

SOPHOS ADDS ADVANCED MACHINE LEARNING TO ITS PORTFOLIO

Sophos, a global leader in network and endpoint security, today announced it has entered into an agreement to acquire Invincea, a visionary provider of next-generation malware protection. Invincea's endpoint security portfolio is designed to detect and prevent unknown malware and sophisticated attacks via its patented deep learning neural-network algorithms. It has been consistently ranked as among the best performing machine learning, signature-less next-generation endpoint technologies in third-party testing and rated highly both for high detection and low false-positive rates.



Kris Hagerman, Sophos

Headquartered in Fairfax, Va., Invincea was founded by chief executive officer Anup Ghosh to address the rapidly growing zero-day security threat from nation states, cyber criminals and rogue actors. Invincea's flagship product X by Invincea uses deep learning neural networks and behavioral monitoring to detect previously unseen malware and stops attacks before damage occurs. With a focus on the U.S. government, healthcare and financial services sectors, Invincea has been deployed in some of the most targeted networks in the world.

"By adding Invincea to our portfolio, Sophos is executing on its vision to assemble the most powerful technologies to provide the very best, cutting-edge defens-

es for our customers," commented Kris Hagerman, chief executive officer at Sophos. "Invincea is leading the market in machine learning-based threat detection with the combination of superior detection rates and minimal false positives. Invincea will strengthen Sophos' leading next-gen endpoint protection with complementary predictive defenses that we believe will become increasingly important to the future of endpoint protection and allow us to take full advantage of this significant new growth opportunity. We are proud to welcome the Invincea team to Sophos and look forward to introducing the benefits of this advanced technology to our customers and partners worldwide."

Sophos is recognized as a leader in endpoint protection today with an expanding set of next-generation technologies such as the signature-less anti-malware, anti-exploit and anti-ransomware technology in Intercept X and the behavior-based analytics, Malicious Traffic Detection and Application Reputation in Sophos Endpoint Protection. The Invincea machine learning malware detection and prevention technology will be fully integrated into the Sophos endpoint protection portfolio, further strengthening Sophos' leadership in this fast-growing market.

The availability of Invincea technology through the Sophos Central security management platform will further enhance the Sophos synchronized security portfolio and real-time intelligence sharing. "We started Invincea with the vision of using non-signature based technologies, including machine learning, in innovative ways to protect organizations against the most advanced forms of cyber-attack," commented Anup Ghosh, founder and chief executive officer at Invincea. "X by Invincea represents a new generation in antivirus

technology based on deep learning and behavioral monitoring.

Joining forces with Sophos presents the perfect opportunity to take our proven, advanced technology to a global audience and make it part of a comprehensive synchronized security system. Sophos is leading the industry in adopting and bringing to market this disruptive new vision for complete, advanced, and integrated security, and we are delighted to join the team and help make it happen." Norm Laudermitch, chief operating officer and head of product development at Invincea added, "Invincea set out to disrupt the traditional approach to antivirus, and even now no single technology is enough to fully protect customers."

"I share the Sophos vision for bringing together a powerful ensemble of next-gen technologies to dramatically improve the overall effectiveness of endpoint protection. Along with our world-class technical team at Invincea, I'm looking forward to joining Sophos and helping deliver on this ambitious and exciting vision." The Invincea endpoint security portfolio including X by Invincea will continue to be supported and sold by Invincea and available via Invincea's network of registered partners. Sophos has agreed to acquire Invincea from its current shareholders for a cash consideration of \$100 million with a \$20 million earn-out. Sophos will retain the company's office in Fairfax. Invincea CEO Anup Ghosh and COO Norm Laudermitch will join Sophos in key leadership positions. Consummation of the transaction is subject to the satisfaction of various closing conditions. Invincea Labs, a division of Invincea that has been separately managed and operated since 2012, has been separated prior to the acquisition and is not part of this transaction.

STICKY, INSECT-SIZED DRONES COULD ACT AS POLLINATORS

MIAMI: Small drones coated with horsehair and a sticky gel could one day help pollinate crops and help offset the costly loss of bee population worldwide, researchers in Japan said Thursday. The miniature robots described in the journal *Chem* are a long way from being deployed in the field, but researchers say they may offer a partial solution to the loss of bees due to disease and climate change.

"The findings, which will have applications for agriculture and robotics, among others, could lead to the development of artificial pollinators and help counter the problems caused by declining honeybee populations," said lead author Eijiro Miyako, a chemist at the National Institute of Advanced Industrial Science and Technology (AIST) Nano materials Research Institute. In 2007, Miyako began experimenting with liquids that could be used as electrical conductors.

One failed attempt produced a sticky gel, like hair wax, which he relegated to a storage cabinet for almost a decade. The gel was rediscovered during a lab cleanup, and its unchanged nature gave Miyako an idea. He began experimenting with houseflies and ants, applying the gel to them to see if it could help pick up pollen from tulips in a box. It worked. Then he moved to drones, coating them with horsehair to mimic a bee's fuzzy coating. He added the gel to their undersides and flew them over pink-leaved Japanese lilies (*Lilium japonicum*).

"The robots absorbed the pollen and then could be flown to a second flower, where the grains were deposited, artificially pollinating the plants and causing them to begin the process of producing seeds," said the study. The United States recently listed the rusty patched bumblebee (*Bombus affinis*) as an endangered species. Meanwhile, colony collapse disorder continues to spread around the globe, with devastating impact on bee populations.

Pollinators contribute some \$15 billion to the value of US crop production each year, and they are needed worldwide for one-third of edible crops. Someday, artificial pollinators might be called on to help. "We believe that robotic pollinators could be trained to learn pollination paths using global positioning systems and artificial intelligence," said Miyako.—AFP



TAIPEI: Uber drivers display placards that read Thank you for letting technology improve the economy and Thank you for letting me return home safely during a demonstration in front of the entrance of the Ministry of Transportation in Taipei yesterday. —AFP

TAIWAN UBER DRIVERS PROTEST FINE HIKE AS APP HALTS SERVICE

TAIPEI: Protesting Uber drivers circled Taiwan's transport ministry yesterday as the ride-hailing app halted operations on the island following an impasse with the government which deems the service illegal. The US firm announced last week that it would suspend business in Taiwan from yesterday after the government raised the maximum penalty for Uber drivers to Tw\$25 million (\$804,000) the highest in the world. The Transport Ministry last week said it was preparing to charge the firm Tw\$230 million in penalties.

Uber has racked up fines for running a business without the proper registration to operate as a taxi service since it

entered the Taiwan market in 2013. About 200 cars, adorned with ribbons and Uber stickers, drove around the transport ministry in downtown Taipei yesterday, according to an alliance of drivers which organized the protest. Single mother Fiona Yang, 38, said Uber had been her main source of income for the past two years as she juggles earning a living and raising two children.

"I can understand why they had to suspend operations. The penalties are outrageous," she said. "It has a big impact on me. How am I going to raise my kids?" Uber said last week it hoped the suspension would prompt action from President Tsai Ing-wen, who is

pushing for the island to foster its own "Asian Silicon Valley". "The current regulatory environment makes it impossible to serve the island the way we know works best," the firm said in a statement.

Taiwan's suspension came after Uber halted services in Hungary last July due to new legislation that stops drivers from making money with their own vehicles. The smartphone app has faced stiff resistance from traditional taxi drivers around the world, as well as bans in some places over safety concerns and questions over legal issues, including taxes. Uber insists it is a platform connecting drivers and passengers, not a transport business like taxi firms.—AFP