

Google says Android malware cut in half

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Google said Thursday that malware infections on Android devices have been cut in half in the past year following security upgrades for the mobile platform.

In a security review for 2014, Google said it made significant strides for the platform long seen as weak on security.

Android security engineer Adrian Ludwig said in a blog post that the overall worldwide rate of potentially harmful applications installed dropped by nearly 50 percent between the first quarter and the fourth quarter of the year.

Ludwig noted over one billion Android devices in use worldwide have security through Google Play "which conducts 200 million security scans of devices per day" and that fewer than one percent of the devices had potentially harmful apps installed in 2014.

For those devices which only use Google Play apps, the rate of potentially malicious apps was less than 0.15 percent, Google said.

The report noted that Android got several [security](#) upgrades in 2014, including improved encryption and better detection tools for malware.

Android has long been seen as vulnerable to malware because it is an open platform and many devices run older versions of the mobile operating system

But Google's report said its review "does not show any evidence of widespread exploitation of Android devices."

"We want to ensure that Android is a safe place, and this report has helped us take a look at how we did in the past year, and what we can still improve on," Ludwig said.

"In 2015, we have already announced that we are being even more proactive in reviewing applications for all types of policy violations within Google Play. Outside of Google Play, we have also increased our efforts to enhance protections for specific higher-risk devices and regions."

Android is used on around 80 percent of the smartphones globally, but its popularity has also made it a magnet for malware.

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