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Discover the secrets of the Google Play Community

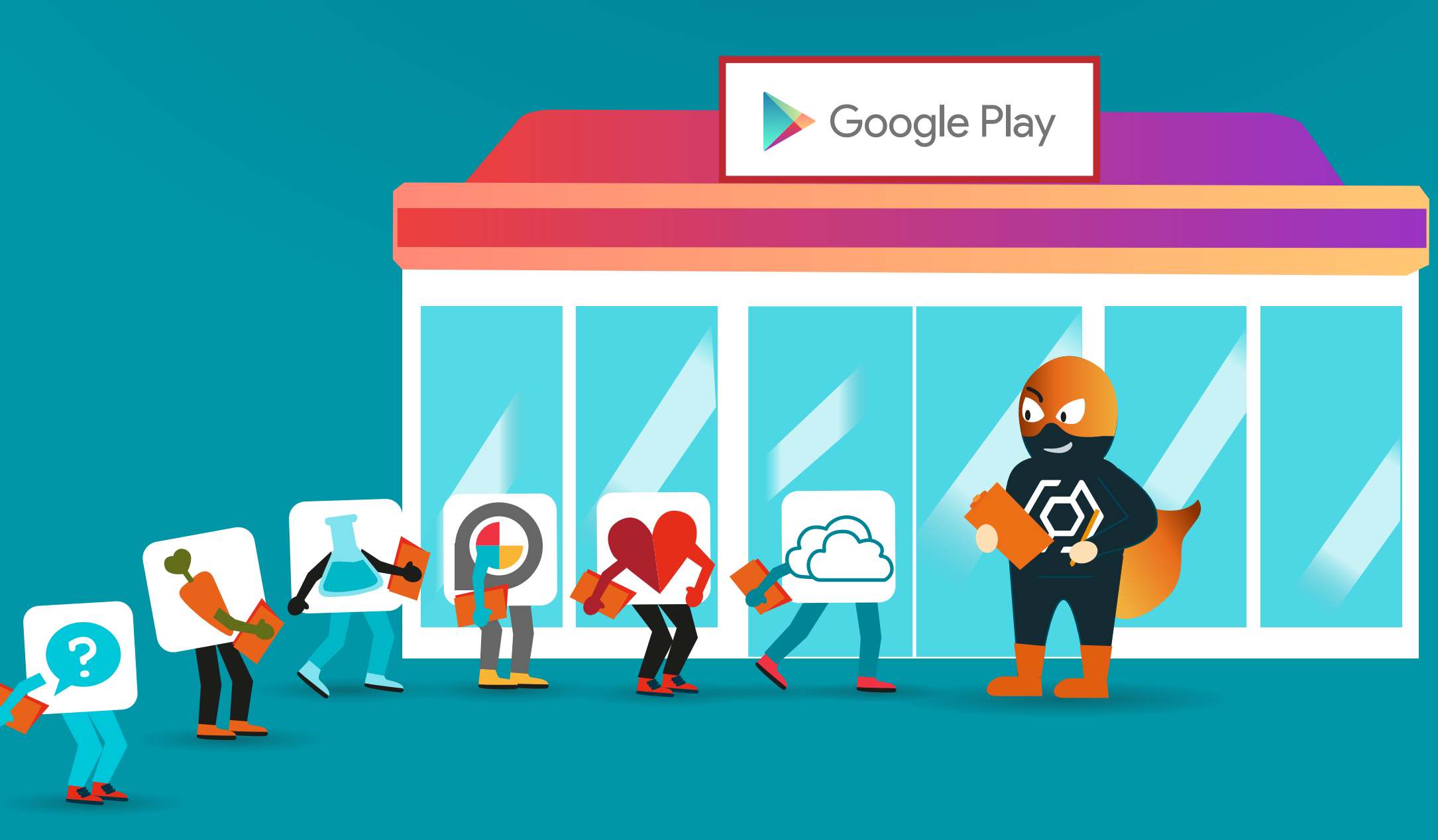
A surprising story

based on Google Play market demographic research, carried out with Tacyt technology in February, 2016.

There once was...

... An online store, where the Android mobile apps were distributed. Every day an average of 4.500 new items arrived at the store, yet not all the apps were developed in the proper way. This is where cyber delinquents, the developers' arch enemies, took their opportunity.

This was in a time gone by... Tacyt arrived, a cyber intelligence tool able to pick out negligent developers.



The first discoveries

After an exhausting process, of asking each and every app for its name, developer and other intimate details, Tacyt unraveled to our analyst, Junior, the following data:

APPS NUMBER (packageName)

TOTAL 3.366 K

DIFFERENT 2.317 K

DELETED 927 K

As you can see, there exists a high rate of app mortality.

Why is it so important to store information about apps taken off the official market?

Sometimes, developers decide to remove unsupported apps, but, other times, the apps get taken off the market to keep malpractices hidden from analysts, so they are unable to carry out research on them.

UNIQUE DEVELOPER **EMAIL ADDRESSES** (developerEmail) 678 K

DIFFERENT **DEVELOPER NAMES** (developerName) 539 K

UNIQUE FINGERPRINT **CERTIFICATES** (certificateFingerprint) 806 K

I don't get it!

Does Google Play allow the same developer to use various emails, names and certificates to implement different apps?

That's right!

It turns out that the practices that I usually detect, at times, are aimed to dress up the true identity of a developer.

4 revealing relationships

Pay attention to the instructions that Tacyt gives to Junior and understand the complexity of Google Play.

UNIQUE FINGERPRINT **CERTIFICATES** (certificateFingerprint) 806 K — UNIQUE DEVELOPER **EMAIL ADDRESSES** (developerEmail) 678 K

From 805.731 well-known certificates 761.389 are associated to a single developer email. The rest are used by two or more developer email addresses when they sign their apps.

I once found a certificate used by 10.240 different email accounts!

DIFFERENT **DEVELOPER NAMES** (developerName) 539 K — **TOTAL APPS NUMBER** (packageName) 3.366 K

The same happens to developer names.

For you to understand, the developer that has more apps than anyone else is called *Tenchijin Horoscopes* and his signature has been assigned to 7.102 different apps.

UNIQUE FINGERPRINT **CERTIFICATES** (certificateFingerprint) 806 K — **TOTAL APPS NUMBER** (packageName) 3.366 K

Another interesting piece of information,

more apps exist than certificates!

Do you know how many apps are associated to the most shared certificate?

¡52.129!

DIFFERENT **DEVELOPER NAMES** (developerName) 539 K — UNIQUE DEVELOPER **EMAIL ADDRESSES** (developerEmail) 678 K

As you can see, the email addresses may not be signed and dated. Behind an email address we can find apps associated to one or more individuals or companies.

The email account that shares the most of apps belongs to the *Tobit company*, that develops software.

Some advice on security

You should recommend companies that outsource their app development to demand that their certificates are not to be shared.

This way, they will avoid being associated with the rest of the app developer company's client portfolio.

TAKE CONTROL ON YOUR CERTIFICATE IF YOU DON'T WANT TO SHARE INFORMATION WITH OTHERS

What consequences would one suffer if it was possible to list the entire client portfolio of an app development company?

If an attacker finds a vulnerability in an app, he could easily list the set of apps developed on the same laptop, and analyze if they are vulnerable too.

IT IS POSSIBLE TO LIST APPS WITH THE VERY SAME VULNERABILITIES

You can read the full version of the Google Play, demographic analysis at: **blog.elevenpaths.com**

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