

2nd security firm raises concerns about Cruz and Kasich apps (Update)

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Another computer-security firm raised concerns Monday about the potential for hackers to glean users' personal data from phone apps released by the campaigns of Republican presidential contenders Ted Cruz and John Kasich.

An independent analysis by Symantec, one of the world's largest software companies, determined that the "Cruz Crew" phone app could allow third parties to capture a phone's unique identifying number and other personal information. The company said the Kasich 2016 app could expose users' location data and information about other apps installed on the phones.

Symantec's analysis used a test that collects unencrypted personal data being transmitted from phones running the campaigns' apps.

"The data may be going to a legitimate destination, but it could be intercepted by someone intercepting the traffic," said Shaun Aimoto, a Symantec engineer.

Cruz data director Chris Wilson on Monday denied the campaign's app leaks data.

"If Symantec had looked more carefully, they would see that the app requests the device info but this info is never sent anywhere," Wilson said. "The Cruz Crew app is the most secure, popular and effective app of any 2016 presidential candidate."

The Associated Press first reported on potential vulnerabilities with the Cruz and Kasich in March after the computer-security firm Veracode performed detailed reviews of phone apps released by presidential campaigns from both parties.

Kasich spokesman Rob Nichols declined to comment Monday.

Neither security firm found suspect code in the app released by the campaign of Democrat Bernie Sanders. The campaigns of Republican Donald Trump and Democrat Hillary Clinton have not released their own apps.

The AP previously reported that the Cruz Crew app is designed to gather detailed information from users' phones—potentially tracking their physical movements and harvesting the names and contact information of friends. That information and more is then fed into a vast database containing intimate details about nearly every adult in the United States to build psychological profiles that target individual voters determined to be likely Cruz supporters.

The Cruz campaign has said the app's users voluntarily share their personal data, and how that information is collected and shared is detailed in legal disclosures available online.

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