

Bitdefender®

Security

Coronavirus Report: Popular Android Apps Impersonated by Malware



Foreword

It has been more than 30 days since Europe and North America have adopted serious isolation measures in an attempt to stop the Coronavirus pandemic. With most people safe at home in lockdown, human interactions are bridged by technology.

Whether it's for working from home, online school courses or entertainment, people rely more than ever on smart devices to ease the effects of social distancing, and malware developers have been quick to adapt to the new reality.

Here at Bitdefender we keep a close eye on cyber-criminals' techniques, and we develop mitigations for a safer experience at home, at the office or at school. For the past three months, we have monitored trending mobile applications and have looked for cloned applications rigged with malware.

Android Apps

To the best of our knowledge, none of these applications are available through official sources. The fact that they're delivered through alternative channels does not make things any better though. Our past research reveals that one in 10 Android users install applications from alternative sources even when they are available on the Google Play Store for free. Here's a non-exhaustive list of popular applications that cyber-criminals are using to compromise devices.

WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION

APK MD5: 9526c93bcfaa7b6f638181e100bc52fc

Detection: Android.Trojan.Obfus.II

Malware family: SpyNote

App label: World Health Organization

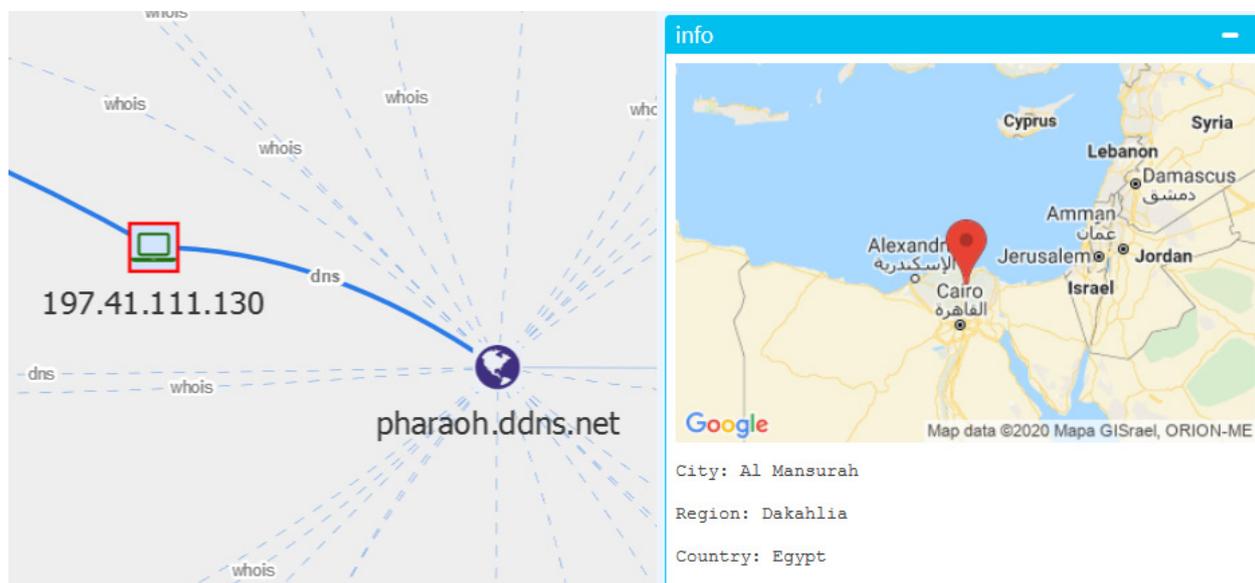
App icon:



As soon as the World Health Organization announced [that it would develop an Android application to track COVID-19 infections](#), malware authors started exploiting this theme to peddle infected APKs.

This fake app hides its icon after the user opens it for the first time, then continues its malicious activities in the background. No visible GUI is available for the user.

The application's command and control server can be found at **pharaoh.ddns.net**(197.41.111.130), whose location can be tracked to Egypt's Al Mansurah city.



It can read text messages, make phone calls, read the contact list, get account information, record audio and access the device's camera, among many other capabilities.

