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Hackers Hold Entire Hotel for Ransom, Trap Guests in Rooms

A luxury hotel in Austria found itself in a bizarre hostage situation recently when hackers managed to access its electronic key system and lock all the hotel guests in their rooms until the hotel agreed to pay a ransom to get its systems back.

According to The Local, the cyber lock-in happened on the first day of the winter season at the Romantik Seehotel Jaegerwirt, a 111-year-old, four-star luxury hotel that has a pool, lake views, and a state-of-the-art electronic key system that turned out to be something hackers could exploit. On the first day of the winter season this year, hackers accessed the hotel's IT system and shut down everything, to include all the reservation info and the hotel's electronic key system. Approximately 180 people were staying at the hotel that day, and many of them were locked in their rooms, while others were locked out of theirs.

The hackers wanted 1,500 euros in Bitcoin to release the hotel's system, and the hotel decided to pay. "The house was totally booked with 180 guests, we had no other choice. Neither police nor insurance help you in this case," said managing director Christoph Brandstaetter. After the hackers were paid, the system went back to working as it was supposed to. But Brandstaetter says the hotel is planning on replacing the hotel's door

locks with old- fashioned ones with real keys.