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Android phones are missing multiple security updates still more secure than the average Windows machine, security researcher and co-author of the study says. The statement was made after a study by the Security Research Laboratory (SRL), which found that many Android brands lag far behind the updates. The study, first reported by Wired, also found that some vendors lied about the latest application update. Researchers discovered that THE and TCL were the worst offenders when this came to questionable claims to be up-to-date. Most gaps fix probably the result of genuine difficulties to track all the necessary patches in Android, Linux kernel, chipset, and hardware drivers, SRL founder and study co-author Carsten Nohl said of the Android administration in an email. Only in (a) a few cases have we caught vendors simply stating the wrong patch dates, and even more so recently. SRL has updated its SnoopSnitch app to show genuine patch information for your phone, and will release a bug release at the end of the week, explains Nol. Missing security updates can't hurt beyond downloading an app, what else can consumers do if they don't have the latest security updates? Single missing patches alone are not a cause for concern, since most Android hacks require a chain of multiple bugs, Nohl clarifies. If the gap in the patch is very large, a security-conscious user may want to switch to a more fixed phone. However, the founder of SRL believes that owners of Android devices can take solace in security measures on their phone. Android antivirus apps remain one of the most popular types of apps on Android. Normally, you don't need an antivirus app, if you play safely, just download apps from the Play Store, and save... We haven't seen any large-scale hacking attacks on Android, and hopefully never will be. Each phone has a number of security barriers, and each missing patch usually affects only one of them. Consumers can take comfort in the idea that an Android phone with multiple patch spaces is still more secure than the average Windows computer. The sheer number of phone models means it's no surprise that suppliers are struggling to support upgrades, Nol notes. Simplifying the jungle model is a prerequisite for patch gaps in my opinion. If you have a super-old or ultra-budget Android device that hasn't received security updates in a long time, you're looking at more than a few patch spaces. So you probably want to update your phone or turn on safety options. Fairphone 2 made the news earlier this month after it received an Android 9 Pie beta update. It doesn't sound like anything to brag about at first - it's not even the latest version of Android after all - but that's when you remember that phone launched in 2015, advertising Android 5.1 Lollipop. Fairphone Lollipop. Fairphone that qualcomm stopped supporting the Snapdragon 801 chipset inside The Fairphone 2 after Android 6.0 Marshmallow. In fact, the company essentially had to work with the team behind LineageOS custom ROM to whip up the update itself. It seems pretty incredible that the company had to jump through so many hoops to get the pie work. Fairphone may be a niche brand, but if you consider the terrible reputation that Android phones have in terms of upgrades compared to iPhones, it really drives home the fact that almost always no guarantee the phone continues to receive updates after two or three years on the market. Is this on the chipset provider though, as Fairphone offers? What do they do with Android updates? Here's what upgrade commitments we should expect from various chip designers. What is SoC? Here's everything you need to know about smartphone chipsets. HiSiliconHuawei told the Android Authority that its HiSilicon chip division has maintained its Android processors for two to three years. We asked the firm to clarify this statement (for example, do flagships get three years of updates, while the SoCs budget get two years?), and will update the article accordingly. It is worth noting that in 2017 Huawei Mate 10 Series and 2018 P20 flagships recently received Android 10, lining up with two to three years of collateral. But budget-level devices such as the P20 Lite are not scheduled to get an update (despite the launch alongside the P20 series), and it is assumed that many older Y series phones will not receive EMUI 10. KvalcommKualcom is the largest supplier of Android processors around, so all eyes are on it to adequately support its silicon. But what should you expect then? In many cases, the fourth, fifth or even sixth version is provided on the basis of demand from customers and the market, the Android Authority said. who wants to expand security fixes, the company added. In addition, the company also noted that it has its own bounty program and internal vulnerability testing, with any problems found within the company published. Despite the company's promise that up to six updates to the Android version could be provided, Google Pixel 2016 still topped out on four major OTAs. It is worth bearing in mind that the Pixel series offers Android promotions that should allow a much easier upgrade process. MediaTek and SamsungWe've asked MediaTek and Samsung to comment on commitments to update their chipsets. They didn't come back. us by the time we're published. MediaTek phones have a reputation for not delivering on updates, although this may be at least partially partial for the second line of budget brands often use these chipsets. For what it's worth, most of the devices in our list of the best MediaTek