

**GET OFF MY  
PC NOW!**

Lock your settings so  
nobody can mess them up



p56

# STAY 100% ANONYMOUS ON Google

50>



£2.30

Use all Google's tools without it  
knowing **ANYTHING** about you p40



I'm Feeling Private



**PLUS**

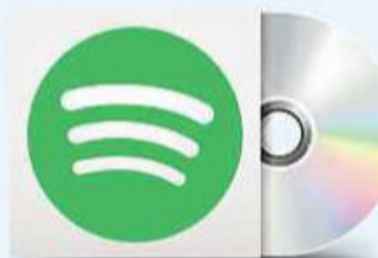
**MY BROWSER IS FASTER  
THAN YOURS!**



Speed hacks that make this boast true p48

**MAKE YOUR OWN SPOTIFY**

Stream your CDs to play anywhere,  
anytime – on ANY device p58





## IT'S NOT TOO LATE



**NEXT DAY  
DELIVERY**



**NEXT DAY  
DELIVERY**



**NEXT DAY  
DELIVERY**

### **FUSION** **GTX 1050** GAMING PC

- Chillblast F3 Gaming Case
- AMD Athlon 200GE Processor
- AMD Stock CPU Cooler
- 8GB DDR4 2400MHz Memory
- ASUS PRIME A320M-K Motherboard
- NVIDIA GeForce GTX 1050 2GB GPU
- Seagate 1TB SSHD Hybrid Drive
- Fractal Design 80 PLUS 500W PSU
- 802.11n WiFi
- Windows 10 Home

Price from:

**£569.99** inc VAT

### **FUSION** **GTX 1070** GAMING PC

- Corsair Carbide SPEC-04 Tempered Glass
- Intel® Core™ i5-8400 Processor
- Centurion Direct Contact CPU Cooler
- 16GB DDR4 2400MHz Memory
- Asus Z370-P Motherboard
- NVIDIA GeForce GTX 1070 8GB GPU
- 250GB SK hynix SL308 SSD
- Seagate 1TB 7200RPM Hard Disk Drive
- Corsair CX650 80 PLUS Bronze 650W PSU
- 802.11n WiFi
- Windows 10 Home

Price from:

**£1399.99** inc VAT

### **FUSION** **RTX 2070** GAMING PC

- Corsair Carbide SPEC-ALPHA Case
- Intel® Core™ i5-8600K Processor
- Chillblast 120 CPU Water Cooler
- 16GB DDR4 2400MHz Memory
- Asus PRIME Z370-P Motherboard
- NVIDIA GeForce RTX 2070 8GB GPU
- 250GB SK hynix SL308 SSD
- Seagate 2TB Hard Disk Drive
- Corsair CX750M 80 PLUS Bronze 750W PSU
- 802.11n WiFi
- Windows 10 Home

Price from:

**£1679.99** inc VAT

Terms and conditions are on the website. All trademarks are acknowledged. Pictures are for illustration only. Prices are correct at time of going to press (28-11-18) E&OE



## Get the gift of privacy from Google

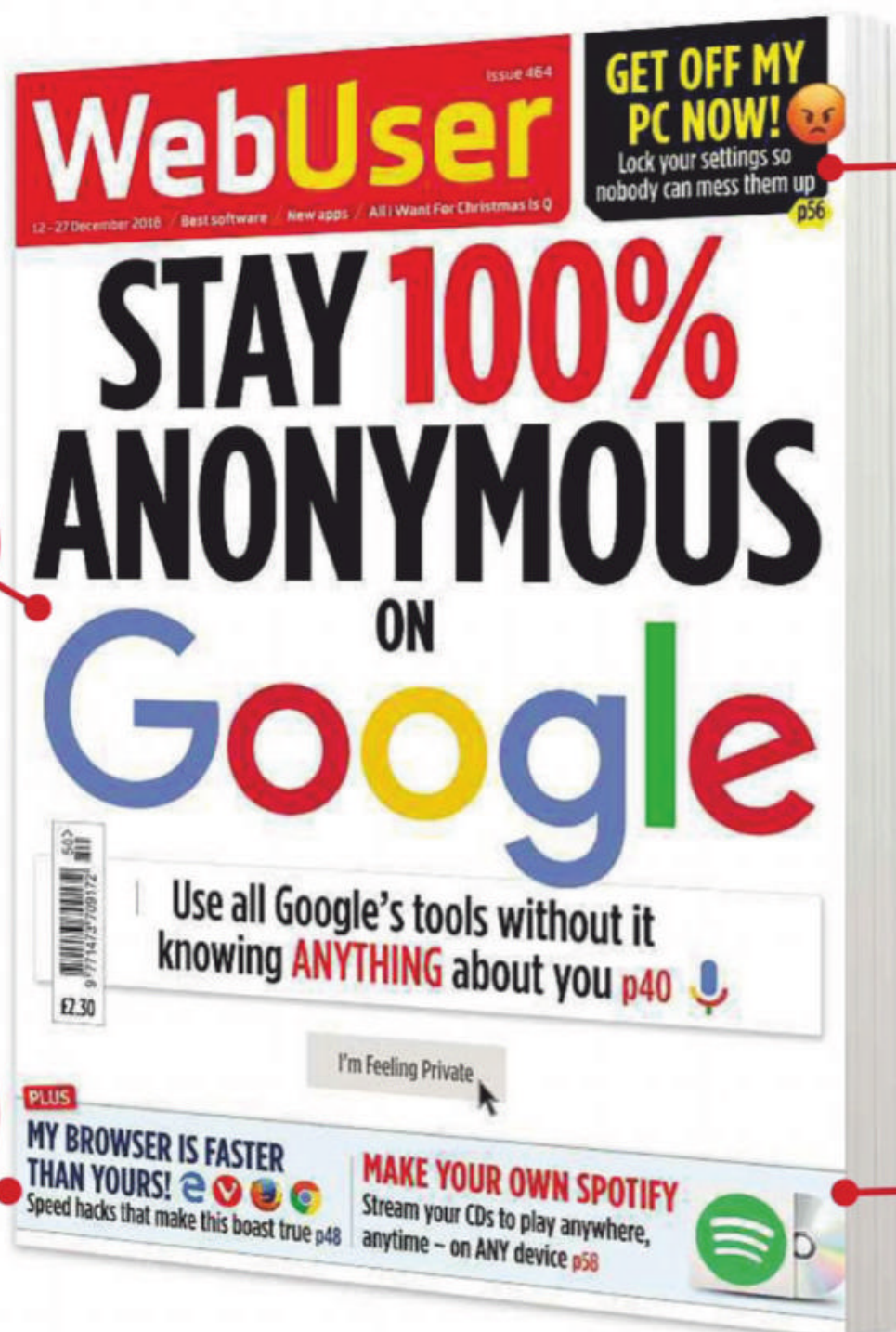
It's that special time of the year when we at *Web User* give thanks to the wonder of the web, put aside our differences with *Computeractive* and merrily knock the stuffing out of Google.

