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Private Facebook Data from 81,000 Accounts Discovered on Crime Forum

Malicious browser extensions have been blamed for the theft of private messages and data from 81,000 Facebook users recently discovered for sale on a cybercrime forum. According to the BBC Russian Service investigation, samples of the data were discovered in September being hawked for 10 cents per account on an English-language forum with Russian connections. Most of the breached accounts were from Russia and Ukraine, but Facebook users in the UK, Brazil and other countries are also among the victims, the BBC said after verifying the find with UK cybersecurity company Digital Shadows. Criminals offered another 176,000 accounts although it's possible that some of the email address and phone number data in this cache could simply have been scraped from public profiles. Stolen data from the 81,000 accounts that appeared to be genuine included intimate exchanges between Facebook users. One example, according to the BBC, included photographs of a recent holiday, another was a chat about a recent Depeche Mode concert, and a third included complaints about a son-in-law. When the BBC posed as a buyer, the seller claimed he could supply access to a further 120 million accounts, which Digital Shadows believes is probably untrue because it implies a huge data breach Facebook would have noticed. Facebook told the BBC it knew of a rogue extension designed to steal data from its users, although it refused to name names.