

## TECHNOLOGY DOESN'T MAKE SCHOOL PUPILS SMARTER: STUDY

**TOKYO:** Computers do not noticeably improve school pupils' academic results and can even hamper performance, an OECD report said yesterday that looked at the impact of technology in classrooms across the globe. While almost three quarters of pupils in the countries surveyed used computers at schools, the report by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development found technology had

made no noticeable improvement in results.

Conversely, in high-achieving schools in parts of Asia, where smartphones and computers have become an integral part of people's everyday lives, technology was far less prevalent in the classrooms. In South Korea, students used computers for an average of nine minutes at school and in Hong Kong, only 11 minutes—just a fraction of the 58

minutes spent in Australia, 42 in Greece and 39 in Sweden.

"Where computers are used in the classroom, their impact on student performance is mixed at best," OECD's education director Andreas Schleicher said in a report, the think-tank's first on the topic. "Students who use computers very frequently at school do a lot worse in most learning outcomes, even after accounting for social

background and student demographics."

The report measured the impact of technology use at school on international test results, such as the OECD's Pisa tests taken in dozens of countries around the world and other exams measuring digital skills. It found that education systems which have invested heavily in information and communications technology have seen "no noticeable improve-

ment" in results for reading, mathematics or science.

The OECD urged schools to work with teachers to turn technology into a more powerful tool in the classroom and develop more sophisticated software for experimentation and simulation, social media and games. "The real contributions ICT can make to teaching and learning have yet to be fully realized and exploited," it concluded. — AFP

## WHEN SHARING IS CARING



By Jyoti Lalchandani

The news media has been awash this week with salacious gossip surrounding the latest high-profile security breach of a multinational Internet-based business. And while the issues currently causing so much damage to Ashley Madison and its 37 million users may seem a whole dubious other world away, there's nothing like a massive leak of extremely sensitive customer data, credit card details, and internal emails from the CEO to resharpen the focus of enterprise IT leaders on that perennial bugbear of cybersecurity.

As cybersecurity incidents multiply in both frequency and complexity, the resulting enterprise countermeasures are often woefully mismatched against the technological prowess of those doing the hacking. Attacks are improvised, targeted, technically focused, and rapidly adaptable, and as we have seen this past week, they can have truly devastating consequences.

The hackers can be well-financed criminal enterprises or acting as agents of nation states, and interspersed in this spectrum of malfeasance is a sinister motley crew of privateers who improvise heists for political or theft reasons. The damage typically follows a period of extensive reconnaissance and is usually both swift and unrelenting in nature. Tasked with defending their networks against increasingly capable adversaries that have the technical resources to innovate their methods, organizations therefore require rapid and reliable communications across all computing sites that are exposed to cyber threats.

Compounding this already gloomy picture is the fact that the current raft of cyberattacks are not confined to targeting individual applications. Indeed, not only does today's threat landscape extend beyond the boundaries of individual applications, the breaches in security now involve a combination of penetrations that extend beyond the scope of any enterprise, industry, or even geographic region. The magnitude and complexity of cyberspace has grown exponentially, and as a consequence threat now emanates from anywhere and everywhere; the origin of attack sources is practically without limits. And while governments around the world have made myriad attempts to gain control over this rapidly escalating threat landscape, their efforts have all too often been found wanting. Indeed, legislation typically only addresses the policies that organizations must put in place, when what is really needed is the provision of comprehensive guidance on how to implement all-encompassing cybersecurity measures. It is little wonder, then, that many CIOs feel like they are fighting an extremely lonely - and ultimately futile - battle against insurmountable odds.

If you've managed to read this far without

seeking refuge in the nearest underground bunker until it all blows over, you're probably thinking that there must surely be a better way. Fortunately, you're not alone, and that is why we're increasingly seeing the formation of industry partnerships that are focused on minimizing the most damaging effects of cybercrime by disseminating proven rapid-reaction cyberattack methods among their peers.

### Collaboration

This collaborative approach is rapidly becoming a necessity in certain high-profile industries. Globally, firms in banking, financial services, pharmaceuticals, chemicals, oil and gas, telecommunications, and defense have already been compromised and are therefore vulnerable to further breaches. In such scenarios, threat-partnering alliances make perfect sense as they facilitate the sharing of knowledge, common experiences, and joint capabilities, and enable the participants to better anticipate and mitigate incoming threats.

