Welcome to the Cyveillance Weekly Trends Report

Greetings from Cyveillance, the leader in open source threat intelligence. Since threat intelligence is constantly evolving, we publish this newsletter to keep our customers updated on the latest threats to various industries. Each week, we’ll send you highlights from our analyst research reports. You can unsubscribe at any time. For the latest security news stories throughout the day, you can also follow us on Twitter, or to view the latest security articles from Cyveillance experts, subscribe to our blog.

In this Issue:

- Top Weekly Incidents
- Energy
- Agribusiness
- Insurance /Healthcare /Pharmaceutical
- Financial Services
- Global Intelligence
- Legal and Regulations

New White Paper: Social engineering in a Web 2.0 world has evolved to a fine art, characterized by highly targeted, customized attacks. Download this whitepaper to learn more about what steps you can take to protect your organization.

Top Incidents

Energy

- Anti-energy-train activism is escalating in the Pacific Northwest. A new oil train protest resulted in multiple arrests in Washington State last week. The group's first such protest only "symbolically" obstructed railroad tracks. Their protest the week before this only obstructed the tracks at a nearby oil refinery. This protest obstructed railroad tracks inside Seattle city limits, and was joined by multiple public figures. The escalation appears to have been prompted by a recent incident in which multiple tanker cars...
carrying oil derailed inside the Seattle city limits.

**Agribusiness**

- On July 29, 2014 Children of Vietnam Veterans Health Alliance reported that the first ever individual suit has been filed against 35 US chemical companies for involvement in development of chemicals used during the Vietnam war. The plaintiff is a French woman of Vietnamese origin named Tran To Nga, and her complaint has gone to the French Superior Court based in a Paris suburb. Several well-known individuals will stand as her witnesses, including Doctor Duong Quang Trung, journalist Dinh Phong, Vietnamese heroic mother Bui Thi Me, and former State President Nguyen Minh Triet.

**Insurance/Healthcare/Pharmaceutical**

- The National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) and the Department of Health and Human Services’ (HHS) Office for Civil Rights (OCR) jointly announced they will be hosting a conference in Washington, D.C. Sept. 23-24, 2014. The conference, titled Safeguarding Health Information: Building Assurance through HIPAA Security, will concentrate on the HIPAA Security Rule and how organizations should approach compliance strategies. The Security Rule protects the confidentiality, integrity, and availability of electronic protected health information (ePHI) by requiring that HIPAA-covered entities and their business associates (BAs) implement and maintain administrative, physical, and technical safeguards.

**Financial Services**

- The United States Secret Service and the Department of Homeland Security’s National Cybersecurity and Communications Integration Center issued an advisory regarding a Point-of-Sale malware dubbed “Backoff” which has been discovered exploiting businesses’ administrator accounts remotely and exfiltrating consumer payment data. The malware is a type of RAM-scrapper made infamous by the Target breach that saw attackers plant wares on terminals to nab credit cards while they were temporarily unencrypted. Attackers implanted the malware on the point of sales (PoS) terminals of several unnamed retailers by brute forcing passwords protecting remote desktop protocol channels.

**Global Intelligence**

- A new browser method for tracking users without the user of cookies. Known as “browser fingerprinting”, the web browsers uses different image processing engines, export options, compression level, so each computer draws the image slightly differently, the images can be used to assign each user’s device a number (a fingerprint) that uniquely identifies it. It takes advantage of HTML5 Canvas API and JavaScript to create dynamic generated graphics. Canvas fingerprint tracking has made it more difficult for even the sophisticated computer users to protect their privacy.

**Legal and Regulations**

- In a recent judgment, Europe’s highest court in civil matters, the Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU), expanded the scope of the EU Customs Regulation. It ruled that EU customs authorities have the power under the Regulation to seize and detain goods suspected of infringing intellectual property (‘IP’) rights where those goods have merely been sold by a non-EU importer to a consumer residing in the EU for private use.

**Energy**
The International Monetary Fund says Canada and other countries can improve their economies and environment by hiking energy taxes – while cutting them on people and capital. In a new book, Getting Energy Prices Right: From Principle to Practice, the IMF essentially endorses policies at times advocated by the federal Liberals and NDP calling for what some have termed a “green shift” in the taxation system. The Conservative government, however, has rejected carbon taxes. The premise of the book is that while carbon-based energy was indispensable to economic growth over the past century, it has come with considerable costs. The solution, the IMF says, is to tax energy to such a level that the revenue pays for energy’s environment and health costs.