I'm only joking, of course: we love Google, and there's plenty of great Google content in this issue, including a workshop about its new image converter (page 52); expert tips for Google Docs (page 64); and details of this year's Google Santa Tracker (page 6). What we don't love is Google's gluttonous attitude towards our data and the way it shares our personal information with

advertisers like a plate of mince pies.

In this issue's cover feature, we explain how you can stop this happening, without giving up Google, by withholding the information it uses to track you and by switching to more private versions of your favourite tools. If Google won't give you the gift of anonymity, then *Web User* will. Hope you all have a wonderful Christmas!

**Robert Irvine, Editor**  
[robert\\_irvine@dennis.co.uk](mailto:robert_irvine@dennis.co.uk)  
[#webuser](https://twitter.com/webuser)



### 5 Things you'll learn this issue

**1** How to monitor the amount of time you spend on Facebook and Instagram every day



page 6

**2** How to access the hidden God Mode in Windows without tweaking any settings

page 29

**3** How to change any element on a web page using a Chrome extension

page 32

**4** How to fix a PC that won't install the latest Windows updates from Microsoft

page 66

**5** How to spruce up Gmail by using one of your own photos in the background

page 68

### Subscribe to Web User!

Never miss another issue – subscribe at [subscribe.webuser.co.uk](https://subscribe.webuser.co.uk)

 Average sales, Jan-Dec 2017, 27,156 copies per issue





**FREE  
LED  
flashlight**



**SUBSCRIPTIONS**  
Turn to page 62 for  
special subs offers

**ISSUE 464**

**12 - 27 DECEMBER 2018**

**COVER  
FEATURE**

# STAY **100%** ANONYMOUS ON Google

Enjoy your  
favourite Google  
tools without  
sacrificing your  
privacy

**p40**

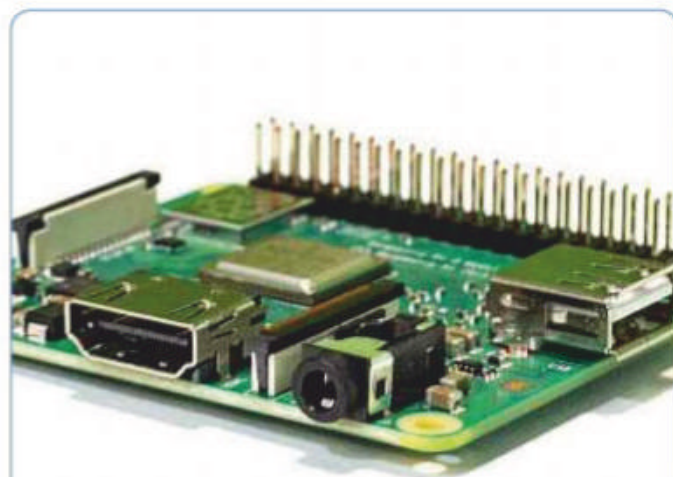
Where to move your photos when  
Flickr scraps its 1TB free service **p46**



Can the new iPhone XR rival  
its pricier siblings? **p24**



The new Pi is as compact as ever,  
but now connects to Wi-Fi **p26**



## **IN DEPTH** Articles on the latest tech topics

- 38 FAQ**  
Initiative Q
- 40 COVER FEATURE**  
**STAY 100% ANONYMOUS ON GOOGLE**  
Use its tools, but keep your personal data private
- 46 Best free Flickr alternatives**  
We review six online photo-storage services
- 48 Tweak your browser to make it faster**  
Explore experimental tools and default settings
- 50 Top 20 best tech podcasts**  
Where to hear top talk on tech topics

## **REVIEWS** Apps, sites and products on test

- 14 Best New Websites**  
Take a tour of TripAdvisor's refreshed design
- 24 Product Test**
  - Apple iPhone XR
  - Raspberry Pi 3 Model A+
- 28 Best Free Software**  
Ice Cream PDF Editor's easy-to-use tools
- 32 Best New Browser Tools**  
Use VisBug to hack any element on a web page
- 34 Best Free Apps**  
Get the best signal with NetSpot WiFi Analyzer

