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Cheap Android Phones and Poor Quality Control Leads to Malware Surprise

The abundance and variety of low cost Android phones is one of the reasons that Android has become so popular around the world. Unfortunately, low priced phones could also mean less operating revenue and thus possibly a lower quality control. Such is the case with a cheap Android phone that costs \$110 USD and has a remote access trojan (RAT) preinstalled. In 2017, researchers at Sophos saw a post on xda-developers.com where a user stated that their security software was constantly complaining about an app called Sound Recorder that was preinstalled on the phone. To investigate further, Sophos purchased the reported uleFone S8 Pro. When they analyzed the phone it was discovered that the preinstalled Sound Recorder app was actually a malicious variant that had capabilities similar to a remote access trojan (RAT) and a backdoor.