Given the drought situation, anti-fracking activists in California say it’s time for Governor Jerry Brown to put a stop to water-intensive fracking, claiming that the controversial oil and gas production method is exacerbating the problem. The California Department of Gas and Geothermal Resources (known as DOGGR) recently ordered 11 fracked wells shut down over fears that they were contaminating potential sources of potable water. As many as 100 other fracking sites are under review, as well.

The Sierra Club has posted this article discussing their efforts on the first day of public hearings on the Environmental Protection Agency's Clean Power Plan. The environmentalist group says the first day of action was a success with “hundreds and hundreds of people gathered in Washington, D.C., Denver, and Atlanta”.

Gov. Nikki Haley said Monday she is not yet willing to support bringing in more nuclear waste to the Savannah River Site (SRS) in Aiken County, unless the federal governments acts on the waste that is already there. The governor’s comments came as she toured the site with Energy Secretary Ernest Moniz. The Energy Department is considering whether to process spent German reactor fuel at the former nuclear weapons station.

Anti-energy-train activism is escalating in the Pacific Northwest. A new oil train protest resulted in multiple arrests in Washington State last week. The group’s first such protest only “symbolically” obstructed railroad tracks. Their protest the week before this only obstructed the tracks at a nearby oil refinery. This protest obstructed railroad tracks inside Seattle city limits, and was joined by multiple public figures. The escalation appears to have been prompted by a recent incident in which multiple tanker cars carrying oil derailed inside the Seattle city limits.

Opponents of expanding a natural gas pipeline through northwestern Massachusetts rallied on Boston Common on Wednesday, asking Gov. Deval Patrick to rescind his support for a new tax on New Englanders’ electricity bills to help subsidize it. The protest, attended by hundreds of supporters, was the culmination of a month-long “rolling rally” that marched through towns likely impacted by Kinder Morgan’s proposed 250-mile long pipeline expansion in Berkshire, Worcester and Franklin counties.

California authorities enlisted celebrity Lady Gaga to create a public service announcement advocating water conservation in light of the state’s current drought. Anti-fracking activists are using this to bolster their case for banning fracking in the state.

Agribusiness

Several US states have recognized the high rates of bee mortality and have set aside funds to help combat the death of large bee populations. Some states mentioned as giving state funding to bee cultivation and protection are Virginia, Michigan, North and South Dakota, Wisconsin, and Minnesota. Many state governments have recognized pesticide use in the US as a major cause of declining populations.
On July 29, 2014, Sustainable Pulse reports that two kinds of GM rice have been discovered and confirmed on Chinese markets in two southern provinces, Hubei, and Hunan. Despite China's heavy investment in GM technology development, the Chinese Minister of Agriculture stated that GM rice is still in a research stage, and any commercialization would be illegal.

On July 29, 2014 Children of Vietnam Veterans Health Alliance reported that the first ever individual suit has been filed against 35 US chemical companies for involvement in development of chemicals used during the Vietnam war. The plaintiff is a French woman of Vietnamese origin named Tran To Nga, and her complaint has gone to the French Superior Court based in a Paris suburb. Several well-known individuals will stand as her witnesses, including Doctor Duong Quang Trung, journalist Dinh Phong, Vietnamese heroic mother Bui Thi Me, and former State President Nguyen Minh Triet.

On July 30, 2014 RT published a story about Brazilian farmers who are demanding a refund from several biotech and seed companies for GMO crops that allegedly did not kill pests. Brazilian farmers claim they were forced to spend an average of $54/hectare on extra pesticide for their fields. Biotech companies insist that guidelines were not followed by farmers and that they are not responsible for alleged seed failure.

On July 25, 2014, Costa Rica officially declared maize as the foundation of its cultural heritage. GMO opposition sees this as a victory against GMO's in the small nation. Much of this debate centers around the first entry of GMO's through a Monsanto subsidiary in Costa Rica in 2013.

The District of Columbia Court of Appeals ruled this week to uphold a law requiring meat producers to label where meat was born, raised, and slaughtered. Meatpackers and processors opposed the law primarily through their trade group, the American Meat Institute. This marks the second time this year that the group has lost in court.

According to the Agricultural Prices report, the farm-gate price of corn has dropped 44% since last July. Additionally, the price paid to farmers for soybeans is down by 17%. The USDA report says in July 2013, the farm-gate price for corn was $6.79 a bushel vs $3.80 this July. After a record harvest in 2013, prices are again at risk with another expected above-average harvest.

