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THE
TRUTH
ABOUT

'Vodafone'

WOULD YOU LIKE TO LISTEN TO PEOPLES MAILBOX MESSAGES UNTRACED ?

If so, then read on.....

Vodafone have this wonderful system in place where you can do just that. Why would you want to do that you ask yourself.

1) Well, if you were a person dealing in large financial amounts then you could make a packet. (Perhaps you are a City banker and have a colleague that may be doing well financially and you know that if you could access his personal messages on their recall service then maybe you could 'Steal the Deal" and become enormously wealthy overnight).

2) If you know any Bookmakers mobile no's then why couldn't you listen to their tips or customers bets that may have been left on their recall service. There are dozens of Bookies at the races every week.

3) Terrorists could plot an individuals whereabouts if only they knew.....Or do they ?.For instance, by listening to a users personal messages then what if the message read " Sorry I can't make Paddington at 13.30, if there's any way you could see me at Heathrow Gate 11 at 14.30 then that would be great. I'll be wearing a light grey bobble hat. If not ring me on". What if you were an important person with much public influence ? Frightening.....

4) What if a news reporter had your mobile number and was accessing your personal info on a regular basis hoping for the big 'SCOOP'. They've got you if anyone leaves any thing of any interest on your recall service. They ring you, they tell you YOUR info and hey presto Free news to any newspaper. Worrying.....

5) Private detectives could also do well out of this, but what if you were the one having the extra marital affair ? Sounds like trouble to me.....

6) You can even go as far as changing the users personal greeting and P.I.N if you were that malicious.

7) Perhaps you're just a noseyparker.

READ ON TO FIND OUT MORE

First of all the *vodafone's* user must be engaged, switched off or out of signal area. No problem, most mobiles are normally one of the three. (Especially after midnight).

- 1) You must telephone their *vodafone* mobile number
- 2) Wait for "This is the vodafone recall service for 07997.....please leave a message after the beep.
- 3) As soon as it 'beeps' then press 9. This must be done immediately after the beep, if not then start again.
- 4) It then asks you to enter your security code. DIAL 3333. You're in.....
- 5) If you don't gain access then that persons security code has been changed. *Vodafone* have a default code which is 3333 unless changed. The majority of people who use a *vodafone* do not know that their own mobile has such a code (it does however state this in all of their handbooks - you try finding it though !).
- 6) If the user has not changed their security code then basically you're in to their personal mailbox. IT'S AS EASY AS THAT.
- 7) Once entering into their mailbox the recall service will tell you if there are any 'old' or 'new' messages and will start playing them all back to you one by one.(to skip each message quickly press 6 during each one and it will play the next).
- 8) Once the messages have ended then it will say there are no more messages, for help key ONE. Press the digit 1 and you will enter into the mailbox service where you can take any of the options listed. Some of the options are 'To change your personal greeting' or 'To change you security code' etc. (This security code can be changed to any 4 digit you so wish so that at any time the user can't change it back.)

This system was put in place 13 years ago and is open to much abuse. It was put in place for the user in the event of losing their mobile so they could contact their own mailbox from any telephone, either in the UK or from any where else in the World.

HOW I FOUND OUT

It was back well over 18 months now when I was working in the South Wales area travelling up and down the M4 going about my daily duties as a typical Sales rep for a local food manufacturer. My day was going like any other day, people ringing to place their first orders, general enquiries and sometimes the Boss ringing me to wind me up to produce even more sales. Obviously the handsfree car kit for the mobile was worth its weight in gold and to mention it so was the phone, no phone no business. Anyway, the inevitable happened as it always has done, the mobile went out of signal. For an hour I was driving and waiting for the signal to reappear but it did not. That was it, I found the nearest service station and got on the phone to Vodafone. I was told by a customer service representative that unfortunately the whole of the South Wales area network had failed and would be on soon. I might add that soon meant approx 5 hours !. I began to get irate with the fact that I knew that people were trying to ring me and not getting through. I asked the operator if my recall service was still functioning and she informed me very confidently that it was. Great I thought, so I then explained to the lady of my circumstances and she explained to me how to access my mailbox without using my own mobile. She went through the procedure with me and afterwards I said to her about the default code which I was not aware of, about the fact that my messages could have been read up until that day because I had not changed my pin code on my mailbox. The phone I have is a business vodafone and was given to me without any instructions whatsoever and I dare say that there are many people out there in the same situation. I then proceeded to tell the lady of customer services that if I rang any vodafone number I would more than likely access their mailbox if I tried. She said to me 'yes' but said I was not supposed to do it. My argument is you lock the door, people can't get in, you give everybody a master key, to which only few know of, then you're open to infiltration. This does not give me any confidence knowing that this is going on and nothing will be done.

My first plan of action was to tell the media. I contacted Oonagh Blackman at The Daily Mirror on the 28th August 99 and was glad to hear that she really was concerned. She assured me that the story could make Headlines because of its implications and decided to look into it. She rang me back after 10 minutes and confirmed that what I had told her was correct and explained to me she tried it with some numbers she had. She then went on to explain that she was to put a few reporters onto this and have them ringing up all of the 'publicly profiled people' in and around London. Please be aware that this was a Bank Holiday weekend and a lot of business people probably had their phones switched off. Oonagh, after 2 weeks, then proceeded to tell me that the story probably won't make the paper but she was quite happy to send me a payment for my trouble, which I received. I was very annoyed with myself, knowing that I'd told the wrong person. I thought to myself that if anybody in the Media had this way of getting news tips, gossip etc then why should they tell anybody else ?. So my next step was to contact Paul Crosby at The Sun. He personally invited me in to News International where we sat for while discussing the seriousness of the story.