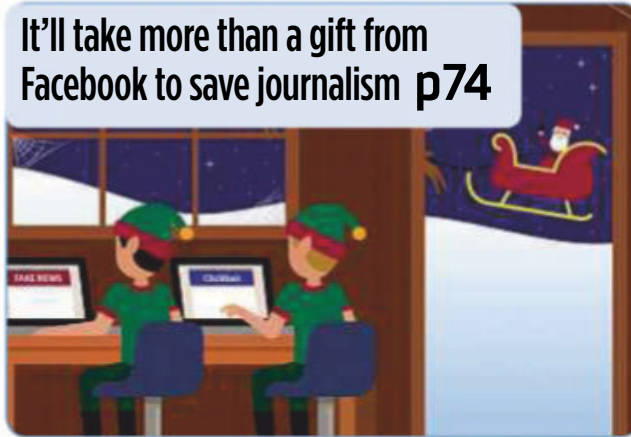




## FAVOURITES Must-read regulars

- 6 What's New Online**  
How to follow Santa this Christmas
- 8 Need to Know**  
This fortnight's top tech news stories
- 12 Stay Safe Online**  
Security advice for PC and mobile
- 18 Build a Better Site**  
Expert tips, tools and practical help
- 20 What to Watch Online**  
Films and TV shows you can't miss
- 23 Best Buys**  
Our pick of the best new products
- 37 Take a Screen Break**  
Guess the emoji Christmas hits

It'll take more than a gift from Facebook to save journalism **p74**



- 60 Broadband Deals**  
Find the best-value package for you
- 72 Inbox**  
Tell us your views and opinions
- 74 Page 404**  
Barry lays the blame for fake news

### EDITORIAL

Group Editor Daniel Booth  
Editor Robert Irvine  
Technical & Reviews Editor Andy Shaw  
Features Writer Steve Clark  
Art Editor Laurence Hallam  
Production Editor Miki Berenyi  
Editorial Tel: 0203 890 3890

### ADVERTISING

Tel: 0203 890 3846  
Advertising Director Charlotte Milligan  
Advertising Manager Alexa Dracos

### ADVERTISING PRODUCTION

Group Production Manager  
Stephen Catherall, 0203 890 4050  
Production Assistant Helina Ozyurt, 0203 890 3827

### MARKETING

Marketing Manager Rachel Hare  
Marketing Production Manager Gemma Hills

### MANAGEMENT

Tel: 0203 890 3890  
Managing Director John Garewal  
MD of Advertising Julian Lloyd-Evans  
Commercial and Retail Director David Barker  
CFO/COO Brett Reynolds  
Chief Executive James Tye  
Company Founder Felix Dennis

### SYNDICATION AND USE OF LOGOS

Syndication Senior Manager Anj Dosaj-Halai  
Tel: +44 (0)203 890 3816  
Email: [anj\\_dosaj-halai@dennis.co.uk](mailto:anj_dosaj-halai@dennis.co.uk)

### INTERNATIONAL LICENSING

Web User is available for licensing overseas.  
Licensing & Syndication Assistant Nicole Adams  
Tel: +44 (0)203 890 3998  
Email: [nicole\\_adams@dennis.co.uk](mailto:nicole_adams@dennis.co.uk)

### SUBSCRIPTIONS

Tel: 0330 333 9493  
Email: [subscriptions@dennis.co.uk](mailto:subscriptions@dennis.co.uk)  
You can manage your existing subscription through [www.ManageMyMags.co.uk](http://www.ManageMyMags.co.uk). This should be your first port of call if you have any queries about your subscription. A subscription to Web User for one year costs £47.99 for UK subscribers, £95 for Europe and £151 for the rest of the world. Call 0330 333 9493 to get the next issue, delivered free to your door.

### PRINTING

Printed by Wyndeham Bicester, Oxon  
Distributors Seymour 020 7396 4000

### PERMISSIONS

Material may not be reproduced in any form without the written consent of the publisher. Please address such requests to: John Garewal, Dennis Publishing, 31-32 Alfred Place, WC1E 7DP

### LIABILITY

While every care was taken preparing this magazine, the publishers cannot be held responsible for the accuracy of the information or any consequence arising from it. All judgments are based on equipment available to Web User at the time of review. 'Value for money' comments are based on UK prices at time of review. Web User takes no responsibility for the content of external websites whose addresses are published in the magazine.

© Copyright Dennis Publishing Limited. Web User is a trademark of Felix Dennis.



### A DENNIS PUBLICATION

Web User is published fortnightly by Dennis Publishing Ltd, 31-32 Alfred Place, WC1E 7DP. Company registered in England. Material may not be reproduced in whole or part without the consent of the publishers. ISSN 1473-7094

WEB USER  
PRINTED IN THE UK



## Practical WebUser

Workshops, tips, projects and problem solving

16 pages

- 52 Workshop 1**  
Optimise online images with Squoosh
- 54 Workshop 2**  
Spybot Identity Monitor
- 56 Workshop 3**  
Stop people messing with your Windows 10 settings
- 57 Workshop 4**  
Control Android apps with NetGuard
- 58 Weekend Project**  
Create your own Spotify server
- 64 Web User Masterclass**  
Expert tips for online office tools
- 66 Ask the Expert**  
All your technical questions answered
- 68 Readers' Tips**  
The best tips from our readers
- 71 Readers' Helpdesk**  
Answers from our reader forums

Monitor password hacks **p54**



Block changes to W10 settings **p56**



Stream your music collection to any device **p58**







# What's New Online



## Track Santa on his Christmas travels

**W**e assume you've all been good boys and girls throughout 2018, so you'll be expecting Father Christmas to pop down your chimney for 25 December. Before the big day, however, there's much preparation to be done and you can see just how Santa's elves are getting on by checking out his bustling North Pole village online.