phones have either received a major Android update or are getting one. But then again, the firm hasn't told us its commitment to upgrade for Android phone processors in the long run. Read: Snapdragon 865 vs. Kirin 990 vs. Exynos 990Samsung's Exynos chipsets are pretty much inside the firm's Galaxy phones, and its two-year-old flagships have typically got Android 10. The firm as a whole is doing a decent job of updating its last budget days too, and even the two-year Galaxy J6 and Galaxy A7 2018 are getting Android 10. In addition, the company still supports older devices with monthly or quarterly security updates, with even the Galaxy A5 2017 (released in January 2017) still getting quarterly patches. You can check the supported phones here. Are Android processor manufacturers to blame for poor OS upgrade support? Admittedly, chipmakers are only part of the equation when it comes to delivering on Android system updates. OEM manufacturers also play a big role in this process, as they have to roll together updates from Google, the Android processor provider, their own teams and other sources to push out the final update. Manufacturers and their network partners should also test an Android update or security patch to make sure there are as few bugs as possible. This testing process can add more time to the upgrade release cycle, so many enthusiasts are trying to opt for unlocked phones rather than carrier branded models. Fortunately, Google makes the Android update process a little easier with features such as Project Treble and Project Mainline. The Treble project has significantly redesigned the main Android platform to provide faster and simpler updates. Meanwhile, Project Mainline allows you to deliver some updates through the Play Store (e.g. media co-currency, network components), completely bypassing operator testing. Related: Here's a list of Android 11 beta phonesChipmakers also use Project Mainline to enable GPU driver updates through the Play Store. Kvalcomm and Arm announced their participation in this endeavor, which should drastically reduce the time needed to fix bugs and optimize performance on the phone. Update: GPU driver updates through the Play Store are independent of the Mainline project, according to XDA Mishaal Rahman. Another rarely mentioned factor in Android updates is Linux long-term support (LTS) core affiliate. The Linux kernel is at the heart of Android, but the LTS branch used is usually only supported for two years. Fortunately, this period of support extended to six years ago in 2017, eliminating another hurdle to long-term support for android updates. It is understood that chipmakers definitely play a role in Android Android updates their absence). But with companies such as Kvalcomm offering up to six updates and Google seeking to move some updates to app stores, manufacturers can't afford to hide behind their hardware and software partners. That's all we know about chipmakers and their commitment to upgrading Android to different processors. You can check out more mobile technical coverage through the list below. With the official release of Android 5.0 Lollipop just around the corner, we thought we'd look at system updates as a whole. We all want the latest and best software that Google pushes out, but do we actually deserve to get a software update? There comes a time in the life of every Android device when its creator decides that it has received its latest system update. Maybe this day comes before the device ships to consumers, maybe it's on a set schedule or maybe it's years and many upgrades down the road. When that day comes, many react with anger and are left to wonder if their device is actually obsolete, or if their manufacturer is just lazy or forgetful about their years being a loyal customer. There is a general consumer perception of Android devices that they all need to receive the latest version of the OS, and in a timely manner. While we all want the latest features, it is often overlooked that for one reason or another, the device is simply not in line to get another update, no matter how much we may shout at the manufacturer. Why should phones get updates? It's a pretty simple question to answer, all you need is to watch ads from any major presentation of any Google I/O conference to see most of the reasons that phones should be getting updates. Google always infuses new and interesting features into Android, usually with a new user interface and design principle. Performance improvements are usually also on deck. Remember when everything was buttery smooth? Something usually not explained in significant detail, if any, during major VA presentations is improving security. While Android was inherently secure with the earliest versions of the OS, there are several known vulnerabilities found in versions as recent as Android 4.2 Jellybean. If we're talking about any other reason for phones to get updates, I think security should be the focus. This certainly makes the leap forward with Android 5.0 Lollipop, using two-factor authentication and full device encryption from the first download. The obvious fact remains that any manufacturer who is not able to keep their devices well enough, should bear the wrath of the social crowd. manifested itself in a bad culture around the company and ultimately a loss of brand confidence, loyalty and sales. We, educated consumers, fickle people, oh yes, we. If, by this logic, security updates and consumer pressure are the main motivating factor for manufacturers to handle updates, updates, some phones go without support? Why phones shouldn't