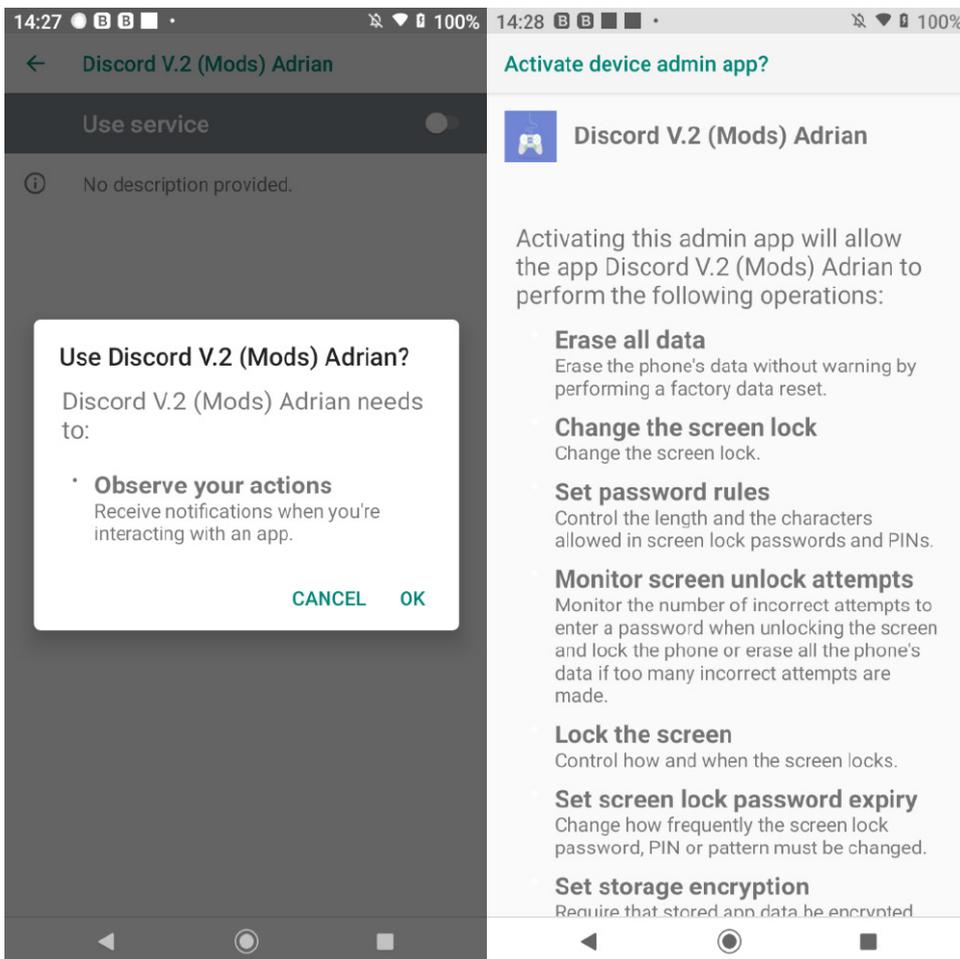
DISCORD

APK MD5	App Label	Detection
692895885a1fc803f5062bdfbe3be9f0	Discord V.2 (Mods) Adrian	Android.Trojan.FakeApp.JE
2da8739af8d063c6c3d92f836ad32d53	Discord	Android.Trojan.SpyAgent.Q
6cbeb773921b80c132e0cb33824a78f9	Nitro Discord	Android.Trojan.Agent.AKD

App icons:



The first application is a classic; it asks for accessibility and device admin permissions, hides itself and then spies in the background. At least it doesn't block you from going to Settings - Applications to uninstall it.