There are two ways to do this: the first is via the North American Aerospace Defence Command (NORAD), which lets you unlock a fun game every day via an Advent Calendar, watch movies about Santa, learn more about the jolly chap and get to grips with holiday traditions around the world. There's also a selection of music tracks, most of which are performed by the US Air Force Academy Band or The Norad Commanders. What's



more, come Christmas Eve, you'll be able to track Santa's whereabouts – including on mobile devices for the first time.

The second option is via Google, which is also offering a glimpse of North Pole life, again with lots of activities, one for each day in December, spread across an interactive map. It'll end with another Santa



tracker that not only tells you how far away he is from your

location, but the number of delivered gifts. You can also ask Google Assistant "Hey Google, call Santa" to connect to the North Pole.

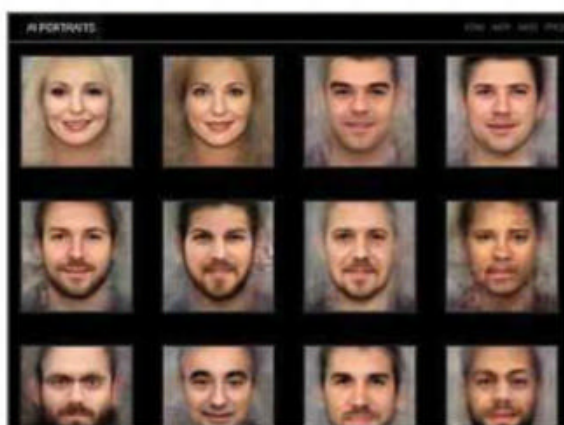
Happy Christmas!

[www.noradsanta.org](http://www.noradsanta.org)  
[santatracker.google.com](http://santatracker.google.com)

## Visualise yourself as a celebrity

[aiportraits.com](http://aiportraits.com)

Forget going under the knife, slapping on the make-up or applying a filter in Instagram: if you want to look as glamorous as the most picture-perfect



celebrity, then upload a photo to AI Portraits. Using an artificial-intelligence algorithm, this website analyses your looks, then sifts through the faces of millions of actors and actresses to reconstruct and retouch your image using the facial elements of people with similar features (and more money to spend on them).

Whether you see the created portrait as an improvement is deemed irrelevant: indeed, the bods behind the tool say "there is no willingness to improve or deform the starting picture". Instead, they say it is an exercise in exploring how AI views you and interprets your features. Still, there's no denying that many people will see the result as "better", even if it's just down to the smoother skin. That said, it's all a bit of fun and the developers promise to immediately delete your uploaded images after processing them.

## Monitor your time on social media

[www.instagram.com](http://www.instagram.com)

[www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com)

If you find yourself endlessly scrolling through your Facebook and Instagram feeds for several hours every day, then check out the social networks' new dashboards, which serve as a regular reminder of how much time you're wasting.

They show you how many hours you've spent on Instagram or Facebook over the past week, along with your daily average, allowing you to take action by cutting the number of notifications you receive. Crucially, they also let you set reminders that prompt you to stop browsing after a set period of time.

Access your dashboard in Facebook by selecting the Menu button and choosing Settings & Privacy, 'Your time on Facebook'. In Instagram, simply tap the menu icon in the top-right corner of your profile and select Your Activity. Just be aware that the times shown only relate to the device on which the app is running, so estimates won't be accurate if you keep switching between desktop and mobile.



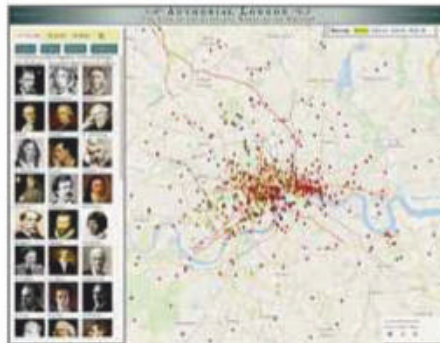


We pick the 10 best things you must do on the web this fortnight

## Explore fictional London

[bit.ly/london464](http://bit.ly/london464)

Many acclaimed authors, from Charles Dickens to Zadie Smith, have lived in London or written about the capital. The Authorial London map highlights 50 of them, plotting literature-based locations and offering biographies, relevant extracts from their novels and photos of key places. Red markers indicate the places the authors wrote about, while yellow ones show where they lived or worked.

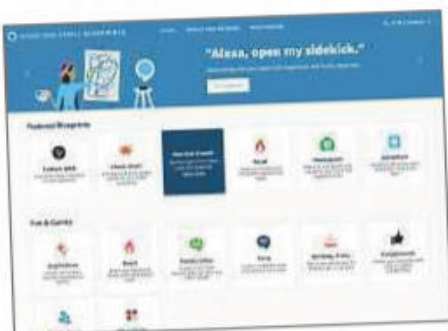


## Create your own Alexa skills

[blueprints.amazon.co.uk](http://blueprints.amazon.co.uk)

Although there are already tens of thousands of skills available for Alexa, Amazon is now letting you create your own tasks for the voice assistant without needing any coding skills. With Alexa Blueprints, you can choose from 22 templates based around the home, fun and games, learning and knowledge, and stories. In each case, you simply fill in the various entry fields, name your skill and make it available on your Echo speaker and other Alexa devices within minutes.