Despite recent research advances, such as a new strain of wheat that resists destructive mildew, commercial planting of genetically modified food crops has stalled in China, the world’s most populous nation and one with a fast-tightening food supply. Meanwhile, the government is also trying to wean itself from imports by building its own seed-producing capacity for GMO corn and soybean at state companies such as DBN, which runs a biotech center in Beijing.

---

Insurance/Healthcare/Pharmaceutical

**Insurance**

- At a Tech in Policy event sponsored by Washington, D.C. newspaper The Hill, FTC Commissioner Julie Brill made it clear that the FTC is aware of recent concerns about health app data privacy and security and is looking into new ways to police the industry.

- Self-Regional Healthcare of Greenwood, S.C. is alerting patients of a data breach that occurred over Memorial Day weekend when two men stole an unencrypted laptop containing an unknown number of patient records.

- The Massachusetts attorney general has reached a $150,000 HIPAA settlement with a Rhode Island hospital in the wake of a data breach in 2012 that affected 14,000 patients.
12,000 of whom were from Massachusetts.

- Riverside Health System, a non-profit healthcare organization in Newport News, Virginia, has announced a disturbing internal data breach that dates all the way back to 2012.

- The federal tally of major health data breaches has grown substantially in recent weeks to a total of 1,074 incidents affecting 33.7 million individuals since September 2009. The approximately 30 incidents added to the list over the last month provide examples of the variety of risks that healthcare entities continue to battle.

- The National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) and the Department of Health and Human Services’ (HHS) Office for Civil Rights (OCR) jointly announced they will be hosting a conference in Washington, D.C. Sept. 23-24, 2014. The conference, titled Safeguarding Health Information: Building Assurance through HIPAA Security, will concentrate on the HIPAA Security Rule and how organizations should approach compliance strategies. The Security Rule protects the confidentiality, integrity, and availability of electronic protected health information (ePHI) by requiring that HIPAA-covered entities and their business associates (BAs) implement and maintain administrative, physical, and technical safeguards.

- CVS Caremark recently sent prescription information for approximately 350 customers to the wrong addresses.

- Essentia Health of Fargo, North Dakota, has announced a patient privacy breach after a marketing firm was able to acquire 430 patient names and addresses without their consent.

- Indian Health Services (IHS) alerted 620 patients in July that a data breach had occurred on May 30 when an IHS employee mistakenly left a folder with patient names, Social Security numbers and enrollment information out in a public area.

**Pharmaceutical**

- Allergan has filed a lawsuit claiming that Valeant Pharmaceuticals, William Ackman and his Pershing Square Capital Management violated securities laws that prohibit insider trading and failed to disclose legally required information, among other things. Valeant and Ackman teamed in April to buy Allergan.

- The scandal over bribery allegations in China has taken another discouraging turn for GlaxoSmithKline with the news that both the Federal Bureau of Investigation and Securities and Exchange Commission are conducting probes of the drug maker’s activities there.

- The proposed European Union General Data Protection Regulation could make cancer research impossible and add a significant burden to both doctors and cancer patient, leading oncologists have warned. The planned wording of the Regulation stipulates “explicit and specific patient consent,” meaning that researchers would have to approach patients every single time research is planned in order to consult their data or use tissue samples stored for research purposes, says the European Society for Medical Oncology (ESMO).

**Financial**
Activism

- Housing activists held an anti-eviction protest on August 2nd at the bank-owned property of a local resident facing eviction in Ferndale, MI, followed by another demonstration at one of the bank’s branches in Detroit, MI.

- Housing activists will hold anti-eviction protests on August 6th and 7th at the country court in Decatur, GA in support of defendants standing trial for preventing the eviction of a local resident who is facing eviction from his GSE-owned property.

- Housing activists staged a protest on July 26th outside the Chicago home of a regional director of a government sponsored enterprise for housing. Approximately 120 people participated in the action, including 35 homeowners facing foreclosure and eviction in Chicago, Detroit, and Minneapolis. Anti-eviction activists warn they will continue to protest outside the homes of financial institutions’ regional directors, board members, executives of banks, and members of GSEs for housing, and FHFA.

- An Israeli bank in Manhattan, NY was vandalized last week. Its windows were defaced with fake blood as pro-Hamas demonstrators staged a “die-in” protest.

- A homeowner in Yale, OK launched a petition calling on a leading U.S. bank to halt its foreclosure on his home.

- Multiple activist groups throughout the country submitted a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request to the U.S Department of Justice (DOJ), seeking answers to questions related to the November 2013 DOJ settlement with a leading U.S bank.