With this in mind, intelligence-sharing partnerships should jump-start defensive tactics by learning about successful practices in peer organizations. However, this only becomes possible if the sharing of information is effective and the coordination of responses is rapid. By sharing experiences and drawing on the collective knowledge of their peers, enterprises can gain immediate insights into attackers' methods and realize instant benefits as cyberattacks occur.

To facilitate the effective sharing of information, all the members of any alliance must employ standard data formats and compatible transport protocols. Common data vocabularies are also helpful in establishing a shared understanding of the logical structures of attacks, especially in cases that will allow the encapsulation of exchanged data for further analysis. This use of common terminology allows each firm to catalogue malware conditions in a uniform manner and enables them to then apply countermeasures that can be used to stop incursions across a broad range of targets.

Given the parlous nature of today's threat landscape and the inability of governments around the world to tackle the problem through legislation, it is imperative that enterprises start exploring their own proactive solutions. Peer-to-peer information exchanges that enable partners to share protective methods and best practices certainly have a key role to play in improving the resilience of enterprise infrastructure and reducing vulnerability to repeat or copycat attacks. The victims of the Ashley Madison hack might not agree right now, but sometimes sharing really is caring.



A view of an iPhone in Washington showing the Twitter app, right, among others. Think of it as tweeting for dollars. The social media service Twitter yesterday introduced a feature that enables political candidates and advocacy groups to raise money directly via its mobile application, making it quicker and easier to harvest small donations from followers. — AP

## TWITTER OFFERS NEW CASH STREAM FOR CANDIDATES

### PARTNERSHIP WITH SQUARE INC

**WASHINGTON:** Think of it as tweeting for dollars. The social media service Twitter yesterday introduced a feature that enables political candidates and advocacy groups to raise money directly via its mobile application, making it quicker and easier to harvest small donations from followers.

Campaigns already aggressively use Twitter to spread their message, particularly during live political events such as Wednesday night's Republican presidential debate. The company says that tweets about the August 6 debates on Fox News were viewed more than 1 billion times on Twitter and across the web. And in a race likely to cost more than the \$2 billion spent in 2012, why not look for cash in every corner?

At least a dozen presidential candidates will begin using the new fundraising technique right away, said Jenna Golden, Twitter's director

of political ad sales. While the White House seekers are early adopters, Golden said the fundraising service is also available to local and state-level candidates.

"We think about donating to a campaign as an old-fashioned, traditional process, a cumbersome process," she said. "This was an incredible opportunity for us to simplify and streamline."

Political candidates have been able to raise money through Twitter by linking to the web-based online donation forms. But for people on mobile devices - and that's 80 percent of Twitter's audience - it can be clunky to click through different applications and web pages.

Kentucky Sen. Rand Paul, among the savviest digital fundraisers in the GOP presidential field, has tweeted links to campaign swag, including a red T-shirt that says, "The NSA knows I bought this Rand Paul t-shirt." His campaign and the Democratic National Committee

are among the groups that say they'll make use of Twitter's new in-message fundraising.

Twitter is working with Square Inc., a financial services company, to collect the money and the information that the Federal Election Commission requires from political donors. Would-be givers fill in their identifying information and link to a debit card.

Several clicks later, the Twitter user's contribution is headed straight for the candidate of their choice, and they can "share" news of their financial support to their own Twitter followers. The candidates also can pay Twitter to promote their fundraising-linked tweets.

"Twitter has been a successful avenue of fundraising for campaigns in the past, and this will make it even more attractive to campaigns as they look at how to allocate precious dollars," said Vincent Harris, a digital strategist for the Paul campaign. — AP

## OCADO STILL EXPECTS TO SIGN OVERSEAS DEAL THIS YEAR CFO SAYS CONFIDENT OF 2015 DEAL

**LONDON:** British online grocer Ocado remains confident of signing its first technology deal with an overseas retailer this year and is in talks with multiple potential partners, it said yesterday.

