



AP Photo/Elaine Thompson, file

In this 2017 file photo, an Amazon Echo Dot is displayed during a program announcing several new Amazon products by the company, in Seattle.

Amazon: Echo device sent conversation to family's contact

Associated Press

SEATTLE — An "unlikely" string of events prompted Amazon's Echo personal assistant device to record a Portland family's private conversation and then send the recording to an acquaintance in Seattle, the company said Thursday.

The woman told KIRO-TV that two weeks ago an employee of her husband contacted them to say he thought their device had been hacked. He told them he had received an audio file of them discussing hardwood floors, she said.

In a statement Thursday, Amazon confirmed the woman's private conversation had been inadvertently recorded and sent. The company said the device interpreted a word in the background conversation as "Alexa" — a command that makes it wake up — and then it interpreted the conversation as a "send message" request.

"At which point, Alexa said out loud 'To whom?'" the statement said. "At which point, the background conversation was interpreted as a name in the customers contact list.

"Alexa then asked out loud, '(contact name), right?' Alexa then inter-

preted background conversation as 'right.'"

The statement continued: "As unlikely as this string of events is, we are evaluating options to make this case even less likely."

The woman, who was identified only by her first name in the news report, said every room in her family's home was wired with the Amazon devices to control her home's heat, lights and security system.

She said the family unplugged the devices and contacted Amazon after they learned the recording had been sent.

Ryan Calo, a law professor who co-directs the University of Washington's tech policy lab, agreed that the sort of glitch Amazon described is unlikely. But it may trouble customers nevertheless, he said.

"What makes it particularly unfortunate is the sense that Amazon Echo users will have that there's any prospect that what they say in their private home might end up outside the home," Calo said. "We feel less reassured about the control we assert over it than we once did. It's the feeling you have to watch what you say in front of a device that's supposed to make your life better."

Grant County School District opts not to arm teachers, for now

School board may consider at another time

By RICHARD HANNERS
EO Media Group

The idea of arming teachers in Grant County schools was put to rest after the school board reached consensus May 16 that it is not the best time to change that policy and it is better to pursue other options.

Chairwoman Chris Cronin recognized the numerous steps taken by the administration since she sat on the board, including installing cameras and new locks, and she said she appreciated all the public input on improv-

ing school safety from many diverse sources.

"This is clearly a subject this community is interested in," she said.

Cronin noted the strong feelings on both sides and said the idea had come before the board three times already.

"We've been listening," she said.

Now was not the time to change policy to allow teachers to be armed, Cronin said. The district would face "significant costs," and teachers were already "stretched thin" and facing scheduling difficulties. She noted that no school staff told her they wanted to be armed.

The district's proposed budget includes funding for a school resource officer, and opportunities for part-

nerships with law enforcement, more training and building improvements had come out of the discussion, Cronin said.

Board Vice Chairman Zach Williams, who had brought up the idea of arming school teachers or staff during the board's March 21 meeting, following the Feb. 14 shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School, in Parkland, Florida, said he agreed with Cronin.

Williams said there was significant public pressure to have a discussion on the idea, and he wanted the public's input. He noted he had heard people say that his mind was already made up, but he had changed his opinion.

"We got a better outcome because of this discussion," he said.

Williams pointed out that he and Cronin had not talked about the matter before the board meeting. The district was facing numerous changes this year — a new superintendent, a new principal at Humbolt Elementary and numerous staff changes — and now was not the time to change policy to allow teachers to be armed, he said.

One by one, the rest of the board said they agreed with Cronin and Williams. Haley Walker noted that somehow discussion about school safety had narrowed down to arming teachers. Colleen Robertson said she was glad students had an opportunity to provide input.

The board agreed to pursue other options to improve school safety, including evaluating mental health issues.

State grapples with gaps in IT project oversight

By PARIS ACHEN
Capital Bureau

Despite a record of information technology project failures, some state agencies are exempt from a law requiring them to have an independent external quality assurance review of projects exceeding \$1 million.

Certain state agencies, such as the Secretary of State's Office, are exempt from laws passed in 2014-15 to require certain state agencies to have independent outside oversight and reporting on IT projects. Some of the state's most notorious IT project failures — such as the Cover Oregon healthcare exchange website and the more recent project to install a new state agency phone system — lacked an independent quality assurance reviewer for all or part of the duration of those projects.

The Secretary of State's Office has allocated \$2.8 million to build its own Oregon Centralized Voter Registration computer system during the next three years to replace

software now supplied by contractor DXC Technology.

