Starbucks to roll out fix for weakness in iPhone app

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Starbucks Corp. said it will soon roll out an update for its iOS mobile application, which a security expert says had a critical flaw that potentially exposed customer data to computer-savvy phone thieves.

Cyber-security researcher Daniel Wood disclosed this week that Starbucks' digital wallet app for the iPhone doesn't encrypt critical customer data - including email, password and credit card information. That makes it vulnerable to a hacker or thief who physically takes someone's iPhone. Starbucks chief information officer Curt Garner, in a letter to customers posted on the company's website Thursday, acknowledged that Wood's report highlighted "theoretical vulnerabilities."

Starbucks maintains that it had already added new barriers to protect the data, though it won't elaborate for security reasons. The update to the app, Garner wrote, is being readied out of an "abundance of caution" to add extra layers of protection. "We expect this update to be ready soon," he wrote.

The company has said that the app for Google's Android mobile operating system doesn't have the flaw.

Garner wrote that there's no indication that anyone's data has been compromised. He added that Starbucks customers who think their information may have been compromised should contact the company at 1-800-23-LATTE or starbucks.com/customer"

target="_blank">www.[starbucks](#).com/customer.

The flaw comes in the midst of rising worries about retailers' ability to safely handle [customer data](#), including credit card information. During the holiday season Target and Neiman Marcus suffered major cyber-heists.

For Starbucks, data safety is critical, especially as an increasing number of customers rely on their smartphones to store their loyalty cards. Some 11 percent of U.S. transactions in the quarter ended in September were made using the mobile app.

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