce cloud functionality for its iTunes service but the move is believed to be in the

offing. The company will complete construction this spring on a massive storage facility in North Carolina.

Shares of Amazon.com rose nearly 4 percent in early trading Tuesday to \$173.32.

[www.wirelessweek.com](http://www.wirelessweek.com)

## **Emerging Technology**

### **Google Launches In-App Billing for Android**

March 30, 2011

Google has launched in-app billing for Android apps, company executive Eric Chu announced in a blog post yesterday.

In-app billing will let Android users make purchases of digital goods like media files or upgrades for mobile games without exiting the app. The in-app billing service is handled by Google's Android Market.

Several Android apps are already offering the service, including Tap Tap Revenge by Disney Mobile; Comics by ComiXology; Gun Bros, Deer Hunter Challenge HD and World Series of Poker Hold'em Legend by Glu Mobile; and Dungeon Defenders: FW Deluxe by Trendy Entertainment.

Niccolo de Masi, CEO of Glu Mobile, called the start of in-app purchases on Android Market a "very significant step forward."

"The Android gaming market continues to demonstrate impressive growth and we are optimistic that over the medium term in-app payments on Android will generate revenue streams analogous to those on iOS," de Masi said, referring to Apple's rival operating system for the iPhone and iPad.

Apple launched in-app payments in 2009. Four of the 10 highest-grossing apps in the App Store – Tap Zoo, Smurfs' Village, Zombie Farm and Texas Poker - are free but allow in-app purchases. The launch of in-app payments on Android could help developers make more money off apps for the competing operating system.

Apple's in-app payments generated concern after children using their parent's iPhones racked up huge bills buying digital goods through games like Smurfs' Village. Apple has since changed how purchases within iOS games are authorized.

[www.wirelessweek.com](http://www.wirelessweek.com)

## **Mergers & Acquisitions**

### **Vodafone Pays \$5 bn to Buy Out India Partner Essar**

March 31, 2011

British phone giant Vodafone said Thursday it had paid \$5 billion to buy out its Indian partner Essar in their mobile phone venture, snapping an increasingly strained relationship.

The sale came after differences between the partners had become more public in recent months on the valuation of their joint venture, which they had hoped would allow them to exploit India's booming mobile phone market.

Vodafone's pact with the Essar Group gave the Indian firm an option to sell its stake to the British-based company for \$5 billion that expired in May.

The deal will result "in a total cash payment of \$5 billion" to the Essar Group and "final settlement is anticipated to be no later than November 2011," Vodafone said in a statement.

Vodafone said the Essar Group, founded by billionaires Shashi and Ravi Ruia, had exercised its option to sell its stake in Vodafone Essar, as India's third-largest mobile phone company is known.

The deal will give Vodafone 75 percent control of Vodafone Essar.

This amount is one percent above the 74 percent cap that foreign companies are allowed to hold in Indian telecommunications firms, meaning Vodafone will have to slightly reduce its stake.

Vodafone, based in Newbury, England, bought a 67 percent stake in Hutchison Essar, as the company was then known, for \$11.1 billion in 2007 as it sought to make India a crown jewel in its expanding emerging markets portfolio.

Vodafone's foreign investment remains the largest to date in India.

The British company said the deal to buy Essar's stake would not affect its financial accounts as the \$5 billion had already been included in Vodafone's net debt.

Relations between the British and Indian firms had grown increasingly tense after Essar and Vodafone had sought to find a compromise on the valuation of their joint venture with Essar seeking a higher worth.

Vodafone has had a rough ride with its investment in India amid intense competition in the world's fastest-growing mobile market which has more than 770 million cellular subscribers.

It wrote off 2.3 billion pounds (3.7 billion dollars) in 2010, citing the ferocious rivalry among the myriad players in the Indian market that has driven call costs to below one cent a minute and rising spectrum charges.

Vodafone is also fighting a massive Indian tax bill stemming from its purchase of Hutchison Essar.