Officials with the Secretary of State's Office believe having an in-house system would allow them to quickly adapt the system to changes in Oregon law and better maintain the security of data, said Steve Bender, an analyst with the Legislative Fiscal Office. It also was uncertain whether DXC would continue to support the voter registration system.

When it came to the attention of the Legislative Fiscal Office that the project budget excluded a quality assurance review, the office asked the secretary of state to add the review. The secretary of state obtained a quote of nearly \$337,000 to conduct an independent review of the IT project.

The state Legislature's Joint Emergency Board approved that expenditure Wednesday, May 23.

Given state government's "landscape of all of the detritus of failed computer systems and failed IT implemen-

tations," Emergency Board member Sen. Betsy Johnson, said, she was concerned whether there is adequate oversight and quality control over the voter registration system project.

"I am just quite worried that some of the same people who oversaw absolute debacles here are now going to be present overseeing this, and I'm looking for some degree of reassurance," the Scappoose Democrat said.

The Legislative Fiscal Office flagged the lack of independent oversight after going over the project, said Legislative Fiscal Officer Ken Rocco.

"LFO was concerned about the risk of the project and the size of the project and that is why we asked the secretary of state obtain an external quality assurance review of this," Bender said.

"Quality assurance reviews don't ensure a project is successful. However, we do believe that this will increase the likelihood of that outcome and that if there are poten-

tial difficulties or concerns in the implementation plan that were not discovered internally then having an external reviewer would be helpful in increasing the likelihood of the project's success."

Johnson said she also wanted assurances that lawmakers would receive reports on the quality assurance reviews to provide accountability for the project.

"What happens if the QA is retained and ignored?" she asked.

The Legislative Fiscal Office will receive reports on the quality assurance review and give them to lawmakers on the committee that oversees IT projects, Rocco said.

The failure of the Cover Oregon health insurance website — which ate up more than \$300 million in state and federal funds — and the more recent problems with the \$46 million replacement of the state agency phone system lacked the kind of quality control reviews that might have caught problems early on.

Corrections

The East Oregonian works hard to be accurate and sincerely regrets any errors. If you notice a mistake in the paper, please call 541-966-0818.

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AccuWeather Forecast

TODAY

Times of clouds and sun

SATURDAY

A thick cloud cover

SUNDAY

Nice with partial sunshine

MONDAY

Intervals of clouds and sun

TUESDAY

Partly sunny and very warm

PENDLETON TEMPERATURE FORECAST				
81°	51°	73°	48°	81°
HERMISTON TEMPERATURE FORECAST				
87°	56°	80°	52°	86°

ALMANAC

PENDLETON
through 3 p.m. yesterday

TEMPERATURE	HIGH	LOW
Yesterday	85°	64°
Normals	73°	49°
Records	93° (1928)	34° (1920)

PRECIPITATION
24 hours ending 3 p.m. 0.00"
Month to date 0.65"
Normal month to date 1.01"
Year to date 6.07"
Last year to date 9.14"
Normal year to date 6.12"

HERMISTON
through 3 p.m. yesterday

TEMPERATURE	HIGH	LOW
Yesterday	90°	67°
Normals	75°	49°
Records	97° (1928)	35° (2010)

PRECIPITATION
24 hours ending 3 p.m. 0.00"
Month to date 0.91"
Normal month to date 0.87"
Year to date 4.96"
Last year to date 6.31"
Normal year to date 4.86"

AccuWeather

DOWNLOAD THE APP

Shown is today's weather. Temperatures are today's highs and tonight's lows.

REGIONAL FORECAST

Coastal Oregon: Partly sunny today; however, more clouds in the south.

Eastern and Central Oregon: Sun today. A shower and storm in central parts and near the Cascades; a t-storm in the south and upper Treasure Valley.

Western Washington: Mostly sunny today. Mostly cloudy tonight. Partly sunny tomorrow.

Eastern Washington: Some sunshine today. Partly cloudy tonight.

Cascades: A shower and thunderstorm around today, but a thunderstorm in spots across the north.

Northern California: A shower and thunderstorm around today, except a thunderstorm at the coast.

