

How Hackers and Activists Exposed Fatal Flaws in the Election System

In the wake of the 2016 US presidential election, there was widespread concern about the security of the nation's voting systems. These fears were only heightened by the release of a report by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) that found that Russian hackers had targeted 21 states' election systems in an attempt to influence the outcome of the election.



Democracy in Danger: How Hackers and Activists Exposed Fatal Flaws in the Election System

by Andrew Marantz

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In the years since the 2016 election, there have been numerous reports of other vulnerabilities in the US election system. In 2017, a group of researchers at the University of Michigan found that they could hack into the voting systems used in 30 states and change the results of an election without being detected.

In 2018, a group of activists known as the Defending Democracy Project released a report that found that 39 states' election systems were using outdated software that was vulnerable to hacking.

These reports have raised serious concerns about the integrity of the US election system. If hackers or activists can manipulate the results of an election, it could have a profound impact on American democracy.

The Vulnerabilities of the Election System

There are a number of factors that contribute to the vulnerabilities of the US election system. One factor is the use of outdated technology.

Many of the voting machines used in the United States are over 10 years old and are running on outdated software. This software is often vulnerable to hacking, and it can be difficult to patch these vulnerabilities because the manufacturers of the voting machines no longer support the software.

Another factor that contributes to the vulnerabilities of the election system is the lack of a paper trail. In many states, voters are not required to provide a paper ballot that can be used to verify the results of the election.

This means that if the electronic voting machines are hacked or malfunction, there is no way to know for sure what the true results of the election are.

The Role of Hackers and Activists

Hackers and activists have played a vital role in exposing the vulnerabilities of the US election system. They have conducted research, developed

hacking tools, and released reports that have raised awareness of the problem.

In 2016, a group of hackers known as the Shadow Brokers released a trove of stolen NSA hacking tools. These tools included exploits that could be used to hack into voting machines.

In 2017, a group of researchers at the University of Michigan used these exploits to hack into the voting systems used in 30 states. They were able to change the results of an election without being detected.

In 2018, a group of activists known as the Defending Democracy Project released a report that found that 39 states' election systems were using outdated software that was vulnerable to hacking.

These reports have helped to raise awareness of the vulnerabilities of the US election system and have spurred calls for reform.

The Need for Reform

The vulnerabilities of the US election system pose a serious threat to American democracy. If hackers or activists can manipulate the results of an election, it could have a profound impact on the country.

There are a number of reforms that can be implemented to improve the security of the election system. These include:

- Replacing outdated voting machines with new machines that are not vulnerable to hacking

- Requiring voters to provide a paper ballot that can be used to verify the results of the election
- Investing in cybersecurity research and development
- Educating voters about the importance of election security

These reforms are essential to protecting the integrity of the US election system. By implementing these reforms, we can help to ensure that our elections are fair and accurate.

The US election system is facing a number of serious vulnerabilities. Hackers and activists have exposed these vulnerabilities, and they have shown that it is possible to manipulate the results of an election.

There are a number of reforms that can be implemented to improve the security of the election system. These reforms are essential to protecting the integrity of the US election system and ensuring that our elections are fair and accurate.



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