Analysts see securing international deals as the key influence on Ocado's stock market valuation. The firm signed a third-party deal with Britain's fourth largest grocer Morrisons in 2013 which helped the firm to report the first annual pretax in its 15-year history. Announcing that profit in February, Ocado said it aimed to agree an overseas technology partnership in 2015, with north America and western European markets the focus.

As investors wait for a deal they have become increasingly nervous. Shares in Ocado, which have had a rollercoaster ride since they debuted at 180 pence apiece in 2010, have fallen 21 percent so far this year. "We're still targeting to sign one this year," Chief Financial Officer Duncan Tatton-Brown told reporters. "It's been a busy summer as it would need to be if we're going to achieve the target that we set out," he said. Ocado shares rose up to 5 percent in early trading but were down 0.3 percent at 315 pence by 1030 GMT, valuing the business at about 1.86 billion pounds (\$2.87 billion).

### DIVIDED OPINION

Founded by three former Goldman Sachs bankers in 2000 Ocado has divided opinion like few other stocks. Some view its home deliveries from giant distribution centres as the future of grocery shopping, while others regard it as a costly

and complicated venture that will never make sustained profits.

Some analysts are concerned that new Morrisons CEO David Potts remains to be convinced of the merits of the firm's 25-year contract with Ocado. Last week he described Ocado as a "competitor" rather than a partner and said he was considering "the broader digital opportunity."

"We see a possibly more constrained future relationship," said

Shore Capital analyst Clive Black, a long time Ocado sceptic who has a "sell" stance on the stock.

Analysts also note that upmarket grocer Waitrose has the option of terminating its own supply agreement with Ocado in 2017 and the threat posed to Ocado of any entry by Amazon into UK online grocery. Ocado said its gross retail sales rose 15.3 percent to 252 million pounds in the 12 weeks to August 9, its fiscal

third quarter, having increased 15.7 percent in its first half.

Average orders per week rose 16.6 percent to 190,000, though average order size dipped 1.1 percent to 110.46 pounds. Tatton-Brown said Ocado saw slightly less price competition in the quarter than in the previous six months and said the firm expected to continue growing slightly ahead of the online grocery market. —Reuters



**TOKYO:** President of Sony Computer Entertainment Japan Asia (SCEJA) Atsushi Morita introduces the new PlayStation Vista during a press conference in Tokyo yesterday. SCEJA held the event prior to the Tokyo Game Show starting on September 17. — AFP

## WEARABLE TECH MARKET BURSTING AT THE SEAMS: SURVEY

**WASHINGTON:** The market for wearable tech, led by Apple Watch and a range of connected fitness gadgets, is exploding, a survey showed yesterday. The report by research firm IDC said global wearable device shipments will reach 76.1 million units in 2015, up 163.6 percent from 2014.

By 2019, worldwide shipments will reach 173.4 million units, a growth rate of nearly 23 percent over the next five years. The biggest growth segment in this category is "smart wearables," which includes watches and devices with more capabilities than "basic" wearables such as fitness bands.

"Smart wearables only account for about a third of the total market today while basic wearables, led by fitness trackers, account for the rest," said IDC analyst Jitesh Ubrani.

But Urbani said smart wearables are on track to surpass the less functional basic wearable category in 2018. "Smart wearables will quickly move from a smartphone accessory primarily focused

on notifications to a more advanced wearable computer capable of doing more processing on its own," he said in a statement.

IDC said it sees Apple Watch and the watchOS operating system capturing some 58 percent of the market this year, projecting sales for 13.9 million units. Apple has not released any sales figures so far.

Android and Android Wear, the operating system from Google, is expected to grab a 17.4 percent market share with 4.1 million units selling this year, according to IDC.

Smart wristwear, including watches and bands that are capable of running third-party applications, is a key growth driver, according to IDC.

This includes the Apple Watch, Motorola's Moto 360, Samsung's Gear S-series, and Pebble's Time. "We are at a stage now where more vendors are getting into this segment, setting the stage for more selection and ultimately more volumes," said IDC's Ramon Llamas. — AFP



**TOKYO:** UBI soft managing director Asia, Steve Miller introduces the company's new battle game, "For Honor" during the Sony Computer Entertainment Japan Aisa (SCEJA) press conference in Tokyo yesterday. — AFP