REGIONAL CITIES

	Today			Sat.		
	Hi	Lo	W	Hi	Lo	W
Astoria	61	52	s	61	50	pc
Baker City	78	51	t	64	45	c
Bend	66	43	t	66	38	pc
Brookings	58	47	c	61	49	pc
Burns	73	42	t	62	39	pc
Enterprise	75	50	t	58	42	c
Eugene	67	43	s	65	43	pc
Heppner	78	50	pc	70	47	c
Hermiston	87	56	pc	80	52	c
John Day	75	48	t	62	43	c
Klamath Falls	58	41	t	66	35	c
La Grande	77	49	t	63	44	r
Meacham	74	47	t	62	41	r
Medford	67	46	t	72	47	pc
Newport	58	47	s	57	46	pc
North Bend	59	50	pc	62	49	pc
Ontario	87	58	pc	75	56	c
Pasco	87	57	pc	80	49	c
Pendleton	81	51	pc	73	48	c
Portland	72	49	t	67	48	pc
Redmond	69	41	t	68	35	pc
Salem	72	45	s	66	46	pc
Spokane	80	54	pc	73	49	c
Ukiah	73	46	pc	62	40	r
Vancouver	71	48	s	65	46	pc
Walla Walla	82	54	pc	72	52	r
Yakima	86	53	pc	80	49	pc

WORLD CITIES

	Today			Sat.		
	Hi	Lo	W	Hi	Lo	W
Beijing	91	63	s	89	61	c
Hong Kong	94	83	pc	95	85	pc
Jerusalem	81	65	s	85	66	s
London	70	57	pc	77	62	pc
Mexico City	82	52	pc	82	52	pc
Moscow	64	44	s	68	50	s
Paris	78	62	t	84	63	pc
Rome	77	61	t	78	63	pc
Seoul	75	55	pc	82	58	s
Sydney	67	52	pc	69	52	s
Tokyo	79	64	s	75	66	sh

WINDS

(in mph)	Today	Saturday
Boardman	WSW 6-12	WSW 7-14
Pendleton	W 6-12	WSW 7-14

UV INDEX TODAY

2

8 a.m. - 10 a.m.

4

Noon - 2 p.m.

7

2 p.m. - 4 p.m.

7

4 p.m. - 6 p.m.

4

6 p.m. - 8 p.m.

2

8 p.m. - 10 p.m.

0-2, Low 3-5, Moderate 6-7, High 8-10, Very High 11+, Extreme

The higher the AccuWeather.com UV Index™ number, the greater the need for eye and skin protection.

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NATIONAL WEATHER TODAY

Shown are noon positions of weather systems and precipitation. Temperature bands are highs for the day.

National Summary: The Northeast will get a taste of summer warmth today, while downpours will return to the South. Showers and thunderstorms will stretch up to the Upper Midwest and will rattle the West Coast.

Yesterday's National Extremes: (for the 48 contiguous states)
High 100° in Laredo, Texas **Low 26°** in Leadville, Colo.

NATIONAL CITIES

	Today			Sat.		
	Hi	Lo	W	Hi	Lo	W
Albuquerque	90	60	s	92	60	s
Atlanta	78	69	t	83	69	t
Atlanta City	78	66	s	78	67	pc
Baltimore	87	69	s	84	69	c
Billings	84	57	pc	84	58	pc
Birmingham	85	69	t	85	68	t
Boise	87	57	pc	72	52	t
Boston	87	68	s	82	54	pc
Charleston, SC	84	72	c	86	73	sh
Charleston, WV	88	66	pc	84	66	t
Chicago	89	67	s	89	68	t
Cleveland	85	65	s	85	67	t
Dallas	94	74	s	95	74	pc
Denver	86	56	pc	91	60	s
Detroit	87	66	s	88	67	t
El Paso	98	67	s	101	71	s
Fairbanks	63	41	c	65	44	pc
Fargo	90	62	c	93	64	s
Honolulu	85	74	s	85	74	c
Houston	89	70	t	91	72	pc
Indianapolis	88	69	s	88	69	pc
Jacksonville	86	69	t	85	72	c
Kansas City	90	68	t	94	69	c
Las Vegas	90	64	s	83	65	pc
Little Rock	87	68	t	89	70	pc
Los Angeles	68	56	sh	70	58	sh
Louisville	90	71	s	88	72	t
Memphis	87	71	pc	87	72	t
Miami	81	74	t	81	76	t
Millwaukee	85	65	t	84	66	pc
Minneapolis	91	70	pc	94	70	s
Nashville	87	69	pc	87	68	t
New Orleans	87	72	t	88	72	t
New York City	87	69	s	88	68	pc
Oklahoma City	90	67	s	93	68	s
Omaha	93	68	pc	97	70	s
Philadelphia	86	67	s	87	68	pc
Portland, ME	99	74	s	95	69	s
Portland, OR	84	65	pc	76	51	c
Providence	86	66	pc	84	58	t
Raleigh	85	69	pc	86	70	c
Rapid City	82	55	s	91	61	s