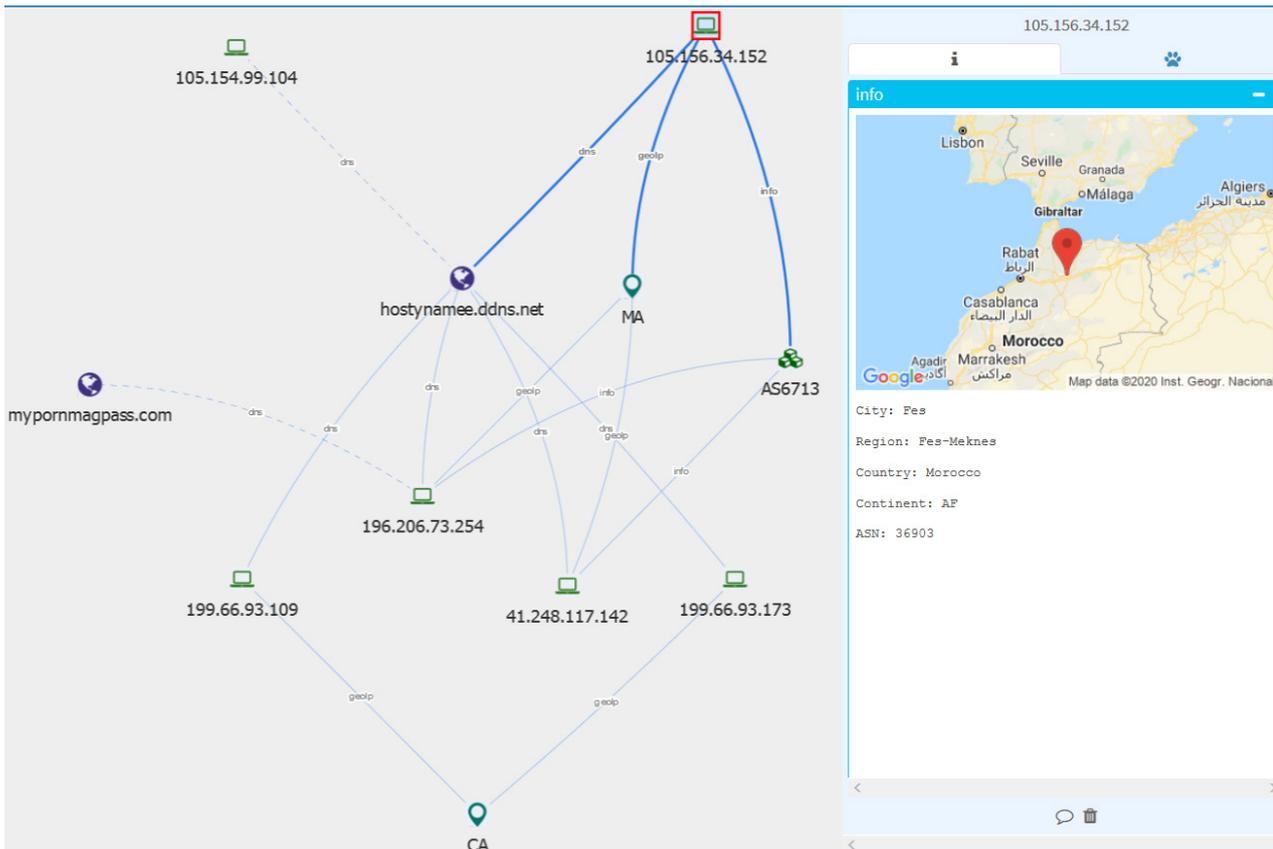


The second app: On start, it shows a toast message with the text "CPU aquire." Then, of course, it hides. Are we seeing a pattern here?

The third app fails to complete installation because it is signed improperly:

```
Failure [INSTALL_PARSE_FAILED_NO_CERTIFICATES: Failed to collect certificates from /data/app/vmdl1001754011.tmp/base.apk using APK Signature Scheme v3: APK content size did not verify]
```

Malware developers make mistakes, too. Just like that uTorrent icon on a Discord app.



HANGOUTS

APK MD5: 0eb9be2abb8f67046fa393eea97571db

App Label: hangouts

Detection: Android.Trojan.HiddenApp.AIB App icon:



The app requests accessibility and device admin permissions, then proceeds to ignore all user attempts at opening it and instead chooses to perform its spying activities covertly.

The CnCserver is located at **0[.]tcp[.]ngrok[.]io** (18.223.41.243), which resolves to US, Columbus. ***This same IP has been used to distribute variants of Gafgyt, a Linux-based cross-platform DDoS botnet family malware.***

These apps have been found in the wild in the US and Germany.

DELIVERY

Need a delivery service while in lockdown? The malware guys are quick to help you out. Simply accept their accessibility permission request and they'll deliver you an Anubis Banker on the double.