Information Security Risk

- Around 100 customers of an Indian government-owned bank were recently targeted by a group of hackers from Canada who cloned their gold debit cards and siphoned off Rs 1.26 crore (Aprx. $201,000) from their accounts.

- Federal authorities and researchers warned that hackers are taking over C-level executives’ email accounts, usually through a network attack and using them to send out e-mails to lower-level employees and/or even banking institution staff instructing them to perform tasks with a sense of urgency. Due to the urgent nature of the requests, typical security practices are often bypassed or overlooked. The hackers literally “masquerade” as the executive, convincing lower-level employees to share confidential information and/or schedule fraudulent wire and ACH transfers.

- Hackers continued to target Israeli banks with DDoS attacks under the flag of #OpSaveGaza.

- Researchers said a new variant of Trojan.Snifula (Neverquest) is targeting more than 30 Japanese financial institutions, including 12 regional banks. The threat first appeared in 2006 and is used to steal victims’ financial information from specific banking sites through man-in-the-browser (MITB) techniques. Snifula’s new targets show that the malware is broadening its focus to smaller financial institutions, meaning that consumers should be wary of the threat regardless of which bank they use.

- A Mid-Atlantic state restaurant association announced that an undisclosed number of restaurants in their state may have been affected by a remote-access breach that compromised point-of-sale software. The association says the possible breach of consumer payment card data appears to be linked to a remote access and systems management provider that facilitates, among other things, file sharing and data backup.

- A study found that a total 175,655,228 personal data records were either compromised and/or lost between April and June of this year. That figure amounts to nearly 2 million records lost per day.
Researchers claim that Finnish banking customers are being targeted by a spear phishing campaign via text messages and emails informing them that their online banking services were being discontinued because of a payment in default.

Researchers identified a new variant of GameOver Zeus that has spurned previous versions' peer-to-peer communication infrastructure and has an updated domain generation algorithm (DGA). The changes and updates have exponentially hiked up the botnet's numbers. Where previously, GameOver Zeus was generating 1,000 new domains weekly, the new version is said to be generating that number on a daily basis.

Researchers identified a new variant of ransomcrypt malware that is easy to update and uses open source components to encrypt files. The variant, detected as Trojan.Ransomcrypt.L, uses a legitimate open source implementation of the OpenPGP standard to encrypt files on the victim's computer. The threat then displays a ransom notice in Russian, asking the user to pay in order to unlock the files.

An Irish gambling company suffered a “massive” data breach losing personal details of over 649,000 customers. The stolen data includes personal information entered by customers signing up to the firm’s online service in 2010 and the years prior to that. The information includes names, addresses, dates of birth, and even the maiden names of mothers, which are often used to verify account details.

The United States Secret Service and the Department of Homeland Security's National Cybersecurity and Communications Integration Center issued an advisory regarding a Point-of-Sale malware dubbed “Backoff” which has been discovered exploiting businesses’ administrator accounts remotely and exfiltrating consumer payment data. The malware is a type of RAM-scrapper made infamous by the Target breach that saw attackers plant wares on terminals to nab credit cards while they were temporarily unencrypted. Attackers implanted the malware on the point of sales (PoS) terminals of several unnamed retailers by brute forcing passwords protecting remote desktop protocol channels.

Legal, Litigation, Regulatory Risk

A Turkish man was sentenced to more than nine years in federal prison for his role in a fraud scheme that involved the compromise of payment card details at a San Diego, CA hotel.

Operational Risk

An article published last week reported that housing activists in Rhode Island have won passage this year of a state “Just Cause” law, which prevents most foreclosing lenders from evicting tenants for no reason, only to board up empty buildings until they are sold to new owners. The legislation was signed into law on July 8th. The article notes opposition by the banks, and illustrates housing activists struggle.

A stock exchange in Moscow, Russia was abruptly stopped during the afternoon of July 30th for undisclosed reasons.

A fatal shooting incident took place at a leading U.S. bank branch in Chicago, IL on July 31st. A 59-year-old man was shot dead, and a 54-year-old man was critically injured in the shooting.

A Seattle, WA-based housing activist group launched a petition to raise additional funds to hire staff for outreach programs, office maintenance, and supplies for banners and posters.

Approximately 50 people gathered Thursday, July 31st at the north side of the State Capitol Building in Sacramento, CA for the start of the four-day Occupy National Gathering. Reportedly, approximately 1,000 individuals are expected to attend the
National Gathering, which is minimal compared to prior gatherings in Philadelphia and Kalamazoo. Still, the event will focus on the "99% versus 1%" theme.

