**Apple’s iOS App Transport Security (ATS) Going Mandatory Next Year**

In 2015, Apple introduced the security feature of App Transport Security (ATS) in its newly released iOS 9. According to this feature an application has to connect to web over secure https connection instead of an unsecured http connection. The feature is not mandatory till now and many developers choose to bypass it and opt out. However, to ensure iOS app security, starting from 1st of January, 2017 the feature shall be made mandatory for new as well as old apps in Apple’s App Store.

The apps most affected by this mandatory change will be those that make use of content based on HTTP, such as audio and video content publishing websites. After iOS 10 was released, it was discovered that if an audio or video clip was viewed from an app which insecurely transmitted it, it could not be played. This goes on to show that Apple constantly strives to improve its iOS app security and has kept the security of customer information as its top most priority.

Shifting from HTTP to HTTPS is not an easy task and will take time. Organizations have to first attain and install security certificate and audit website assets for ensuring that they can transmit through new domain. World’s largest news publication websites Los Angeles Times and New York Times have not yet switched to HTTPS, hence their content will be inaccessible through mobile apps unless the apps declare their domains as exceptions. Hence, large organizations in particular will require a tremendous effort to effectively plan for their iOS app security and to migrate and shift their content to HTTPS.

**What needs to be done?**

* As a developer of a new app, use HTTPS for network communication
* In case you already have an app running in the App Store, develop a team for auditing your app and migrate to HTTPS before the start of next year
* If your app connects to unsecured web services, declare those domains as exceptions till the time you are able to find a permanent alternate option