APK MD5: 28c88cc3272ecdb84b78ce95a28e17a3

Package name: rare.destroy.news

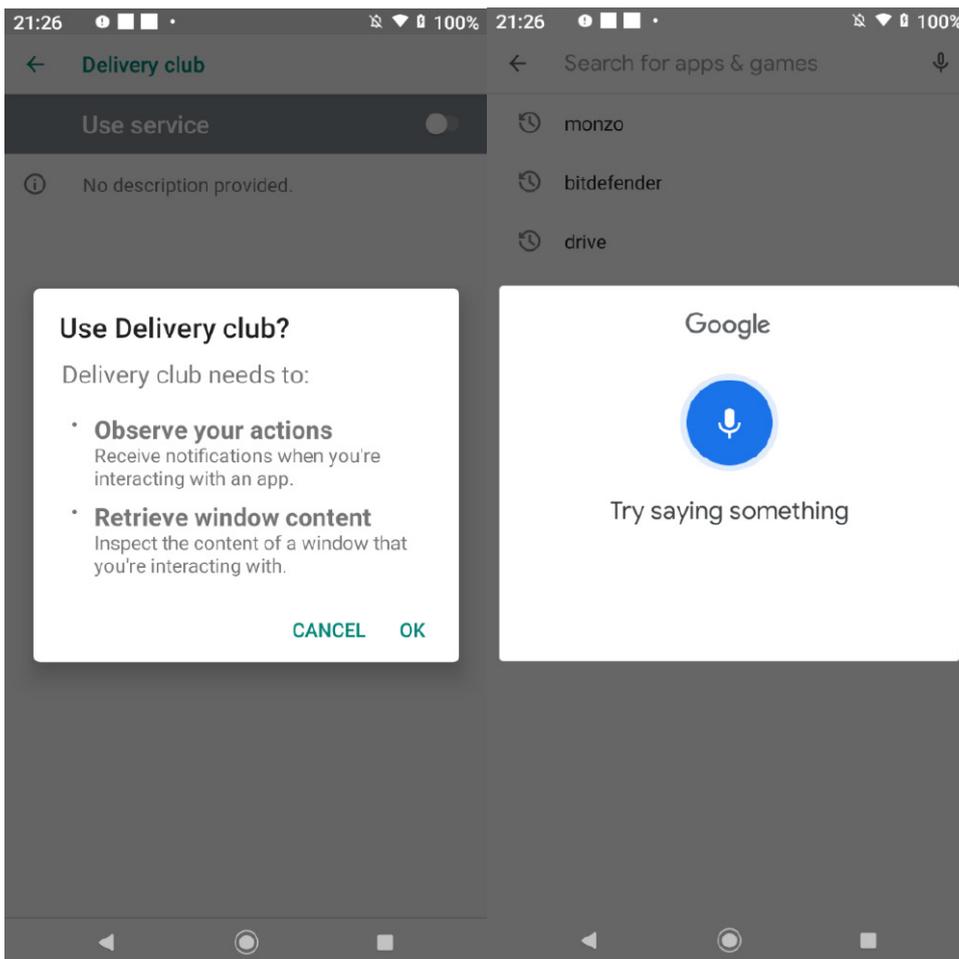
Detection: Android.Trojan.FakeApp.JM

App Label: Delivery club

App icon:



Asks for accessibility settings. When granted, it opens Google Play automatically and starts Google's speech recognition to search on Play, possibly to trick the user into believing that accessibility access is needed for speech recognition. It hides its icon. Drops Anubis in the background from assets.



The Command and Control Server is [www\[.\]happynewyear666\[.\]xyz](http://www[.]happynewyear666[.]xyz) that points to an IP 82.202.173.99 in Moscow, Russia.

SKYPE

Social apps with video call features are surging in popularity due to the social distancing measures imposed around the world, and Skype is no exception.



This is where Skype is most frequently used around the world (Bitdefender telemetry)

Over 100 new fake Skype apps have been found since countries have gone into lockdown and people around the world start to work from home or seek face time with loved ones.

App icons:



App labels:

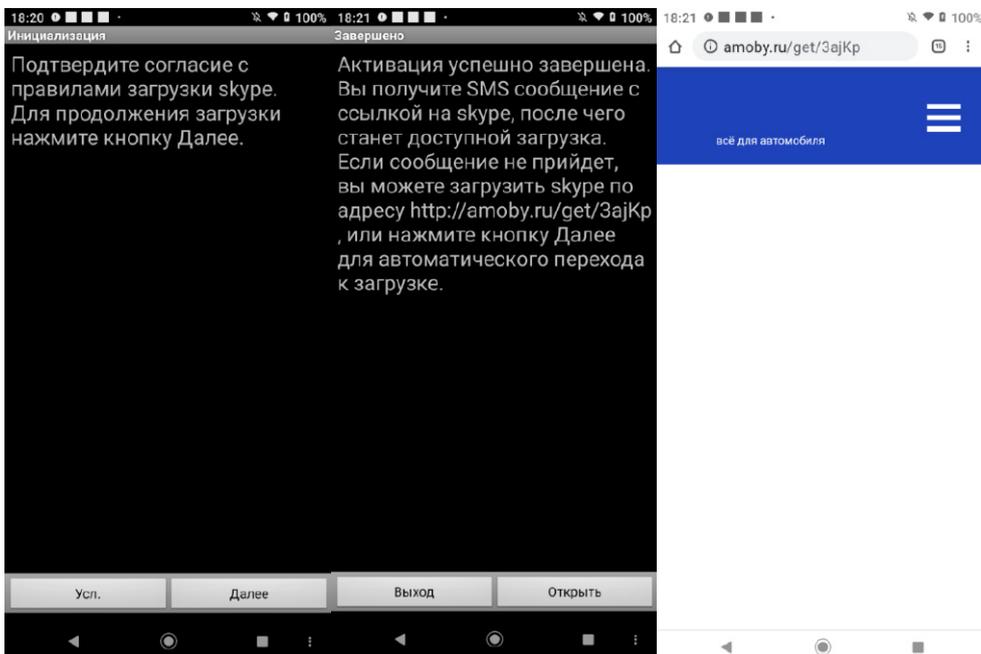
- skype
- Skype
- skype-android
- Skype - free IM video calls Hack
- Skype для Android
- Skype 9.3
- Skype Mobile
- Skype_2.7.0.907
- Skype_Android
- skype注册拉人进群组
- skype自动语音广告
- skypelite
- skype改昵称
- skype轰炸eric

The most common malware family that tries to imitate the original Skype application is by far the one bundled with the **com.soft.android.appinstaller** package name, with 99 Skype-related applications.