- As Occupy Central activists continue to plan a massive August 17th rally in Hong Kong's Central district to demand political reform, an action the government has already declared illegal, nearly 1 million people since July 19th have joined the counter "Sign for Peace and Democracy Movement" hosted by the Alliance for Peace and Democracy (APD). The APD, which fears Occupy Central's August 17th rally will paralyze the heart of the city and coerce the central and the special administrative region's governments into accepting their demands for political reform, consists of 1,340 business groups, trade unions and community organizations opposed to the "Occupy" faction. The APD launched an online signature platform on its website, sign4peacedemocracy.hk, for Hong Kong people living elsewhere to show their commitment to opposing the "Occupy" movement.

Global Intelligence

China

- On 7/28/2014, a Chinese technology news outlet reports a security vulnerability on Android devices could be exploited by using Google Voice to hacked into the devices, gain access to the device and control it remotely.

- On 7/28/2014, a Chinese news outlet reports hackers has been exploiting Malaysia Airlines MH17 plane crash issue and spreading false information on social media. Often a link is provided and once users click on the link it directs user to pages and download malicious programs.

- On 7/28/2014, a Chinese technology news outlet reports statistic shows Internet Explorer contains the most security vulnerabilities in year 2013, and 2014 comparing to other browsers.

- On 7/28/2014, a Chinese technology news outlet reports DDoS attacks has increasingly being use as a strategy to divert attention in order to disguise other methods of attack.

- 7/29/2014 – Chinese news outlets reported that China's State Administration for Industry and Commerce (SAIC) is investigating claims that Microsoft violated Chinese anti-trust laws. Personnel from the SAIC paid surprise visits to Microsoft office locations in Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou, and Chengdu. Sources speculate that the forced retiring of Windows XP may have sparked the investigation.

- 7/30/2014, a Chinese news outlet reports Cryptolocker (aka Koler.a), a ransomware that generates a popup demanding $300 for ransom and threaten to lock users' documents and keyboard is currently spreading throughout United States. According to the article, this ransomware does not contains the source code for locking SD card and documents.

- 7/30/2014, a Chinese language news outlet reports Chief Information Officer of Canada, Corinne Charette claims that Chinese government-sponsored hackers launched attacks on Canada Communications Security Establishment's computer system.

- 7/30/2014, a Chinese news outlet reports a 19-year-old Chinese hackers arrested for attacking People.com.cn DNS server from June 8th to June 9th of 2014.

- 7/31/2014, a Chinese news outlet reports China Merchants Bank's online banking contains XSS vulnerabilities that affects its website, personal computer, and mobile application and could be exploited to obtain customers data.
7/31/2014, Epochtimes.com, a Chinese news outlet reports their Taiwanese official website experienced a DDoS attack from the Chinese Communist Cyber Army.

7/31/2014, a Chinese website reports GNU glibc in Linux operating system contains memory corruption vulnerability that could be exploited by an attacker remotely to execute arbitrary code in affected application.

8/1/2014, a Chinese news outlet reports the number of malware targeting Android devices increased, and WiFi routers has became the main channel for spreading malwares.

8/1/2014, a Chinese news outlet reports Chinese hackers attacks Israel's Iron Dome system and obtained 700 documents and data.

8/1/2014 – Over 100 former employees from Nokia Beijing gathered outside Nokia's headquarters in protest of recent large scale layoffs. The former employees held up signs and demanded to speak face-to-face with executives.

### Germany

- Internet providers can record and save customer IP addresses for up to seven days, according to a decision by the Federal Court of Justice of Germany (Bundesgerichtshof, BGH). The decision by the European Court of Justice to struck down the Data Retention Directive (Directive 2006/24/EC) would not be applicable in this case, as the IP addresses would not be collected for law enforcement purposes, but to mitigate threats against the provider’s own infrastructure. The decision was met with criticism, as the providers regularly share collected information for civil litigation (file sharing cases) and criminal procedures.

### North America

- A new browser method for tracking users without the user of cookies. Known as ‘browser fingerprinting”, the web browsers uses different image processing engines, export options, compression level, so each computer draws the image slightly differently, the images can be used to assign each user’s device a number (a fingerprint) that uniquely identifies it. It takes advantage of HTML5 Canvas API and JavaScript to create dynamic generated graphics. Canvas fingerprint tracking has made it more difficult for even the sophisticated computer users to protect their privacy.