He then wanted to know how to do it, so I explained it to him. In his words he 'could not believe that the Mirror haven't published this and that they were very naughty'. Paul knew of how much an impact this story could have and told me they would print overnight if possible. Guess what.....nothing.....absolutely nothing. I think that money is controlling this suppressing of information. Vodafone have been involved in the Mannesmann takeover and don't want the publicity so are prepared to go to certain lengths, ie. If you print this story then we will pull out all of our advertising.

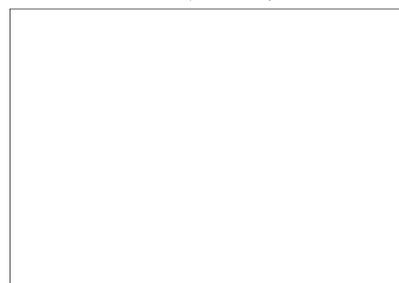
One of the most annoying things now is that if the media have tapped into a mailbox, then they have more than likely changed that persons security code. So the more people who get to know of this information will no doubt be trying to infiltrate peoples mailboxes using the default code of 3333 with no success because somebody has beaten them to it, inevitably proving to the new hacker that most people change there security codes, or somebody has changed it for them.

Vodafone assured the public on Radio 5 Live that 80% of vodafone business users have changed their security codes but how would Vodafone know that the security code wasn't changed by someone else. Vodafone did admit live on the air that it was possible to do but have had no cause for complaint from their customers as yet. I think that when the system was set in place 13 years ago, because the way people want to make money, and that is fast, someone from Vodafone set this system up quick because the customer needed an answering service. Unfortunately, it looks as if the way it was set up was wrong and Vodafone know they set it up wrong and are to scared to admit that they are wrong. The problem with such a story as this, is that one day it will break and cause absolute mayhem. It is now already starting to get to the stage of snowballing up and down the country. Recently, a radio station from the Midlands contacted me on my mobile asking about the story. this lady was in the pub the night before having a few drinks when she overheard some of her friends talking about buying mobiles. They had decided between themselves

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to buy vodafones because they knew there was a way of hacking into their friends phones. This frightens me somewhat because I feel as though I instigated the whole episode, from travelling around the whole of the UK, staying in hotels and being obligated to tell any residents that I got into conversation with. Once someone tells you something of interest, especially of this nature, then it will have the 'tell your mates' aspect about it. What the hell is Vodafone doing about it. On various occasions I've contacted their Headquarters in Newbury and spoken to the Press Office but have had no - one contact me back with answers. Do they think that I will leave this alone. Would you ?. I will not, until they make a concerted effort to be a trustworthy company to themselves, their employees, their customers.

Mr Steven John Nott



You may contact me on the following number. You will be put through to an answer service.
Please leave your message, telephone number and your name.

Thanks

NB. Please also be aware that the BBC have filmed me in the Blue Peter garden and an ITN news crew have been to my home address for an interview, re Chris Choi.

Vodafone are well aware of the problem.

The people who know of this break in National Security.....

M I 5
BBC
RADIO 5
RADIO NOTTINGHAM
ITN
THE SUN
THE DAILY MIRROR
SKY NEWS
REUTERS
ORANGE
B.T
DAILY MAIL
LONDON EVENING STANDARD
SOUTH WALES ECHO
EXPRESS NEWSPAPERS
FINANCIAL TIMES
LONDON TELEVISION CENTRE
D.T.I
WE CAN WORK IT OUT
H.M CUSTOMS AND EXCISE
HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT
HOME OFFICE
LONDON STOCK EXCHANGE
MANNESMAN

Wednesday, October 13, 1999

Mobile minus: Sales boss reveals security problem

Anybody can hear private messages

A CWMBRAN sales manager says he has discovered a major security problem with one of the country's largest mobile phone networks.

Horrified Vodafone subscriber Steve Nott, 32, found that ANYONE can access his answer phone service and listen to his private messages ... helped by the giant network's own operators.

He explained: "Some time ago, the Vodafone network went down because of a technical fault. I had some important messages coming in, so I rang Vodafone to access them.

"I was asked by an operator if I had programmed a PIN number into my answer service. When I said I hadn't, I was told it didn't matter that all I had to do was key in the default number.

"I followed the instructions and was able to hear my messages. It was easy and had taken just seconds."

Mr Nott added: "Afterwards I thought that anyone with my phone number could get into my messages just as easily as I had."

Mr Nott, whose marketing work in London is so sensitive that he doesn't want his full Cwmbran

EXCLUSIVE

By Rob Skellon

address to be published, complained to Vodafone bosses.

The angry marketing man even contacted the British intelligence service MI5.

He said: "Vodafone has millions of users, and many of them will be MPs and high ranking government officials, people with highly sensitive information at their fingertips.

"I thought it important that the intelligence service should know about this. Unauthorised accessing of someone's message service is on a par with tampering with their mail."

The Argus put Mr Nott's claims to the test and by following his instructions we were able to access a Vodafone user's personal message service.

In this case, it was with the subscriber's permission. But it proved the point. Anyone can do it.

A Vodafone spokesman also conceded it was possible.

But he added: "Subscribers have the facility to change the default number and set up their own PIN number.

"If they don't, I suppose they are risking the security of their message service."



PHONE WORRY: Steve Nott, who claims that anyone can access anyone else's Vodafone messages

Picture:
PENORE SIMS