Judging by the text and download link, this family of ransomware targets Russians. It attempts to get victims to download a possibly fake Skype app from <http://amoby.ru/get/3ajKp> (although the given link currently doesn't provide any applications) while trying to send "payment" text messages to various short codes (e.g. 7151, 8151, 2858).

"Confirm agreement with the Skype download rules. To continue to download, press Next."

"Activation completed successfully. You will receive an SMS message with a link to Skype, after which the download will become available. If the message doesn't arrive, you can download Skype at <http://amoby.ru/get/3ajKp> or click next for automatic transition to download."



InfoStealers, DroidJacks, Bankers and other FakeInstallers haven't hesitated in targeting Skype either. We detect all of these applications with variants of Trojan.FakeInst, Trojan.Banker, Trojan.SMSSend, Trojan.InfoStealer and Riskware.Agent. A full list of IoCs for APKs impersonating Skype is available in the Indicators of Compromise section.

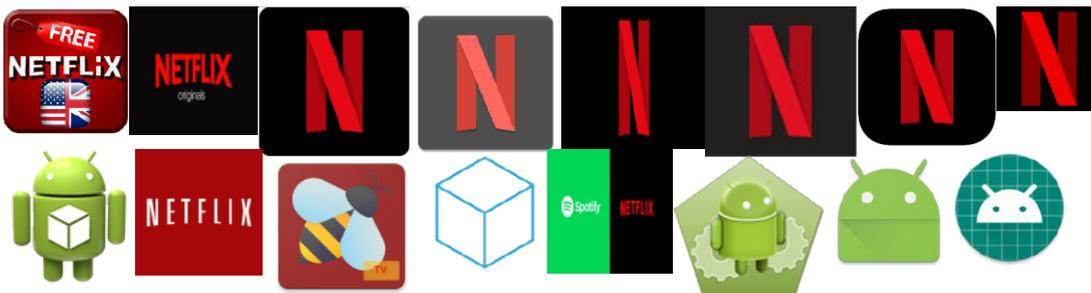
NETFLIX

Netflix hasn't gone unnoticed by cyber-criminals during the lockdown. Almost 100 fake apps trying to imitate the streaming service provider have been found, as more and more people tune into digital content to compensate for a lack of social interaction.

During the first three months of the Coronavirus pandemic, we've seen more Netflix malware in countries such as the United States and Germany. The following chart displays the geographic distribution of the malicious apps:

ChekerNetflix	Netflix Checker
free Netflix	Netflix Free
Free Netflix EN	Netflix hacked
Free Netflix Premium	Netflix hp
Netflix	Netflix Premium
netflix	Netflix Premium by APKMODY
NETFLIX	Netflix Premium by MODPLAY
NetFlix	NETFLIX UHD
Netflix-hacked	NETFLIX VPN V 2
Netflix-MOD-Final	Netflix.apk
Netflix 1	NetflixMOD
netflix 2	NetflixPlayer
Netflix 3	NetflixySpotify
Netflix App	pelis de netflix.com
Netflix by APKMODY	

The fake applications come with various icons, some closer to the service's visual identity than others:

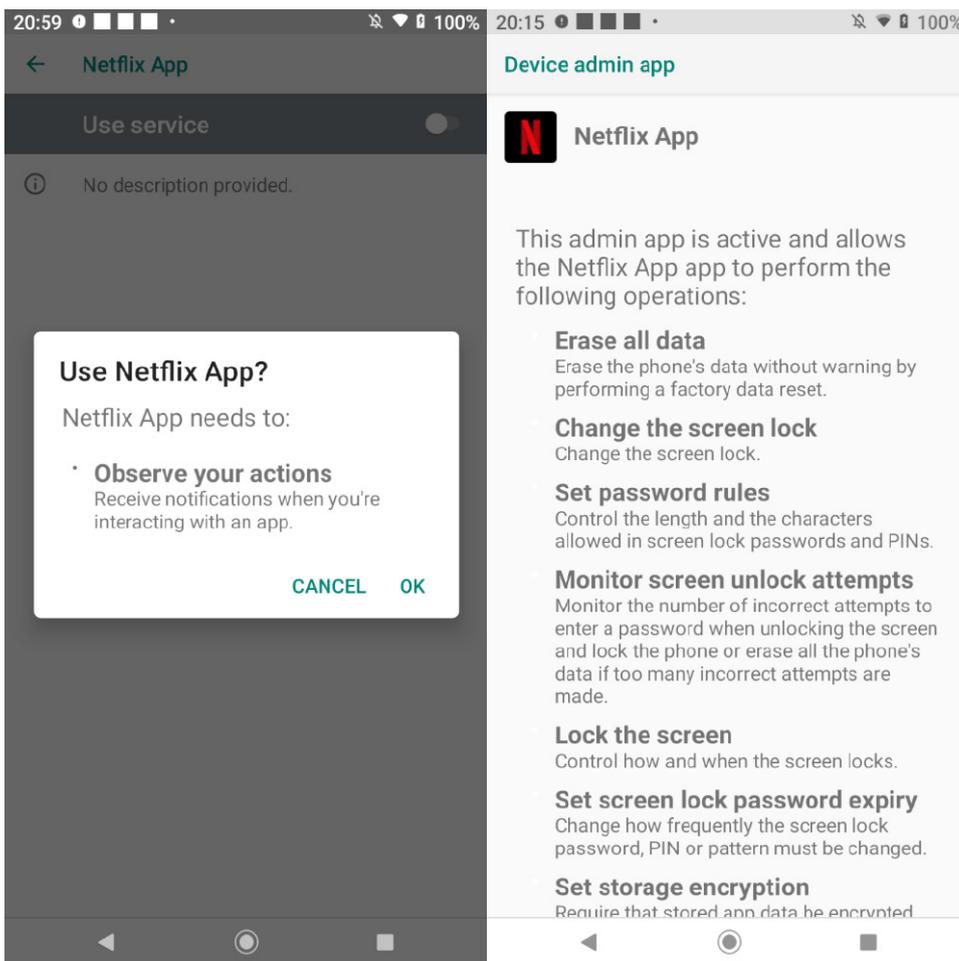


A list of IoCs is available in the dedicated section at the end of this whitepaper.

SpyNote

Almost a third of these apps are different versions of the same app – the same family – and therefore have the same package name: **cmf0.c3b5bm90zq.patch**.

They follow the malware author's favorite behavior pattern: ask for accessibility, ask for device admin rights and hide their icon, as the application completely lacks usable features. Once the device is infected, the apps keep tabs on what victims do in the background, spy on text messages, install applications if instructed to do so by their CnC, record audio in the proximity of the device's microphone, and more.



Command and control servers:

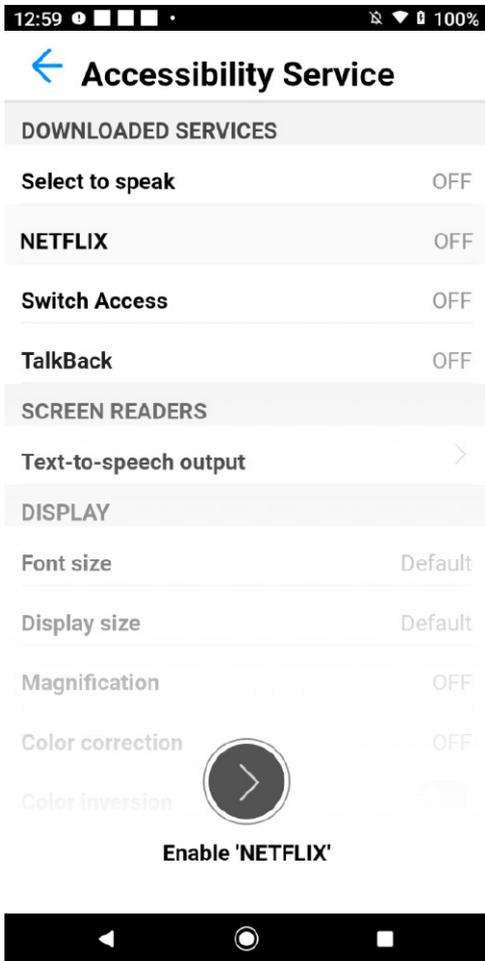
Domains	IPs	Location
spydark.ddns.net	105.159.8.252	Morocco, Tangier
blueboxi.ddns.net	-	-
hajilsaad.ddns.net	160.176.32.70	Morocco, Agadir
a7aa.ddns.net	197.59.115.31	Egypt, Cairo
wordswag.ddns.net	41.111.108.252	Algeria, Messaad
0.tcp.ngrok.io	3.19.3.150	US, Columbus
7aga.ddns.net	197.38.178.119	Egypt, Cairo
hager44.ddns.net	94.47.27.189	Syria, Damascus
cracker012.ddns.net	196.90.134.217	Morocco, Agadir
hexohexo.ddns.net	-	-
STARLORD3307-62594.portmap.io	193.161.193.99	Russia, Saint Petersburg
hexo6664.ddns.net	41.104.38.17	Algeria, Sidi Moussa
arris05.ddns.net	141.255.146.118	France, Paris
spynoteaness2020.hopto.org	105.99.221.139	Algeria, Ras el Oued
azer123456.hopto.org	196.64.240.79	Morocco, Fes

Cerberus RAT

Another Android malware family that commonly targets Netflix is the Cerberus RAT (Remote Access Trojans). Bitdefender found almost 20 Cerberus Trojan files disguised as Netflix apps in the last month alone. Unlike the previously discussed family, Cerberus randomizes its application package names (e.g. ypcttczshlwohemirygyapx.eea.uuclsnrtjxfeykitgzy), so one device can run multiple instances of this malware at the same time.

