

# TREND: 22 cities in Texas were struck simultaneously

(Continued from Page A1) companies have begun offering cyberinsurance that covers some of the ransom costs incurred by the victims. One expert told the *New York Times* that such packages could increase the targeting of entities with cyberinsurance since those purchases become part of the public record.

In the wake of such attacks, every device — from tablets issued to city councilors to the laptops installed in police vehicles — must be examined for existing vulnerabilities and hardened against future attacks.

The strain of ransomware that was used in many of the most recent attacks is named Sodinokibi (see related article, *How ransomware works*, this page.)

However, the ransom demanded by hackers from a city are only a portion of the costs they incur. In addition to the ransom, Keizer had to contract with a cybersecurity firm to negotiate with the hackers and

now it will have to spend even more on security in the future data back-ups and, likely, additional consultants to oversee bringing the system back online.

When Atlanta was held hostage in 2018, the attackers requested \$51,000 in Bitcoin — a cryptocurrency — but bringing the city back online was estimated at an additional \$17 million. Whatever costs Keizer is forced to absorb as a result of the attack is likely to result in cost cutting in other places. The largest portion of Keizer's budget goes toward police personnel.

Those behind the attacks are only rarely prosecuted because of the untraceable mechanisms used to make ransom payments.

In a report published by the World Economic Forum, cities of all sizes are urged to prepare for future digital strikes in the same way they would for an earthquake.

"Digital security is not

only about hardware and software. It is about adopting a comprehensive whole-of-city approach. Security must be conceived as an essential priority, something that is designed into every element of the urban infrastructure, not merely introduced as an afterthought. It requires developing the rules, regulations, procedures and budgets for city authorities, businesses and residents to prepare and respond to digital threats when and after they inevitably occur," the report states.

The report cites human error and a failure to implement best practices as the leading causes of such attacks succeeding.

Many attacks could be prevented with relatively simple actions such as "software patching, correct firewall configuration, frequent and redundant backups, and use of multi-factor authentication for logons," the report concludes.

# How ransomware works

By ERIC A. HOWALD  
*Of the Keizertimes*

It will likely take days or weeks to fully understand how Keizer's data systems were held for ransom, but digital strikes on other cities and counties provide some insight into how it all works.

Ransomware is different than what the average user envisions when being hacked. Rather than destroying or downloading data, ransomware makes data inaccessible through encryption that can only be unlocked with a numeric key held by the hackers.

Hackers are typically known to charge ransom based on the number of servers it was able to lock up and payments are made through a web of untraceable digital transactions. Meanwhile in cities with libraries, the hacks meant checking out books with pen and paper logs. For many police departments, hacks resulted in hand-written citations. Emails sent to Keizer city employees bounced back for several days.

According to a malware

Wikipedia site, comprised of knowledge gleaned from those who have dealt with ransomware, a strain known as Sodinokibi is the current scourge of cities near and far.

Sodinokibi doesn't destroy data and many of the users don't appear to download much unless the victim refuses to pay ransom. Sodinokibi, also known as REvil, is believed to have originated in Russia and has already resulted in roughly \$7 million in known ransoms paid.

Ransoms are paid to affiliates of the hacker or group of hackers. The affiliates reportedly keep 60 percent of the ransom paid and that amount increases to 70 percent after three successful transactions. The remainder goes to the actor or actors behind the hack. As of early 2020, there were roughly 40 known affiliates accepting ransom payments for successful Sodinokibi at-

tacks. While many cases are resolved with the payment of a ransom, some Sodinokibi hackers raised the stakes earlier this month, according to Brian Krebs, a cybersecurity reporter with *The Washington Post*.

One of the hackers behind the Sodinokibi ransomware began auctioning off data it stole from a Canadian agricultural production company. The starting price was \$50,000 for 22,000 stolen files. The Krebs report suggests that auctioning data is one way hackers are diversifying their portfolios given the decreased ability of some agencies to pay ransoms as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and the resulting economic crisis.

On a final note, Sodinokibi unleashes its economic havoc with a program so small it could fit on a 3.5-inch floppy disk produced in 1986.

## CASINO, continued from Page A1

The state's current gaming policy remains one casino per tribe on reservation land. A potential Salem casino has long been a part of local conversations, the original proposal was put forward in the

1990s and Oregon's governor was given veto power over any potential off-reservation casinos in a 1997 9th Circuit U.S. Court of Appeals decision.

The Siletz Tribe would need approval from the Secretary of the Department of the Interior and Oregon Gov. Kate Brown before proceeding.

The Siletz proposed splitting any potential revenues with 25 percent going to the state, 25 percent to the Confederated Tribes of the Siletz, and 50 percent divided up between eight federally recognized tribes in Oregon.

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maze  
Maze by Jonathan Graf of Keizer

sudoku  
Enter digits from 1-9 into the blank spaces. Every row must contain one of each digit. So must every column, as must every 3x3 square.

5		4	2	6	
	7	4	8	5	2
9			1		4
	1		4	3	
4	3	6	2	9	
	6	7		5	
	2		4		6
3	6	2	1	8	
	4	8	6		5

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crossword  
Brush Up Your Latin  
By Charles Preston

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59					60				61			
62					63				64			

CREATORS NEWS SERVICE

**ACROSS**

- 1 Rosebud and others
- 6 Old Hebrew measure
- 10 Nimbus
- 14 Giant armadillo
- 15 Tequila sideline
- 16 Arab sultanate
- 17 Pre-war
- 19 Lion's share
- 20 Winter hazard
- 21 Foray
- 22 Portuguese city
- 24 Bring back
- 26 Stirs
- 27 *Sigma*
- 28 Schubert's "Hail, Mary"
- 32 High emotional content
- 35 Road marker
- 36 Frontier lawman
- 37 Taters
- 39 Beloved of Hercules
- 40 Ringlike moldings
- 42 Yields
- 43 Day of wrath: L.
- 44 Central star
- 45 Brumes
- 46 Prickly plant
- 50 Bring into accord
- 53 Semite

**DOWN**

- 1 One of a flight
- 2 Spear
- 3 Major followers
- 4 Bambi's mother
- 5 In secret: L.
- 6 Stan's movie buddy
- 7 Temperate
- 8 Australian bird
- 9 Does over
- 10 Wise man: L.
- 11 Cupid
- 12 Shoe shaper
- 13 Atop
- 18 Vase protuberances
- 23 Apple or pear, e.g.
- 25 Time flies: L.
- 26 Eager
- 28 Evoke chuckles
- 29 Cross
- 30 Key

**ACROSS**

- 54 Free from
- 55 Whistle stop
- 56 In the Lord's year: L.
- 59 Small case
- 60 Simon or Diamond
- 61 Swedish philanthropist
- 62 Music for two
- 63 Swiss archer
- 64 Overly rotund

**DOWN**

- 31 Sweetsop
- 32 Defunct
- 33 Hindu queen
- 34 English composer
- 37 *\_\_\_ York*: 1941 film
- 38 School grps.
- 41 Service-organization member
- 42 To what good end: L.
- 44 Food fish
- 46 Folklore creature
- 47 Ethnic group
- 48 Queues
- 49 Roman civil servant
- 50 Not up
- 51 Ballerina's mini
- 52 Verified
- 53 Blue dye
- 57 Born
- 58 Unruly throng

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