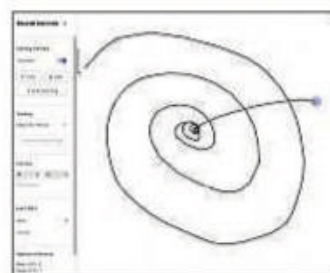
Skills include a schedule of weekly chores, a guide to your home and help for babysitters. You can also share your skills via email or social media.



## Generate sound from your drawings

[bit.ly/sound464](http://bit.ly/sound464)

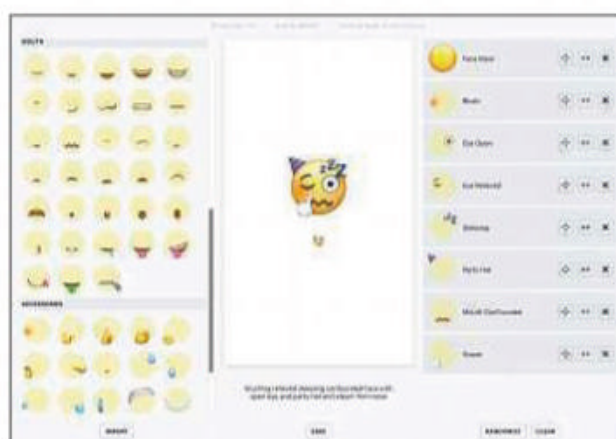
Many Google Experiments ([experiments.withgoogle.com](http://experiments.withgoogle.com)) involve either art or music, and the new drawing tool Sound Canvas cleverly combines the two. It encourages you to scribble on your screen, turning your lines into a range of real-time sounds such as falling notes when you draw downwards, and noise that moves from ear to ear when drawing left to right while wearing headphones. What's more, you can do so using your mouse, keyboard or – by granting your webcam access – any point of your body. There are a few options to play around with, including being able to audibly explore your overall creation.



## Design your own emoji

[bit.ly/emoji464](http://bit.ly/emoji464)

When you're struggling to find an emoji that perfectly encapsulates your mood, you might wish you could make your own. Visit Philipp Antoni's new online Emoji Builder and you can do just that, selecting from a range of resizeable faces, eyes, mouths and accessories based on Apple's emoji to come up with something unique, then save your effort as a PNG image file.



## NEW VOICE COMMANDS



### Play Mickey's Game Show

To celebrate 90 years of Mickey Mouse, say: "Hey Google, play Mickey's Game Show" and answer a host of trivia questions about the cartoon rodent and his chums.



### Activate Siri on a Mac

If you own one of the two MacBook Pros launched this year, say "Hey Siri" to call on the assistant. Just make sure the lid of the laptop is open when you do so.



### Make Skype calls

To make hands-free Skype calls via Alexa-enabled devices, start a conversation with commands such as "Alexa, call Mum on Skype". To set it up, go to Settings, Communication, Skype and log in.



## Use Spotify on Apple Watch

[www.spotify.com](http://www.spotify.com)

The latest version of Spotify for iOS includes an Apple Watch app that plays music, accesses playlists and adds tracks to your library. You can also use your Watch to play music on Spotify Connect-compatible devices – but you can't listen offline.

## Virtually tour a black hole

[bit.ly/hole464](http://bit.ly/hole464)

Scientists have created a stunning virtual tour of the supermassive black hole in the centre of the Milky Way. The video of Sagittarius A\* works particularly well on a VR headset or with Google Cardboard.

## Play YouTube on Switch

[bit.ly/switch464](http://bit.ly/switch464)

YouTube is finally available for the Nintendo Switch console and even has support for 360-degree videos. The free app, based on the versions for smart TVs, is controlled using the left joystick and main buttons.





## Security flaw leaves routers vulnerable to NSA malware

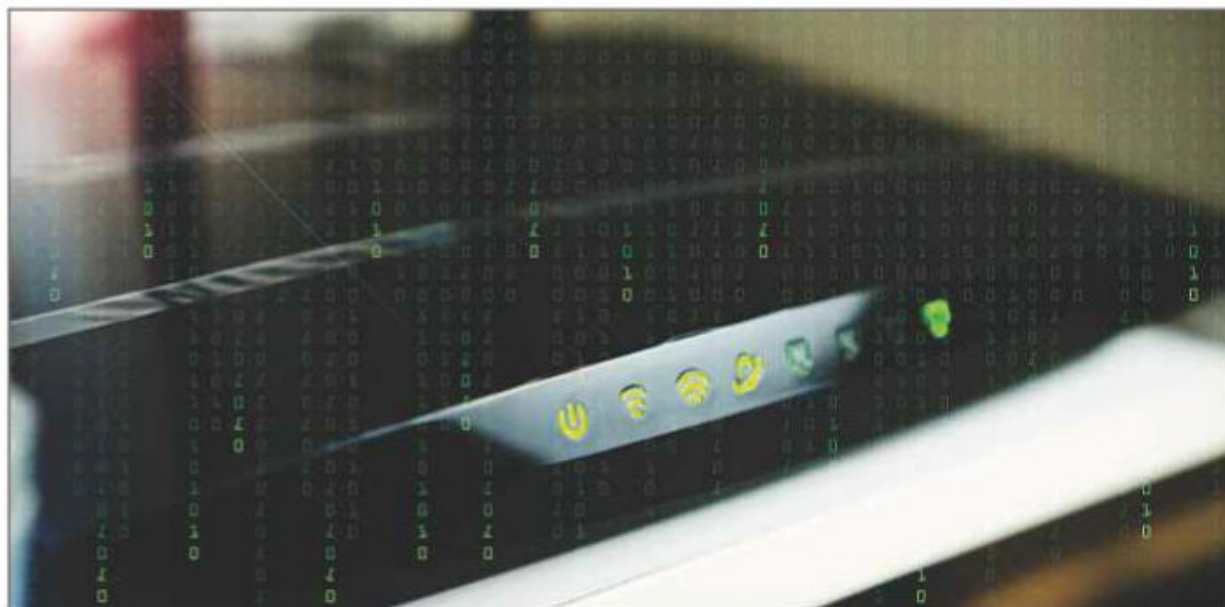
### What happened?

