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Tekst 13

The internet is broken – and we can no longer do without it

Martin Vander Weyer



- 1 'The internet is broken,' a corporate chieftain told me last week. It was an arresting remark, but he did not mean that his home Wi-Fi hub had gone down and required a jab with a paperclip, as mine frequently does. He meant that the entire web has become so insecure — so plagued by industrial-scale scammers, viral anarchists and, according to the US Department of Justice, Chinese military hackers — that it can no longer be trusted for any form of confidential data transmission, from online payments to state secrets.
- 2 By way of confirmation, as I type, in comes an email with a toxic fake 'invoice' attached. Among the last few days' worth of deleted items, I can see half a dozen well-crafted attempts at data theft or worse, including 'Click here' messages purporting to be from BT, Santander and Paypal,

and a 'Thought you might be interested in this' link from a hacked lady member of the House of Lords.

- 3 Perhaps one of them contained a 'ransom-ware trojan' called CryptoLocker that aims to encrypt my files then demand payment to decrypt them again; or Gameover Zeus — 'the most sophisticated virus ever... used to steal millions of dollars around the world,' according to a recent report. At the personal level, only multiple passwords and constant vigilance offer any hope of day-to-day protection; one peril is fake emails offering to cure viruses but actually inserting new ones.
- 4 At the government and big-company level, many billions will have to be invested to conserve the integrity of systems that are now too interwoven and too dependent on speed to revert to safer, slower channels. In the ruling fever for web-based solutions, it turns out we have consigned almost all of our commercial and administrative life to a technology most users barely understand, and with no conception of the risks it carries.
- 5 A report from the computer security firm McAfee this week declared cyber-crime to be almost as big as the global drugs trade and costing the UK £6.8 billion a year. Some experts took issue with McAfee's big numbers — including a global cost of £266 billion, and an estimate of '150,000 European jobs lost' a year. But all agree that the problem is a serious threat to growth in the advanced economies and that its measurable size is misleading anyway, because so much of it goes unreported.
- 6 For all the talk of international law-enforcement co-operation, this is not a category of wrong-doing which our constabularies (reported this week to be cutting back on horses and dogs) are in any sense equipped to investigate. Nor are afflicted states likely to share everything they know — because you don't have to be Julian Assange to suspect that arms of the state far remote from your local police station are the biggest hackers of all.

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Lees bij de volgende opgave eerst de vraag voordat je de bijbehorende tekst raadpleegt.

Tekst 13 The internet is broken

- 1p 43 “and we can no longer do without it” (tweede deel van de titel)
Wordt dit gegeven in het artikel nog eens benadrukt?
Zo nee, antwoord “Nee”. Zo ja, noteer het nummer van de alinea waarin dit gebeurt.