Starwood Hotels Malware Data Breach: What You Need to Know

By **ALYSSA NEWCOMB** • Nov 20, 2015, 3:18 PM ET

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Starwood, a popular hotel chain that includes brands such as W Hotels, Sheraton, Westin and Le Meridien, reported today 54 of its locations had been hit by malware designed to steal customers' credit card information.

Here's a look at what you need to know about the breach.

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Which Locations Were Hit?

The hotel chain provided a list of the 54 locations it said were impacted by the breach, including the potential dates during which customer information may have been exposed.

Who Was Impacted?

The malware targeted point-of-sale systems at a limited number of its restaurants and gift shops, Starwood said in a statement on its website, noting that there is "no indication at this time" its guest reservation or Starwood Preferred Guest membership systems were affected.

What Information Is At Risk?

The malware was designed to steal cardholder names, credit card numbers, security codes and expiration dates, however, the company said "there is no evidence that other customer information, such as contact information or PINs, were affected by this issue."

What Is Being Done About the Breach?

The affected hotels have taken steps to secure customer payment card information and the malware no longer presents a threat to customers using payment cards at Starwood hotels, the company said.

"Protecting our customers' information is critically important to Starwood and we take this issue extremely seriously," Sergio Rivera, president of Starwood's properties in the Americas, said in a statement.

took prompt action to determine the facts. We have been working closely with law enforcement authorities and have been coordinating our efforts with the payment card organizations," he said. "We want to assure our customers that we have implemented additional security measures to help prevent this type of crime from reoccurring."

Starwood is also working with AllClear ID to offer identity protection and credit monitoring services to affected customers for one year, free of charge.

What Can Worried Customers Do?

Customers who believe they made a purchase at one of the impacted locations during the dates they were affected should carefully monitor their account statements for any suspicious activity.

"If a customer believes his or her payment card may have been affected, the customer should immediately contact their bank or card issuer," Starwood's statement advised. Customers with questions can

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visit [Starwood's website](#) for more information.

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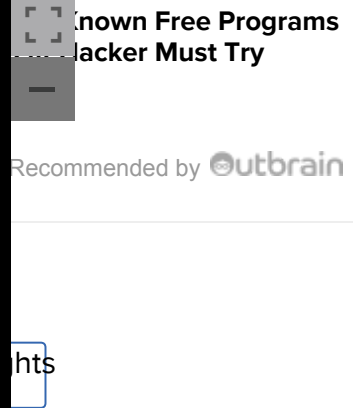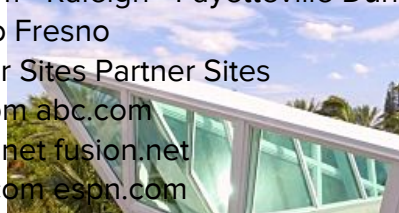Contact Us

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WATCH | Mali Hotel Hostage Situation Ends With 6 Americans Among the Rescued

235   At least 27 people died today, including a U.S. citizen, according to

the State Department, after 170 people were taken hostage at the Radisson Blu Hotel in Mali in West Africa, according to the United Nations.

The attack, conducted by at least three people, began this morning in Mali's capital city of Bamako, with gunmen storming the building. A U.S. defense official said the crisis has ended.

Mali has declared a 10-day state of emergency in the wake of the attack. The U.S. Embassy in Bamako has lifted its "shelter in place" warning in Mali, but still urges Americans to limit their movement around the city and to be vigilant.

Two attackers died in the incident, said Olivier Salgado of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Mali. The total number of attackers was not immediately clear.

Salgado said of the gunmen, "They came to kill, not to take hostages."

A Belgian member of Parliament, Geoffrey Dieudonné, was among those killed, Belgium's regional Parliament said. Dieudonné was training officials from Mali's Parliament. The Parliament said the precise circumstances of his death are not yet known.

There were 22 military and civilian U.S. Defense Department personnel in Bamako, including five at the hotel at the time of the attack, according to a defense official. Everyone was accounted for and there were no reports of injuries, the official said.

Some of the five U.S. military personnel in the hotel, including civilians and service-members, hid and avoided being seized by the gunmen, a defense official said.

One U.S. servicemember outside the hotel stepped in to help first responders move civilians from the hotel to secure locations, as Malian forces worked to clear the hotel of hostile gunmen, the defense official said, adding that U.S. forces did not directly participate in the operation.

Another U.S. servicemember helped at the Joint Operations Center, which was set up to respond to the attack.

Six U.S. citizens were rescued from the hotel, according to the U.S. Africa Command.

National Security Council spokesman Ned Price said the U.S. is continuing to coordinate with U.S officials to verify the location of all American citizens in Mali.

Price said the U.S. stands with Mali "and others in the region fighting the terrorist groups that seek to undermine Mali's efforts to build a durable peace following the crisis in 2012 and 2013." Price said the U.S. is prepared to help Mali investigate "this tragic terrorist attack."

Hostage Standoff Ends at Mali Hotel

Habibou Kouyate/AFP/Getty Images

Malian troops take position near the Radisson Blu hotel in Bamako, Nov. 20, 2015.

The hotel said in a statement, "Our highest concern is the safety of all our guests and employees in the hotel. We are in constant contact with the authorities there and will share further information with you when we have it."

Radisson Blu receptionist Tambacouye Diarra told ABC News that he was at the reception desk surrounded by special forces. He said the gunmen were also surrounded by special forces in the hotel.

A gunman shot in his direction approximately 10 times, Diarra said. He said a gunman ran after him, but he was able to escape. Diarra said he saw people getting shot and some injured people being evacuated out of the hotel.

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Among those in the hotel were three U.N. personnel, who are now safe, according to Salgado, and Air France and Turkish Airlines crew members, who are also safe, according to the airlines.

The president of Mali tweeted that he is in Chad but will be returning to Bamako in the next couple hours.

National Security Adviser Susan Rice briefed President Obama on the unfolding situation and he directed his team to keep him apprised of developments.

France, the former colonial power in Mali, launched airstrikes in Mali two years ago to prevent the establishment of a terrorist state after armed groups linked to al Qaeda took over vast stretches of Mali. French involvement in Mali eventually morphed into a larger operation that involved ground troops and French special forces. At its height, 4,000 French soldiers were largely successful in helping Mali push the al Qaeda-linked rebels out of the country.

ABC News' Ali Ehrlich contributed to this report.

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