A combination of malware designed by US spies and a long-running flaw in old routers has let hackers potentially compromise more than a million devices, according to industry experts.

Earlier this year, networking firm Akamai revealed a serious vulnerability in older routers. Universal Plug and Play (UPnP) – the networking protocol that allows devices to easily connect and discover each other – could be abused by hackers to hide their network traffic and open ports. It could let them slip past security protocols to attack anything connected to the internet via the router – such as a Windows PC, smart-home device or games console. Dubbing the flaw UPnProxy, Akamai's security experts said as many as 270,000 routers could be vulnerable.

Six months on, Akamai has now spotted malware that attacks routers via that very security flaw. UPnProxy is used to access a computer via a hack dubbed EternalBlue ([bit.ly/eternal464](http://bit.ly/eternal464)), which was developed by the US National Security Agency (NSA) to exploit holes in Windows' Server Message Block protocol. EternalBlue was stolen from the NSA and used in the WannaCry ransomware attack that knocked NHS computers offline last year.

Akamai identified the combined threat posed by UPnProxy and EternalBlue and named it EternalSilence. The company's researchers said more than 45,000 routers have been attacked by UPnProxy, exposing 1.7 million devices



to the EternalBlue stage of the attack, though not all those computers will necessarily be at risk.

### How will it affect you?

Akamai described the attack as taking a "shotgun approach" because hackers are targeting as many machines as possible. As with WannaCry, you're probably not an intended target, but if your router and computer share these weaknesses, you may get caught up in the carnage.

Additionally, Akamai warns that it's difficult to tell if your router has been impacted. If you have an older router running Universal Plug and Play, you can disable it; but if it's already infected, you need to completely reboot the device to flush out any malware. How you do this depends on your router – run a quick online search of your router model and "disable UPnP" to find instructions. If

fiddling with router admin settings is too much for you, it may be time to upgrade your router. Make sure you buy one that can be easily updated because routers are increasingly becoming exploited by hackers.

It's easier to tell if your PC has been infected – just scan your system with antivirus software. The Eternal family of malware has long been known about, and Microsoft and other manufacturers have previously issued patches against

the threat, so as long as your systems are up to date – which they always should be – this hopefully won't affect you. Windows Updates can be frustrating, but it's worth having them enabled for the protection they offer. Also, EternalBlue only affects older versions of Windows – those prior to Windows 10 – so running the latest OS is wise for optimum security.

### What do we think?

Security researchers have warned about the danger of UPnP flaws for more than a decade, and Microsoft issued patches for Eternal malware last year – so none of this is new. Yet thousands or more routers and computers are potentially affected by the combination of the two vulnerabilities. It's a reminder to do your best to keep your systems up to date. Install updates and use the most recent software and hardware you can.

You don't have to buy a new router, but if yours is several years old, it may be at risk to more than EternalSilence. Routers can be tricky to update, so many of us don't bother, and while Windows updates get complained about – at least they happen. Router makers need to do the same, and if you are in the market for a new one, look for a model that manages updates easily, so malware outbreaks such as EternalSilence don't cause you undue problems in the future.

```
[{"NewProtocol": "TCP", "NewInternalPort": "445", "NewInternalClient": "192.168.10.145",  
"NewPortMappingDescription": "galleta silenciosa", "NewExternalPort": "47622"},  
{"NewProtocol": "TCP", "NewInternalPort": "139", "NewInternalClient": "192.168.10.146",  
"NewPortMappingDescription": "galleta silenciosa", "NewExternalPort": "28823"},  
{"NewProtocol": "TCP", "NewInternalPort": "445", "NewInternalClient": "192.168.10.146",  
"NewPortMappingDescription": "galleta silenciosa", "NewExternalPort": "47623"},  
{"NewProtocol": "TCP", "NewInternalPort": "139", "NewInternalClient": "192.168.10.145",  
"NewPortMappingDescription": "galleta silenciosa", "NewExternalPort": "28804"},  
{"NewProtocol": "TCP", "NewInternalPort": "139", "NewInternalClient": "192.168.10.144",  
"NewPortMappingDescription": "galleta silenciosa", "NewExternalPort": "28821"},  
{"NewProtocol": "TCP", "NewInternalPort": "139", "NewInternalClient": "192.168.10.146",  
"NewPortMappingDescription": "galleta silenciosa", "NewExternalPort": "28805"},  
{"NewProtocol": "TCP", "NewInternalPort": "139", "NewInternalClient": "192.168.10.147",  
"NewPortMappingDescription": "galleta silenciosa", "NewExternalPort": "28804"},  
{"NewProtocol": "TCP", "NewInternalPort": "139", "NewInternalClient": "192.168.10.145",  
"NewPortMappingDescription": "galleta silenciosa", "NewExternalPort": "28806"},  
{"NewProtocol": "TCP", "NewInternalPort": "139", "NewInternalClient": "192.168.10.112",  
"NewPortMappingDescription": "galleta silenciosa", "NewExternalPort": "28809"},  
{"NewProtocol": "TCP", "NewInternalPort": "445", "NewInternalClient": "192.168.10.112",  
"NewPortMappingDescription": "galleta silenciosa", "NewExternalPort": "47609"}]
```

**Akamai's sample of EternalSilence injections found on a single router**



What we think of this fortnight's top tech news stories and rumours, and how they affect you

## Google Maps scam steals bank details

### What happened?

Google Maps lets anyone make changes to its data, and cybercriminals are now exploiting that feature. Police in India have received multiple reports of scammers editing the phone numbers of banks marked on maps, then asking for customers' financial details when they call. They then use those banking details to steal money from victims' accounts. It's not the first time phone numbers have been abused this way: back in 2014, a security researcher in America performed the same trick with the FBI, intercepting phone calls meant for the US authorities.

