

1. Research major cybersecurity breaches over the past 20 years and pick one to write a short essay on.
2. Give an overview of what the breach was and the motivations behind it.
3. Explain where the “tech flaws” were, and how hackers were able to breach their system.
4. What has the company done to protect against that vulnerability since?

The Sony Pictures Hack

Sony Pictures was on the verge of releasing a new film portraying the death of the leader of the DPRK, Kim Jong Un, called *The Interview*. It was at this time that a group under the name of “Guardians of Peace” had breached Sony Pictures, spread malware, and released private data of employees.

Though it is still unclear who these hackers are, many officials state that the group was, in fact, an organized group of hackers under the guidance of the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK). Others have expressed doubts about the perpetrators, though it still remains the most obvious answer despite the DPRK’s denial.

The reason for this breach was not financial, in fact it was primarily to attack Sony for their propagandistic movie slandering Kim Jong Un and his government in a semi-humorous and violent manner. The demands by the hackers were focused on removing the movie and preventing it from going out to theatres.

The flaw, or rather, the cause of the breach was a server message block worm tool. This program would go throughout the computer systems at Sony Pictures and would destroy data, download certain sensitive data, and bring ruin to many computer systems. After this attack

many theatres refused to screen the movie and Sony suffered a major breach and loss due to the attack.

In response to the attack, Sony invested \$15 million to combat the attack and future attacks. They have bolstered cybersecurity on all fronts, and FireEye (a cybersecurity company) was hired with much of the invested money.

Sony has since not faced an attack on this scale, so I would say that their defence was overall quite successful, but they still faced extreme consequences for their shortsightedness and strange choices in wanting to make movies about killing foreign leaders like Kim Jong Un.