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As found on the web and other sources!

Tech World Abuzz Over 'Windows 11'

Rumor



By John Lister in “infopackerts.com”.

The rumor-mill is filled with claims Windows 11 is imminent. It doesn't seem to be based on much concrete and would certainly be a major change of attitude from Microsoft.

Most of the speculation seems to trace back to a Microsoft post on Twitter which includes an animation of a window in the shape of the Windows logo, casting a shadow into the room.

(Source: bgr.com)

The excitement comes from the fact that although the window has the horizontal line in the middle (making a cross), the shadow intentionally does not. That means the shadow somewhat resembles an 11 (or 111 depending on your perspective.)

"Next Generation" Of Windows

To add to this theme, the post is promoting a Microsoft event on June 24 that takes place at 11am Eastern Time. That may well be a coincidence, but is unusually early for a Microsoft launch.

The speculation led to closer analysis of recent posts by Microsoft executives including one referring to not being "this excited for a new version of Windows since Windows 95!" and another using the term "next generation of Windows." (Source: theverge.com)

The truth behind the story likely falls into one of three categories of possibility. One is that either Microsoft is simply having a little fun or that people are reading too much into a genuine coincidence.

Sun Valley Name Under Threat

Another is that Microsoft has decided it wants to keep Windows feeling fresh and will simply use the numbering for the major updates to Windows, rather than producing completely new version of Windows every few years as used to be the case. "Windows 11" would certainly make the next update seem more important than its scheduled codename of "Sun Valley" and reference number 21H2.

The third possibility is a total about-face in Microsoft's Windows strategy with Windows 11 being a completely new edition that would require an upgrade or outright purchase. That seems unlikely given there have been no serious rumors so far of Microsoft going back to that model. Given many recent "major" updates have been somewhat underwhelming, it's hard to see how Microsoft could have enough in the works to justify a completely new edition without some details already having leaked.

What's Your Opinion?

Do you expect to see a Windows 11 any time soon? Will you care if it's simply a change to the update naming? What would it take for you to move to a completely new version of Windows if that's what Windows 11 entails?

Covid-detecting face masks



Covid may be our last global pandemic, thanks to technology. Specifically, we all went into lockdown because of ignorance — we didn't know who was infected and who was not infected, so the 99% who were not infected had to pretend that they were, because we didn't know. In the future, wearable sensors will tell us who's sick and who isn't, so only the sick will have to be quarantined. To wit: Eggheads at the Wyss Institute for Biologically Inspired Engineering at Harvard University and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology invented synthetic biology reactions that can be embedded into fabrics, theoretically turning clothing and other items into covid detectors. Sadly, their wFDCF face mask (pictured) is a Catch-22. If you're not infected, you don't need to wear a mask. But if you don't wear the mask, you won't know if you're infected.

Nine Rogue Android Apps to Delete Right Now



By John Lister on July, 8 2021 at 02:07PM EDT

Nine popular Google Play apps were actually scams to steal Facebook logins according to a security company. Although Google has removed some of them, they may still be on devices.

All the apps were promoted as performing a simple task and appear to have worked as designed. Although that meant more effort for the developers, the idea was to make users less suspecting that the apps were actually harmful.

The affected apps had the following names and functions:

- App Lock Keep (child safety tool)
- App Lock Manager (child safety tool)
- Horoscope Daily (astrology)
- Horoscope Pi (astrology)
- Inwell Fitness (health)
- Lockit Master (child safety tool)
- PIP Photo (image editing)
- Processing Photo (photo editing)
- Rubbish Cleaner (device optimization)

While the apps all worked as promised, users were told they could access additional features or remove in-app adds by logging in to their Facebook accounts.

Facebook Login Was Legit

The app would then load a genuine Facebook login screen and, once the user typed in their login details, take them to the real Facebook site and automatically log in. However, the app would also pass on the login details to a server operated by the scammers.

Security company Dr Web analyzed the code of the rogue apps and says that although Facebook was likely the target as it is so widely used, there's no technical reason why the approach could have been modified to target other sites and services. (Source: [drweb.com](https://www.drweb.com))

Google Play Security No Magic Bullet

The code didn't reveal what the scammers did with the stolen login details. The simplest option would be selling batches of account details to hackers on the black market. More sophisticated options include going through the account and either posing as the user to target their friends with further scams, or gathering personal information to use for identity theft.

As well as uninstalling the apps immediately, users who remember typing in Facebook login details should change their password immediately. (Source: lifelifehack.com)

It's also a good reminder that while it's safest to stick to Google Play for Android apps, it doesn't offer a 100 percent guarantee that apps are safe. Sticking to well-known and trustworthy app developers can further reduce risks.

What's Your Opinion?

Would you think twice about logging into a social media account while using a third-party app? Should Google remotely uninstall apps from devices when it removes them from Google Play for security reasons? Could it do more to vet apps in the first place or are such scams inevitable.

Judge: Facebook Not a Monopoly; Stock Skyrockets



By John Lister on July, 5 2021 at 03:07PM EDT

A judge has thrown out two complaints from federal and state government that claimed Facebook broke competition laws. After the ruling, Facebook's market value rose to more than a trillion dollars.

The first case was brought by the Federal Trade Commission (FTC), which said Facebook not only had a monopoly but had unfairly maintained it.

The FTC said the monopoly was in the market of "personal social networking services" and that its unfair actions included using technology to block interoperability between Facebook and other services. (Source: courtlister.com)

Instagram Buyout Questioned

Meanwhile the attorneys general of 45 states mirrored the accusation of the Facebook monopoly and argued it had acted unfairly by buying out photo posting service Instagram and messaging tool WhatsApp.

Both suits called for courts to order Facebook to pay damages, cease anti-competitive behavior and undergo "divestiture or reconstruction of businesses": in other words to be forced to sell off parts of its operations.

As a general principle of antitrust laws, those bringing a case need to show a company not only holds a dominant position in a market but has acted unfairly to maintain or exploit that dominance.

Market Share Unclear

Federal Judge James Boasberg said the FTC had failed to prove the monopoly position. He took the unusual step of dismissing the complaints while keeping the case open. That leaves it open to them rewriting the case to give more evidence. (Source: bbc.co.uk)

According to Boasberg, the FTC had simply argued that Facebook's market share was "more than 60 percent" but hadn't given enough detail on how it defined the market or what it used the measure market share. He noted the issue was made complex because social networking services are free to use, so there's no way to compare revenue from sales.

Boasberg also noted that there's nothing inherently illegal about blocking interoperability with rival technologies. He did say a court could examine the Instagram and Whats App purchases, though this wasn't a signal either way on how it might find.

What's Your Opinion?

Do you think Facebook has an unfair monopoly? Is it possible to define market share in social networking? Does Facebook's dominance harm consumers and if so, should regulators use competition law to prevent this harm?

Mike's List of Brilliantly Bad Ideas

1. Annoying home office noise



With the pandemic fading in highly vaccinated countries, workers across the world are putting on actual pants and returning to the office. To ease the transition, the Score a Score website is offering a collection of background sounds called “[Homesick](#)” that reminds you of the glory days of remote work. The sounds, which you can mix and match to create the perfect home office sonic environment in your corporate cubicle, include: “construction,” “traffic,” “leaf blowers,” “trapped fly,” “teenager,” “fighting couple,” “upstairs mystery stampede” and even “teething baby.”