- Approximately 92 per cent of respondents believe that the use of a social networking site increases the likelihood of a successful APT attack, which could prove a threat to a large proportion of businesses. 88 per cent think that ‘bring your own device’ combines with rooting or jail breaking by the owner make a successful APT attack more likely to occur.

- An investigation is underway to determine if nationwide sandwich chain Jimmy John’s was involved in a data breach involving customer credit card information. Jimmy John’s is working with authorities on the investigation.

- After Apple acquired Beats Electronics and Beats Music for $3 billion in May, reports indicate about 200 positions at Beats could be eliminated.

- Cybtc.com reports speculation on BitCoin platform, Coinbase experience hacker attacks again and causing exposure of user accounts information.

- AT&T customers were recently notified of a security breach that is believed to have leaked customer details in order to unlock codes for the iPhone 5S. The attacker was allegedly able to access social security numbers and personally identifiable information (PII). AT&T briefed customers on the situation, stating that the authorities are providing further investigation and that security upgrades are being applied to the system.

### Malaysia

9 of 11
7/27/2014, a Malaysian news outlet reports haze condition in several areas in Malaysia reached unhealthy level.

Vietnam

7/28/2014 Business Times, a local VNese media source, reported that more than three months since it was put into operation, the Samsung Electronics Vietnam Thai Nguyen earned nearly $2 billion USD from exports, mostly smartphones and tablets (June statistics).

8/1/2014 Thanh Nien News, a local VNese media source, reported that the head of Vietnam's only labor union warned that a pledge to ensure an equitable minimum wage by 2017 will fail unless authorities hike it by at least 23% next year. Dang Ngoc Tung, chairman of Vietnam General Confederation of Labor proposed the minimum wage be increased to 2.3-3.4 million VND a month. Many companies in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City already pay workers between 2.9-3 million apart from allowances and bonuses. The National Wage Council will wrap up a plan on minimum wage increases for 2015 this month and submit it to the central government for approval in September.

Legal and Regulations

- Seventh Circuit holds that the Sherman Anti-Trust Act does not apply to foreign company sales to foreign subsidiaries of a U.S. company in Motorola Mobility LLC v. AU Optronics Corp., 746 F.3d 842 (7th Cir. 2014) [click for opinion].

- The FCC released a Public Notice requesting comment on existing best practices for Internet Service Providers (ISPs) to combat cybersecurity threats. The inquiry is a follow up to the FCC’s New Cybersecurity Initiative focused on developing a voluntary, private-sector driven approach to cyber risk management. Comments from this inquiry will support and inform the work of Communications, Security, Reliability and Interoperability Council IV (CSRIC IV) to create cybersecurity best practices that align with the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) framework across the broader communications sector.

- On July 17, 2014, the New York State Department of Financial Services (DFS) issued for public comment a proposed “BitLicense” regulatory framework for New York virtual currency businesses, including bitcoin companies.

- COPPA requires that companies obtain verifiable parental consent before they collect information about children under age 13, unless the collection fits into one of the exceptions provided by the law. In an effort to provide clarity, the Federal Trade Commission recently updated its guidance for verifying parental consent under the Children’s Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA) by issuing three updated FAQs on “verifiable parental consent” requirements. To read the FTC’s updated COPPA FAQs, click here.

- The US Foreign Account Tax Compliance Act (“FATCA”) was enacted to require foreign entities to report information on assets held by US persons. Failure to report the required information would result in the imposition of a punitive 30% withholding tax on qualifying US source payments. On 30 June 2014 the British Virgin Islands (“BVI”) signed a Model 1(b) (i.e. non-reciprocal) intergovernmental agreement with the United States (“US IGA”). The net effect of the US IGA is that BVI financial institutions (“FIs”) will be treated as deemed compliant foreign financial institutions for the purposes of FATCA, even where members of an FIs’ affiliated group may not be. Registration can be completed through the IRS FATCA registration online portal.
In a recent judgment, Europe’s highest court in civil matters, the Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU), expanded the scope of the EU Customs Regulation. It ruled that EU customs authorities have the power under the Regulation to seize and detain goods suspected of infringing intellectual property (‘IP’) rights where those goods have merely been sold by a non-EU importer to a consumer residing in the EU for private use.

Pursuant to the European Court of Justice’s May ruling that users in the EC have the “right to be forgotten” on the Internet, Google has received requests to block search results for 328,000 websites from 91,000 individuals. Google reports that, to date, it has granted more than 50 percent of these requests.