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[apple watch, lack of security. a public service announcement.](#)

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matthew
fox
Posts: 18

 1. May 01, 2015 11:02PM UTC

i wrote tim cook's email and product-security about the apple watch on the 26th. they never replied. as far as i know they are ignoring me. i feel it is my duty to bring up a discussion about the lack of security on the apple watch, and try to get apple to fix this. the tracking # i got from product security was 622116134.

anytime you write tim cook an email, your supposed to get a phone call or an email back from his executive team. they ignored me.

i feel this is the best place to talk about this. because we all love apple, and we all our under non disclosure agreements. what we talk about here is not supposed to leave apple seed. the worst thing that can happen is some jack off from unbox therapy starts another #watchgate campaign and gets 20 million youtube videos and the apple watch sales take a nose dive. i am probably risking losing access to this forum for this post.

I've been looking around on mac rumors and other forums and as far as i can tell , i think i am the only one that knows about this.

my worse nightmare is ill be the one that destroyed all the apple watch sales single handed.

the less people that know that apple does not protect your watch the better.

there are some things that are designed in the watch that apple can fix

- 1) a lost apple watch cannot be located by find my iPhone
- 2) apple inserts delays into the lock screen of the apple watch after six incorrect attempts.
- 3) you can set your apple watch to erase itself after 10 incorrect attempts.
- 4) once you unlock your iPhone your watch remains unlocked as long as you are wearing it.
- 5) you can go to iCloud.com and de-authorize apple pay remotely.
- 6) you can ping your iPhone from your watch, but you cannot ping your watch from your iPhone.
- 7) the apple watch seems to only connect to the wifi network that the iPhone is connected too, it cannot connect to a wifi network on its own
- 8) i can't find how to manually force a backup to the iPhone. as far as i can tell my last watch related backup was 4/26 with 0 backups since

now here is the bad news. apple isn't protecting your watch with any kind of iCloud lock what so ever. if someone steals your gold watch, its gone forever. there is no way to track it, and worse, there is no way to prevent someone else from pairing it to their iPhone. like earlier versions of iOS , its designed to protect your personal information more then the device itself.

how to erase an apple watch without the owners permission, apple calls this procedure " remove paring from the apple watch when the iPhone is no longer in range "

- 1) turn off the paired iPhone or remove the watch from the local wifi network that the iPhone is connected to.
- 2) verify the apple watch is locked by a passcode and not attached to anyone's arm
- 3) press and hold down the contacts button (not the crown)
- 4) this will bring up the shutdown menu
- 5) force touch shutdown
- 6) this brings up 'erase all content and settings'
- 7) press 'erase content and settings'
- 8) when you return your iPhone to a charger, it will erase itself.

it is now ready to be paired to a different iCloud account. i tried this, and me and my brother's iCloud accounts now have the same watch on them.

before i paired the watch , i did a full erase of the iPhone and activated it with a different iCloud account.

stuff that needs to be tested further would be is the watch only pairing to the same iPhone ? and that is why i am able to pair it to multiple iCloud accounts ? maybe only a certain charger , like the one that came with it, is allowing the watch to be erased ?

its possible that once you erase a apple watch without the owners permission it somehow retains the imei and serial numbers from the original phone and that is why i am having no issues registering it again. this needs to be tested.

as far as i can tell with my testing is that the apple watch only protects your personal information and your credit cards. and it does not protect itself what so ever.

this post is intended to be confidential. do not share this information with anyone.

if anyone reads this and shares CONFIDENTIAL APPLE INFORMATION and unbox therapy starts to make youtube videos , people are going to have a field day erasing watches or stealing them and it WILL BE YOUR FAULT

* Edited: May 01, 2015 11:13PM UTC

Quote

Reply



Ronald
Leroux
Posts:
12620

2. May 02, 2015 01:18AM UTC in response to matthew fox's post [1]

Hi Matthew,

It does not mean that what you sent is being ignored. I agree that Apple should have at least the courtesy of sending a reply, how ever short it might be. Apple has as policy of not discussing security matters in any public way.

Quote

Reply

[Useful?](#)



matthew fox
Posts: 18

3. May 02, 2015 01:30AM UTC in response to matthew fox's post [1]

correction

8) when you return your Apple watch to a charger, it will start erasing itself

Edit

Quote

Reply



Ryszard
Holod
Posts: 593

4. May 02, 2015 03:23AM UTC in response to Ronald Leroux's post [2]

All security measures worked exactly as they should. What the OP is complaining about is that anti-theft **deterrence** measures are not foolproof.

* Edited: May 02, 2015 02:54PM UTC

Quote

Reply

2: [Useful?](#)



Jordan
Hipwell
Posts:
7844

5. May 03, 2015 08:59PM UTC in response to matthew fox's post [1]

Just a few things I wanted to respond to.

anytime you write tim cook an email, your supposed to get a phone call or an email back from his executive team. they ignored me.

Tim received a huge number of emails every day. While he said he reads them all, he definitely does not respond to each of them, nor would he delegate that responsibility to someone else. Very rarely does someone receive a response. You're better off filing your issues via [Bug Reporter](#).