### How will it affect you?

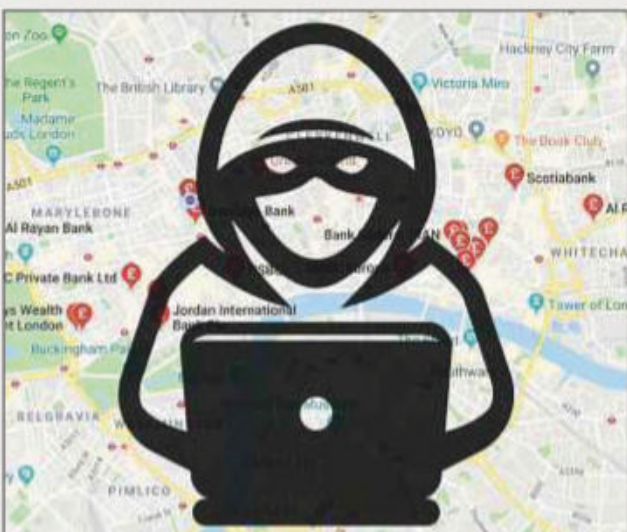
So far, this scam has only been spotted in India, though scammers elsewhere are likely to pick up on the idea. Google said it has fixed the altered bank information, and works to ensure that business profiles have "quality" information. However, Google didn't confirm if it would be taking more

proactive efforts to protect banks or other financial institutions from similar scams in the future.

Google Maps is a handy source of information that displays closing times, locations and phone numbers, but if you are going to contact your bank, it's best to go directly to your financial institution's website to ensure you have the correct number. It's worth remembering that the information in Maps isn't necessarily up to date or accurate, so it's a good idea to double check on a company's website – you don't want to be left waiting outside when it turns out the opening hours have changed.

### What do we think?

The downside to crowdsourced systems is that they can be abused. There are plenty of stories of pranks in Google Maps, although they've diminished since Google shut down its Map Maker feature, which made it easier to instantly edit maps. This latest scam shows Google needs to crack down further, and perhaps lock down the details of more sensitive businesses, such as banks – and even the FBI.



## Freeview goes mobile with streaming app



### What happened?

Netflix, Amazon Prime and other streaming services may be the future of television, but you still get Freeview on most TVs – and it will soon be available on Android and Apple phones and tablets, so you can watch without an aerial. The new app is a collaboration between Digital UK and Freeview's shareholders – the BBC, ITV, Channel 4 and Arqiva – and will let you stream all the main terrestrial channels live, as well as on-demand content from iPlayer, ITV Hub, All 4, My5 and UKTV Play.

### How will it affect you?

The Freeview app will be free to use, although if you watch the BBC, you'll still be expected to pay for a TV licence. The iOS app will arrive on 22 January, while Android users will have to wait a bit longer, though the release date is promised to be early 2019.

The app won't be as straightforward as the tap-and-play version on Netflix, however. For channels and catch-up

services with their own dedicated apps – such as BBC iPlayer – the Freeview app will direct you to download and install that app. However, it will be a handy way to see a wider view of what's available to watch.

### What do we think?

Streaming services are popular for good reason: they're easy to use, convenient and don't require fiddly aerials. A Freeview app that lets you access all that television content on your smartphone on the go is certainly handy, but since you'll need to download the accompanying apps anyway, it's really little more than a fancy television listings guide.

Where this could come into its own is in the home: if you don't have a signal for Freeview now, you can simply stream it via the app. The new app doesn't have the ability to cast from your phone to your TV, but hopefully this will be added in the future to make it a real game changer.



# Amazon 'technical error' leaks customer data

## What happened?

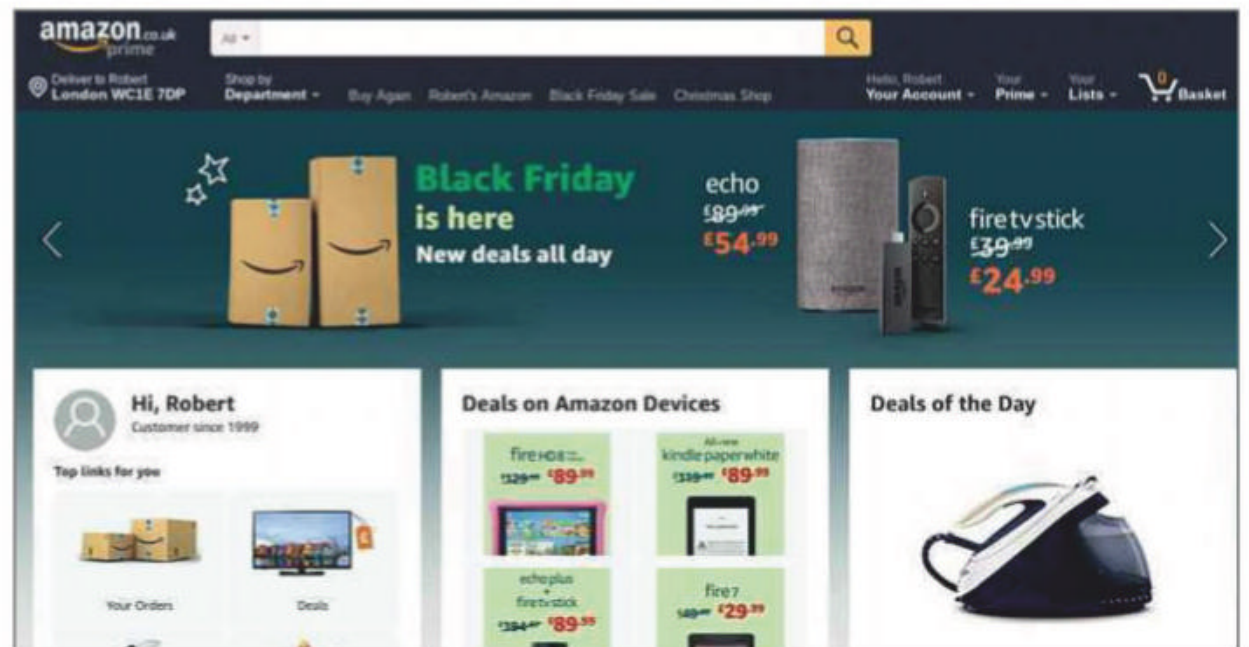
Amazon has admitted that due to an unspecified "technical error", customers' names and email addresses were published on its website.