receive updates There are a number of reasons why the manufacturer should issue End Of Life on the device, and many more reasons that the manufacturer decides to act. Let's look at a few: Limited specs in the case of the oldest Android device that I'm still active, the LG Optimus One (P500), it just can't do it. New out of the box, the P500 offered me about 48MB usable storage space. Of course, it has a microSD slot and the latest OS installed, Android 2.3 Gingerbread, has the ability to save apps for SD cards, but the device was considered a budget device when I bought it and just couldn't handle the new versions of Android. The fact although Android 4.4 KitKat was designed to run as smoothly as possible on devices with just 512MB of RAM, did just that proved less ideal for many. The unsupported parts of the Galaxy Nexus - built by Samsung, was delivered along with the Texas Instruments processor. It took just a few months after the launch for TI to decide that they would no longer support their chipset, leaving Google and Samsung in trouble. This TI decision was one that could not be overcome, leaving the Galaxy Nexus stranded, never seeing another official update. While the TI chip in the Galaxy Nexus is powerful enough to work with new versions of Android, the problem was actually in the software drivers. Since TI didn't put drivers together, the open source community gave it a shot, but in the end, it just shouldn't have been. EconomicsIt should not be a surprise that the very cost of operations is the main reason the manufacturer decides to stop supporting the device. This includes a large number of factors - a person's hours to process upgrades, the cost of devices for testing, possible licensing fees, an estimate of the number of devices sold with the number of those that are still active, and the cost of working on an upgrade compared to putting that effort towards new products and services. Some manufacturers, such as Samsung and THE, can often afford to take care of many of their devices. They employ hundreds of thousands of people around the world, and don't have to find themselves strapped to talent when the team spends some time on older devices. However, they have hundreds if not thousands of active phone models on the market at any given time, eventually the device must be retired and employees are set for new tasks. On the other hand, a small team, like the people on OnePlus, have to handle their single device offering a little more carefully. There is no doubt that the OnePlus One is still a great device and a very coveted phone, more than some of us were wondering what their next device offer should look like. With the size of their team, it can happen that they decrease, or even drop support for one in order to focus on two. Only time will be if One loses support before the device itself stops performing. Aside from: the fact that the OnePlus One is powered by CyanogenMod changing the dynamics, but eventually they too will stop supporting in favor of new hardware. Bringing us to OnePlus creating your own OS for two. What does your manufacturer do about it? Many of the major manufacturers have committed to getting the latest Android updates for their devices, at least for a short period of time after release. We've seen HTC promise to keep all new devices up to date for at least two years after release and Motorola, at least since Google bought them, continues to update most of its line as quickly and often as they can. Looking at rolling out so far Android 5.0 Lollipop, Motorola has been caught in action with an update for Moto X and Moto G and LG has jumped up promising an update to any other manufacturer, even before google can push an update to the Nexus devices. The huge difference with Lollipop is that Google made the developer of the Pre-Android 5.0 Lollipop widely available in the months leading up to the actual release. This has allowed manufacturers as well as app developers to get on board early that we are seeing more and more with applications that are modeled after the latest design standard, Material Design. Historically speaking, Google has managed to push out the latest Android releases of nexus devices long before any other manufacturer can get things rolling. This is one of the main selling points of the Nexus line. Motorola and HTC were quick to follow while Samsung took a little longer and poor LG went so far as to blame carriers for their relatively awful waiting time for new Android releases. Who is responsible for the Android update? Speaking of LG problems, it is true that most phones on the market have more than one hand in a cookie jar that is your phone. As a retraining, here's a basic idea of how Android releases work: Carrier branded/subsidized phone: When you get the phone from the carrier, the Android version on the device has been transferred from manufacturer to carrier. The carrier then enters its apps and code to support their services and network before finally finding its way to your phone. What we have here, then, there is no clear path between Google's Android release and your phone. By the time the manufacturer and carrier do their thing, the upgrades can be confusing and delays can be lengthy. The real sore spot is here when you end up with a device that is physically capable of running the latest and biggest Android release, but it's suspended due to problems in software compatibility for your carrier requirements. Just ask any early adopter 7 LTE user on Verizon, they will explain some of this to you. Unlocked phones: The unlocked phone usually comes at a