These applications request accessibility rights in terms of special requests to function. Once granted, the app uses the classic stealth mechanism of hiding their icon and will proceed to accept other permission requests by itself. Some versions disable Play Protect services to make sure it won't cause any problems in the future. The apps then wait for commands from their command and control servers.

The Cerberus family also uses accessibility features to protect itself from uninstallation by returning the device to the home screen if the user attempts to go to Settings -> Applications to uninstall an app.



WipeLocker

WipeLocker malware has also witnessed a spike lately, as operators strive to grab a share of the newly-available pool of victims looking for Netflix apps in the wrong place.

Immediately after being granted device admin rights, these fake apps wipe out their host's memory card. Then, before locking the device screen (different samples use different pictures for this), they send an SMS message to every contact in the device's list with a random text. One of them goes like this:

"HEY!!! <contact name> Please send me 220 bob kwaMpesa to this number [mobile-phone-number] I have Fuliza in my line. I am really stranded hapakwa stage. Nitakurefund please. "

The text seems to have random words switched to their Swahili equivalent, as "kwaMpesa" (probably a reference to the popular [M-Pesa payment platform](#)), "hapakwa" to "here for" and "Nitakurefund" to "I will teach you".

Other versions of the text are:

"Ralika당신의모든범죄를잊을수는없어. 나는너에게나를해칠수있게 할 것이고, java html C ++이 너에게 올 것이다" (Korean: *"Ralika I can't forget all your crimes. I will let you hurt me, java html c ++ will come to you"*)

"Aki nimekwamahapa stage. Please send me hata 50 bob kwaMpesa to this number [mobile-phone-number] I have Fuliza in my line. Please nitakurefund. Will call you nkifika home"

"Please send me airtime to this number[mobile-phone-number] I have a debt in my line and I need to contact someone urgently I will appreciate."

Some of the malware's functionalities aren't executed if an application with a certain package name exists on the device.

```
public void keepRunningActivity(Context context) {
    DeviceManager deviceManager = new DeviceManager();
    if (!isPackageExisted(context, context.getResources().getString(R.string.packagename))) {
        new Async_sendSMS(context).execute(new Void[0]);
        getTopActivity(context);
        return;
    }
    try {
        if (deviceManager.isDeviceAdminActive(context)) {
            deviceManager.deactivateDeviceAdmin(context);
        }
    } catch (Exception e) {
        e.printStackTrace();
    }
}
```

The applications that the malware checks for include com.geo and com.hellboy. These two applications are utilities that search for package names associated with WipeLocker and uninstall the malware.

Other malware families discovered trying to take advantage of Netflix's increasing popularity are DroidJack, AndroRAT and other types of spyware.

Indicators of Compromise

An up-to-date list of indicators of compromise is available to Bitdefender Advanced Threat Intelligence users. More information about the program is available at <https://www.bitdefender.com/oem/advanced-threat-intelligence.html>.

Fake Skype apps
092392cfd5823b7cfcb0231c125d2ca
6dc9504881a98bedaa1706a078935212
7f3ec9b57814a5e998bc6746c6d3c693
579255d3d98a94ce09981fd9d6f9ccaf
ad38eaf138bbdda5cfd0c075b946c67
88ae31b95554cc3dc01e357bc3c87b74
2a75e863a608424d188af74d31b5ef1e
cac3a5ff4988499457138b11ecf265d8
23e062b7354560e6571d28749849ea11
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574363a1f8634ae5c0610a0987cd26fb
7e32eb63db3cfbe805486a62b62b0c21
3a1fb2d73b3bdc2fe01a689bd3e6b672
52670c7cd7fc1de383bc7fef5768571c
98b0d66c785c89f7de3ee82eb40d8857
453c218ac03d17ec5b820f7299a5244c
c6062b4c84ed293da92874654718d65a
ebd87e0227f4328eca606299c4c71c56
c7782fbb27ca989403b85df4e88fedc4
f98b1f682aeb34cd4c5d4e38620dfb29
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f18dbe60f5b730f7d2acb2023a2676e0
d364262494d97a21d25b73b20e7b5bd3
e865d16eb974be99aff7a83531ab9289
e0dc1d5bbc73067c9f5bd01282660ba1
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8d79839cdbc6c3963270397cfef273
942c329e754b780a7b70571bc1711683
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d1181b043968f4d46f3643celdc591b8
445acb7e3c740b07877f69b043124582
a41c06fcc1105f162b9ec35431bb01cad
47e34fac05cfff12b5baa72beb753490
8626916dd40e1a43e3cebabd4f2969a5
798239e59688b9863e5c63cd650d1d43
3f954af5b772a8b6a4e625ff1a04c339
15d83d3295fd9daf20292d6e804ad94c
4d5984a83032a693fd702a7f4f16408f
7c0eca0fa4981d3d062accaeb48bb8fb
cfb5429fc32a8e68becd8068f904adce
15496dc7749a8fc06dde60898513f3c9
0fd9dd7a0d6dd3256c5319e215067faf
4be1c0a45302d5473ff78dcd90fa1e98
32e415a8b1d173e446251e866e94d70e
9e0e67a60cf2f8bd058d75404c5879a1