Beyond a single email sent to the relevant accounts, Amazon is keeping shtum. There's no word on how many customers are affected, or why the security breach occurred.

The email explains how Amazon "inadvertently disclosed your email address or name and email address due to a technical error. The issue has been fixed. This is not a result of anything you have done, and there is no need for you to change your password or take any other action."

Laughably, Amazon added that the company "takes all security-related matters very seriously and your account security is our top priority. We have policies and security measures in place to ensure that your personal information remains secure."

That will be little comfort for those affected by the security breach, which occurred just days before the Black Friday shopping extravaganza. And although the information leaked isn't as sensitive as credit card details and home addresses, security experts have been keen to remind customers that cybercriminals could still potentially wreak havoc on email accounts with



weak passwords.

The incident is being tracked by the Information Commissioner's Office as a potential GDPR breach. If it is judged as such, this "technical error" may cost Amazon more than it bargained for.

## How will it affect you?

Check your inbox to find out if you're in the clear. Victims of the breach should receive an email declaring Amazon has "fixed the issue and informed customers who may have been impacted."

Even if your data was published, the company believes there's no need to alter any passwords. However, it's always worth creating new, stronger ones after any security breach – for peace of mind.

Finally, check your email address on [haveibeenpwned.com](https://haveibeenpwned.com), which tracks accounts that have been compromised during data breaches.

## What do we think?

Yet another big business struck by a data breach – it makes you wonder if any of these companies understands the internet. There may be good reasons for Amazon's refusal to discuss the matter – preventing hackers from taking advantage of an as-yet-unpatched system bug, for example – but when it comes to security breaches, we prefer companies to be transparent, so we know how to better protect ourselves. An apology wouldn't go amiss, either.



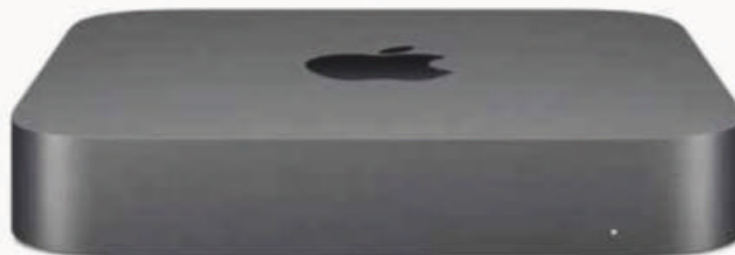
## FIRST LOOK

### Apple Mac Mini [bit.ly/mini464](https://bit.ly/mini464)

A welcome reboot of the comparatively ancient 2014 model, the Apple Mac Mini 2018 is a compact computer that answers the question: "How do I get Mac OS without coughing up a fortune for a MacBook or iMac?"

The trim, space-grey unit is sleek and whisper-quiet, with a tiny footprint – just 7.7in square and 1.4in deep. While it offers the full desktop experience, you'll barely notice its presence.

The 100% recycled aluminium shell contains an i3 processor, 128GB SSD and 8GB DDR4 memory, but these run-of-the-mill specs belie a powerful device. According to Apple, the Mac Mini is five times faster than its



predecessor, out-performing similar i5 and i7 Windows Mini PCs.

And that's just the £799 base edition. The premium off-the-shelf version, retailing at £1,099, delivers twice the storage, an i5 processor, and a 4.1GHz Turbo Boost. A 'hardware buffet' at the point of purchase, which lets you pick and choose suitable components, makes upgrading easier than before, but such tinkering comes at a price – a hefty £4,000 for the top-of-the-line configuration.

The unit's Intel UHD Graphics 630

processor effortlessly handles demanding desktop duties, as well as photo work and lightweight video editing.

Gaming, however, requires an external graphics processor – another expense, on top of the monitor, keyboard and mouse.

At the rear of the Apple Mac Mini you'll find an HDMI socket, two USB-A ports and four Thunderbolt 3 USB-C's – for those people truly locked into the Apple-sphere. There's also room for a Gigabit Ethernet cable, upgradeable to 10GB. And, yes, a 3.5mm headphone jack.

Like every Apple product, the Mac Mini is elegantly designed. It's a stunning machine and a much-needed upgrade. But unless you're a die-hard fan, don't dismiss cheaper Windows alternatives.