

Three charged in high-profile Twitter hack

3rd August, 2020



Three people have been charged for their alleged involvement in the massive hacking attack on Twitter that took place on July the 15th. Hackers hacked into 130 high-profile accounts, including those of former US

President Barack Obama, presidential candidate Joe Biden, rapper Kanye West, Amazon CEO Jeff Bezos and SpaceX and Tesla CEO Elon Musk. The accounts of companies like Apple and Uber were also breached. The hack was part of a bitcoin scam. The perpetrators compromised Twitter's administrative tools to gain access to the accounts. They then altered the accounts to post legitimate-looking tweets that informed followers they could double any funds sent to a bitcoin account.

The three suspects were arrested on Friday. One is a 19-year-old from the United Kingdom, the other two are American citizens aged 17 and 22. The 17-year-old is a resident of Florida. State investigators believe him to be the mastermind of the hack. A state attorney has filed 30 felony charges against him for "scamming people across America". The teen faces multiple charges, including 10 counts of fraudulent use of personal information. A lawyer told CNN: "There is a false belief within the criminal hacker community that attacks like the Twitter hack can be perpetrated anonymously and without consequence." The hack resulted in 415 transfers being made into the suspects' bitcoin accounts, worth nearly \$118,000.

Sources: cnn.com / wfla.com / endgadget.com

Writing

People should put as little personal information online as possible. Discuss.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

charged / hacking / attack / high profile / account / Apple / bitcoin / scam / funds / suspects / citizens / resident / mastermind / felony / fraudulent / belief / transfers

True / False

- a) The Twitter attack took place earlier this month. T / F
- b) Hackers accessed 130 high-profile accounts. T / F
- c) The account of a former US President was hacked. T / F
- d) The hackers managed to gain access to administrative tools in Twitter. T / F
- e) All of the alleged perpetrators are teenagers. T / F
- f) The brains behind the attack is believed to be 17 years old. T / F
- g) One of the men faces 30 felony charges. T / F
- h) The scam netted the perpetrators over a million dollars. T / F

Synonym Match

(The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- | | |
|-----------------------|----------------|
| 1. alleged | a. brains |
| 2. massive | b. nominee |
| 3. candidate | c. nationals |
| 4. scam | d. carried out |
| 5. altered | e. huge |
| 6. citizens | f. crime |
| 7. mastermind | g. changed |
| 8. felony | h. supposed |
| 9. perpetrated | i. valued at |
| 10. worth | j. fraud |

Discussion – Student A

- a) What do you know about hacking?
- b) How worried are you about being hacked?
- c) How big a problem is hacking?
- d) Why are governments so worried about hacking?
- e) How confident are you your personal information is safe online?
- f) What would be the worst sites in your country to be hacked?
- g) How can hackers breach the security of sites like Twitter?
- h) What do you think of the hack on Twitter?

Phrase Match

- | | |
|---|------------------------------|
| 1. Three people have been charged for | a. breached |
| 2. hacked into 130 | b. consequence |
| 3. Apple and Uber were also | c. to a bitcoin account |
| 4. altered the accounts to post legitimate- | d. arrested on Friday |
| 5. double any funds sent | e. investigators |
| 6. The three suspects were | f. of the hack |
| 7. state | g. their alleged involvement |
| 8. believe him to be the mastermind | h. of personal information |
| 9. 10 counts of fraudulent use | i. looking tweets |
| 10. perpetrated anonymously and without | j. high-profile accounts |

Discussion – Student B

- What do you think about what you read?
- What should happen to the hackers?
- Have you ever masterminded anything?
- Have you ever fallen for a scam?
- What do you know about bitcoin?
- What do you think of Twitter?
- Will hackers always be able to get into websites?
- What questions would you like to ask the Twitter CEO?

Spelling

- charged for their addeleg involvement
- the ivsemsa hacking attack
- presidential cntiadade Joe Biden
- Apple and Uber were also beechedar
- eaprrersotpt compromised Twitter's administrative tools
- post tliigeemat-looking tweets
- The three spsestuc were arrested on Friday
- State vesatogtinisr
- A state tnortaye
- The teen faces ellumpit charges
- lmoaynyunso and without consequence
- resulted in 415 tnrrasesf being made

Answers – Synonym Match

1. h	2. e	3. b	4. j	5. g
6. c	7. a	8. f	9. d	10. i

Role Play

Role A – Hacking

You think hacking is the biggest online danger. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't as dangerous. Also, tell the others which is the least dangerous of these (and why): fake news, cyber-bullying or a lack of exercise.

Role B – Fake News

You think fake news is the biggest online danger. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't as dangerous. Also, tell the others which is the least dangerous of these (and why): hacking, cyber-bullying or a lack of exercise.

Role C – Cyber-Bullying

You think cyber-bullying is the biggest online danger. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't as dangerous. Also, tell the others which is the least dangerous of these (and why): fake news, hacking or a lack of exercise.

Role D – Lack of Exercise

You think a lack of exercise is the biggest online danger. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't as dangerous. Also, tell the others which is the least dangerous of these (and why): fake news, cyber-bullying or hacking.

Speaking – Online Dangers

Rank these with your partner. Put the biggest online dangers at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- | | |
|------------------|--------------------|
| • hacking | • malware |
| • phishing | • scams |
| • cyber-bullying | • bad eyesight |
| • fake news | • lack of exercise |

Answers – True False

a	F	b	T	c	T	d	T	e	F	f	T	g	T	h	F
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.