Fake Skype apps
3973f48cc9e4f4f2591e2478011520f9
a765ce1d9f9333425d300b5507b8d03b
3b911be1d14f3d497d4f854aad884c30
16c98b09ac9aa85bf2f90abfac3cdd66
0822fb4b48e358db7802fc4171828fb8
108ba6bbf981f1de7173e1e26aac60bc
52fffccece2cb701a2e4c98d30c27e184
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b1820532aa8bae01602ec65f1682fb61
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34e0a1674c03e99b6a711bf2fdd019ba
418d3e507bb62a99e5c18dc3e89f103d
fc669416dd4b04f772e5cfd308abc3fc
fa40ce167b1b902554acb52e62bb7391
ca59cae18dff39d8f2ab588ee8ebec33
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9b4f54ba4b6f054f0c17aad8b6f25e05
7602b142b18795dc8450f6139b0cfc2c8
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f9dafbb8070eb27a16871ae535f305f
b66406cf2b6507f4e6fe8a19459f0146
117cfb772e162558bf3d50334288ef5b
3324102c6d15c445dea67fbc047f469a
8c9c95acb56cd50f07226dce2dcb2ab
86c618e9b4e9a8f66998bedd2e247415
2d9337a1ad18ae79971d4414fd2f6da4
6e2c6f0258a5cfff5cdea124f1a6e4b1e
c49212de0d0e737a1c94f7a08e2d7248

Fake Skype apps
6e50f05575a330e4744f7bc6ae29bce8
d80b8814b8e6e13678671a4ac6bf0d24
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61c5aed9d34ec7fccc822aa48514d758
74f00f1abe6522445bd860877549a087
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49e3931b1ab6850571b4edd45c48cf5b
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099596be2ec82c0f5061a61fd3eca846
4759a1e683f6b7ce9b1abc97d6a5b446
9873485d9f13d60f381e4042d9ac3c50
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157b93e5467aaa049a76ee5c3601dd74
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239b1539b5214714fa0a707cd250d5e8f67
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c999d3867d3dd483b9046e8f2871b779
3bc1a7c8ebdf2a162980cdb8ec1644b2
7e2db73b389b19a63f53d7f088b6cf8
b6c5259f58522b3e4c579244df189aa7
3368de63d2e2762d5408056447db33d4
d63ed05792d23e6283a40c95ce1ce7c8
4e69b4472845f7556e7a2a205ac4179b
6cd34b4ecb762e6070645b32c90422ce

Fake Skype apps
612d37628bcffe45ba89ed62acdcdb15
6a27b55197c30f04c67f68061e20f424
13ce76ed40a4fdb00fa56c57904c5ffe
23d7c3dbdeabf3960ffbad8fc2038fc3
f58a3b2ffeb80a5e3a7b96519252a201
e6216c4ae5c66f855be3ccfa09f78b0c
3a74dfa62aaa0787ee5e4b09573e5ef0
81a98fd0446f51443f7e19ab5d34e4d1
d788b774ac06f9b66a25adfff988abc3
26c0e37a61e31a122b1c72006d78e148
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543e1c6f2b643779a1d783d3bd39e15a
4dlbee08269b5f1c2813d345f98f0dc6
5cb3a9637d0323f872f59e1b803ff266
24312cc6cbb4dc4a342878d3230877db
fae54defd2f2395c36238bdc93a38d6a
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Fake Netflix apps
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RECOGNIZED BY LEADING ANALYSTS AND INDEPENDENT TESTING ORGANIZATIONS



TECHNOLOGY ALLIANCES



Bitdefender

UNDER THE SIGN OF THE WOLF

Founded 2001, Romania
Number of employees 1800+

Headquarters
Enterprise HQ – Santa Clara, CA, United States
Technology HQ – Bucharest, Romania

WORLDWIDE OFFICES

USA & Canada: Ft. Lauderdale, FL | Santa Clara, CA | San Antonio, TX | Toronto, CA

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