higher price, the main reason for this is that there are there subsidy as it would find your typical operator branded Android smartphone. The advantage is that your phone maker is usually responsible for releasing Android to the device and can do so with minimal delay. Not to mention this often means that a simpler version of Android is installed on the device, sometimes very close to the Android. Nexus phones from Google are a great example of how unlocked phones work. You buy the device from Google and Google delivers you any available Android updates. Despite the promises and best intentions of even Google and others through the Open Handset Alliance, your device will inevitably meet its end for a software update. What do you do when your phone is out of date? Custom ROMs For those who are not familiar with custom ROMs, they are versions of Android that are not usually built by Google or one of the typical phone manufacturers. There are a lot of ROMs out there, and some great ones too. Some of our favorites here are CyanogenMod and paranoid Android. There is no doubt that installing custom ROM is a method to take a much bigger selection of Android devices and update them for new versions of Android. For many phones, custom ROM is the only way to see any updates. Although we accept custom ROMs as a major part of the Android market, they are mostly handled by phone-based users. That is, each of you must make a conscious decision to work through the sometimes difficult and dangerous process of unlocking, rooting and ROMing your devices. This process usually voids your warranty, and carries the risk of bricking your device as a whole. Be sure to learn everything and everything and follow the instructions carefully if you decide to go down this path - it may seem scary, but it is usually very much worth the trouble. This suggests, of course, that your phone is even able to go through this process, and that the Android community has s juryed out the right way to build a compatible ROM as well. If everything else fails, the next option is actually very good. Doing nothing is

the number one action, or lack thereof, for a phone that has been rendered obsolete. Let's be honest, despite the lack of new interesting features, your old outdated phones are still pretty good. Or as good as they ever will be. Chances are you've even replaced it with new equipment already. The quoteChances, you purchased, or plan to purchase, a new device anyway qperson qsource qposition leftWhat to do with old equipment? Many of us end up donating old devices to our family and friends. If I can point out, it's admitting that the device is not dead and useless, just that it's not good enough for your desires and needs - if you really just want the recipient to suffer, then that just means. Instead of giving it away, you you Use this obsolete device that runs this outdated version of Android for an easy purpose. We recently covered a lot of ideas on what you can use an old phone for. I had that little old LG Optimus One I was talking about now a music player connected to my stereo. I also use it as a companion hiking, with offline maps and, again, music. My newest use, slow-motion video. Bottom line, there's nothing as fancy as photosphere, material design or even buttery smoothness on our old devices, but they should still prove workable even without. Don't forget that when you focus on the tasks you want to accomplish, the operating system becomes less important and the applications available become key. Fortunately, many of the more than one million apps in the Google Play Store will run on older hardware, with older versions of Android keeping your dead phones alive only a little longer. Perhaps one of the best things for all Android users, which has started to happen in the last short time, is that Google and others have been slowly unloading their key apps and services into standalone apps in the Google Play Store. This means that these features can be individually updated and installed on more and older devices without requiring a full new Android release. This reduces the need to see upgrades on older hardware and, once again, gives your devices a little more sip of air before the full expiration date. The conclusion of the quote qtext manufacturers owe us a quality device with safe and operational software, but perhaps nothing more qperso nsource qposition right Despite the absence on all the interesting new features of the latest Android releases, there really is time for the device to stop getting updates to the operating system. After all, we can say that manufacturers owe us only a quality device with safe and operational software. With all that said and done, the burning question on everyone's mind right now - will your phone get an Android 5.0 lollipop? Be sure to check out our list of phones that are in line for an update over in our community, and follow along our Android Lollipop coverage for all the latest news surround OS. Either way, I'm sure you'll join me in hitting the Check Update button on all your devices if you haven't flashed the image of the system already. Please keep in mind that this is a good review, but only scratches on the surface of everything and the entire Android updates and policies around them. Feel free to point out any key factors I have left in the comments below. What do you say -- should more effort go on as many phones as possible as possible, or should the upgrades stop long before the device starts to feel under-powered and sluggish? Sluggish? Sluggish?

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