1) a lost apple watch cannot be located by find my iPhone

Right, it doesn't have a GPS chip. If it's out of range of the iPhone it's limited in functionality. (May change in future hardware which may be more independent.)

2) apple inserts delays into the lock screen of the apple watch after six incorrect attempts.

What's the problem here? They have delays on iOS too. That's better than what they do with OS X (no delays at all, nothing to stop you from guessing forever).

3) you can set your apple watch to erase itself after 10 incorrect attempts.

Also a good thing.

4) once you unlock your iPhone your watch remains unlocked as long as you are wearing it.

Makes sense. It auto locks when removed from the wrist. Again, no problem.

5) you can go to iCloud.com and de-authorize apple pay remotely.

Nice feature.

6) you can ping your iPhone from your watch, but you cannot ping your watch from your iPhone.

That would seemingly make for a good enhancement request. You could even file it here using FBA. Note it might still require the watch be within range of the iPhone. Also note it likely wouldn't be used often - you'll misplace your phone much more frequently than a device you normally always have on your wrist.

7) the apple watch seems to only connect to the wifi network that the iPhone is connected too, it cannot connect to a wifi network on its own

Makes sense, it's connected to the iPhone, not sure how you consider that a security risk Apple could fix.

8) i can't find how to manually force a backup to the iPhone. as far as i can tell my last watch related backup was 4/26 with 0 backups since

Not sure how backups work, am curious though.

how to erase an apple watch without the owners permission... 8. when you return your ~~iPhone~~ Apple Watch to a charger, it will erase itself.

Hmm where did you find those instructions? If you actually can steal an Apple Watch, run away, reset it while out of range of the iPhone, and set it up to use with a different iPhone, that could be a problem. They should have Activation Lock or some feature to prevent theft - it's worked great for iOS. I've not researched this though, but if it is possible, that would be the only problem I can see out of the concerns you've listed here.

* Edited: May 03, 2015 09:00PM UTC

Quote

Reply

1: [Useful?](#)

 6. May 03, 2015 10:22PM UTC in response to Jordan Hipwell's post [[5](#)]



Jordan Hipwell wrote:

They should have Activation Lock or some feature to prevent theft - it's worked great for iOS.

Colin
Mattson
Posts: 492

Yeah, I would have sworn there was allusion to some kind of activation lock during the announcement press blitz. Since the actual release, though, the only thing approaching a theft deterrent seems (?) to be the PIN lock, which isn't particularly helpful in that context.

On the one hand, it's a watch, and cheaper than watches many people wear every day with no theft deterrent or security measure... on the other hand, it's undoubtedly a lot easier to steal and resell an Apple Watch than an analog timepiece. (Especially an expensive timepiece.)

Quote

Reply

[Useful?](#)



matthew
fox

Posts: 18

[7. May 04, 2015 07:12AM UTC](#) in response to Jordan Hipwell's post [\[5\]](#)

i sorta divided my message into two sections. i wasn't complaining about the not having find my watch, or the pass lock thing, i was just giving an overview of what we know how some of the security features.

i was mostly complaining about the lack of theft protection on the apple watch.

as far as writing tim cook,, anytime you write tim cook a question your email is supposed to be assigned a tracking number, and someone from executive relations is supposed to call you back, or thank you for your email. that is how tim's email works. most of the emails appear to get lost i think.

the instructions i found were freely available on www.apple.com

the point i am trying to make is the apple watch is in accessory, like your car keys, a bic lighter, a bluetooth headset, or a pair of sunglasses.

if it is lost or stolen you will not get it back until apple fixes this wiping problem. all those people who think you need someone's iCloud password or a pin code to erase an apple watch are a bunch of jokers

why apple would allow anybody to wipe an gold watch and pair it to their iCloud account and iPhone without the owners permission or knowledge is a total joke and this needs to be fixed before more people find out

* Edited: May 04, 2015 07:17AM UTC

Quote

Reply



John
Pappas
Posts:
1232

[8. May 04, 2015 11:14AM UTC](#) in response to matthew fox's post [\[7\]](#)

matthew fox wrote:

why apple would allow anybody to wipe an gold watch and pair it to their iCloud account and iPhone without the owners permission or knowledge is a total joke and this needs to be fixed before more people find out

Essentially you're saying that it will be Apple's fault if someone recognizes that you're

wearing an expensive watch (device) and decides to steal it from you because they will then be able to use it for themselves. I might not be getting what you're implying but it seems then that I should blame Rolex if someone sees mine on my wrist and then steals it to use (or sell) on their wrist. Perhaps Rolex should include some type of explosive charge that goes off if my watch were to leave my wrist after a certain length of time.

Now if the Apple Watch could be used to get into your private data after it was stolen then yes Apple should be required to include some safeguards to prevent this. But, again if I'm understanding this, they have. So I'm really not getting your point.

[Quote](#)[Reply](#)

6: [Useful?](#)



9. May 06, 2015 04:25AM UTC in response to matthew fox's post [[1](#)]

Wow, you really sound a bit nuts. Like you should be wearing a tin foil hat!

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David Allen 3: [Useful?](#)
Posts: 1034

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