[news.yahoo.com](http://news.yahoo.com)

## **CenturyLink Completes \$12.2B Acquisition of Qwest**

April 1, 2011

CenturyLink Inc. completed its purchase of Qwest Communications International Inc. on Friday, combining the country's third- and fourth-largest traditional phone companies into one.

The closing of the \$12.2 billion all-stock deal was expected and follows nearly a year of regulatory reviews. The combined company, which will be known as CenturyLink, offers landline phone service in parts of 37 states.

The consolidation is a response to steady cancellation of landlines as households chose to rely on cell phones or cable phone service. By buying up Qwest, CenturyLink will have a chance to cut corporate overhead.

The combined company will have about 15 million phone lines, or as many as Qwest alone had in 2005.

Qwest began its troubled path as a long-haul fiber network in the telecom boom of the late 90s. Helped by its sky-high stock price, it bought traditional "Baby Bell" phone company US West in 2000. It then was ensnared in accounting troubles.

Qwest is the larger company, but its high debt load left it unable to play the consolidator in the industry. That role has instead been taken by CenturyLink, which started as a small rural phone company. For the past decade, it's been buying mainly rural phone companies and lines, culminating in the acquisition of Embarq in 2009 and now the acquisition of Qwest.

The only larger landline phone companies now are AT&T Inc. and Verizon Communications Inc.

CenturyLink is keeping its headquarters in Monroe, La. Qwest's Denver headquarters will turn into one of CenturyLink's six regional headquarters and will also be the overall headquarters for its business services group. The other five regional headquarters will be in Phoenix, Minneapolis, Seattle, Wake Forest, N.C., and Apopka, Fla.

The combined company has about 47,000 employees, and some job cuts can be expected from the combination. Both companies have been cutting jobs as they lose landline customers.

CenturyLink shares fell 17 cents, or 0.4 percent, to \$41.38 in morning trading Friday. Qwest shareholders are getting 0.1664 shares of CenturyLink stock for each Qwest share.

Qwest shares have been trading near parity with the trade-in value since the deal was announced in May, but the closing gives Qwest shareholders a boost in dividends. Each CenturyLink share carries an annual dividend of \$2.90, whereas the corresponding amount of Qwest shares yielded \$1.92.

[news.yahoo.com](http://news.yahoo.com)

## **Industry Reports**

### **Mobile Devices to Generate Data Traffic Equivalent to 18 Billion Movie Downloads by 2015**

March 30, 2011

According to new figures from Juniper Research, the amount of mobile data traffic generated by Smartphones, Featurephones and Tablets will exceed 14,000 Petabytes by 2015, equivalent to 18 billion movie downloads or 3 trillion music tracks. Pressure on Mobile networks however will begin to ease as 63% of traffic, nearly 9,000 Petabytes, moves across to Wi-Fi and Femtocell networks.

Juniper's new Mobile Data Offload & Onload Report finds that while data growth over the cellular network will be substantial, it will not be the "data explosion" that some have anticipated. However, the report notes that despite the implementation of offloading measures, migration of data traffic from fixed to mobile will exacerbate the strains on the cellular network.

According to report author Nitin Bhas, "It is important for network operators to be cognizant of the net impact that both offload and onload have on the total data traffic through the network. So even though data offload alleviates some of the operator's network

congestion, a significant proportion of the offload could itself be offset by fixed to mobile migration of data."

### ***WiFi vs. Femtocell***

Although currently WiFi accounts for over 90% of the traffic offloaded, Femtocells will account for a steadily increasing proportion over the forecast period and both will contribute to be a flexible solution that will co-exist and provide a 'big-win' opportunity for the operators.

Other key findings include:

- North America and Western Europe to account for over 60% of global mobile data offloaded
- Developing markets to witness highest growth percentage of data offloaded, growth strongest in the Indian Sub Continent region.

### ***Opportunities for operators***

The report suggests that operators need to view offloading solutions as complementary to their 3G/4G network providing opportunities to seize market share and revenues from fixed line operators, extending their reach beyond mobile and making their 3G/4G business case profitable

[it.einnews.com](http://it.einnews.com)



120 Madison St. 15<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Syracuse, New York 13202  
(315) 470-1350  
1-888-8KSRINC