

# Canva Security Breach of 2019

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# What Happened?

Graphic Design website Canva was hacked on Friday, May 24, 2019 (Barth, 2019)

The data of about roughly 139 million users were compromised that day (Barth, 2019)

On Friday 24th May 2019, we detected a malicious attack on our systems, which we stopped as it was occurring. Our first response was to lock down Canva, then notify authorities and users that the breach had occurred. Because the intruder was interrupted mid-attack, they also took a different tactic to most security incidents and tweeted about the attack, which required a rapid communication response. (Canva, 2019)

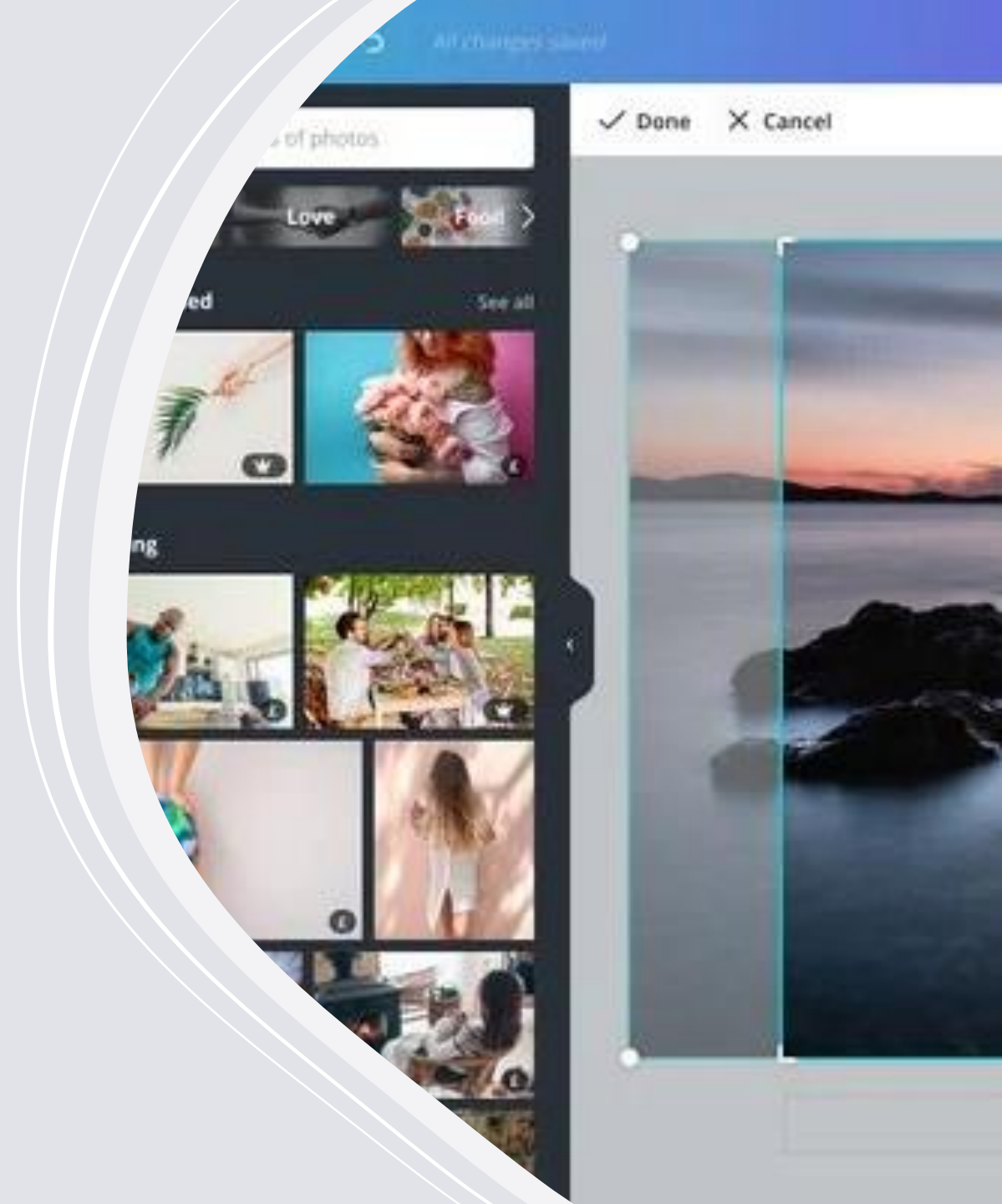
# What Was Stolen?

Exposed data included usernames, email addresses, encrypted passwords which were salted and hashed with the bcrypt algorithm, customer names, and city/country information (Barth, 2019)

For other users, the stolen information included Google tokens, which users had used to sign up for the site without setting a password. (Cimpanu, 2019)

They briefly viewed files with partial credit card and payment data. (Canva, 2019)

They claimed to have obtained OAuth login tokens for the users who signed in via Google. (Canva, 2019)



# Who Done it and Why?

Responsible for the breach is a hacker going online as GnosticPlayers. (Cimpanu, 2019)

The hacker is infamous. Since February this year, he/she has put up for sale on the dark web the data of 932 million users which he stole from various companies. (Cimpanu, 2019)

The hacker contacted ZDNet about the hack and boasted by stating "I downloaded everything up to May 17." and "They detected my breach and closed their database server." (Cimpanu, 2019)

Most likely boasted about the hack to ZDNet for his financial gain and ease of sale for the accounts on the dark web. (Christou, 2019)

# What is Canva doing about it?

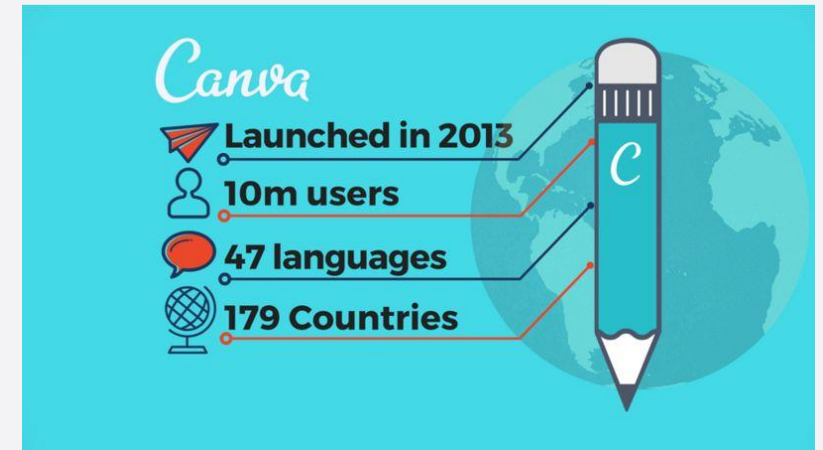
Notifying our users about the incident  
(Canva, 2019)

Prompting users to change passwords  
(Canva, 2019)

Resetting OAuth tokens (Canva, 2019)

Coordinating with partners (Canva, 2019)

Partnering with 1Password to offer a year free of service to Canva users. (Canva, 2019)



# Prevention

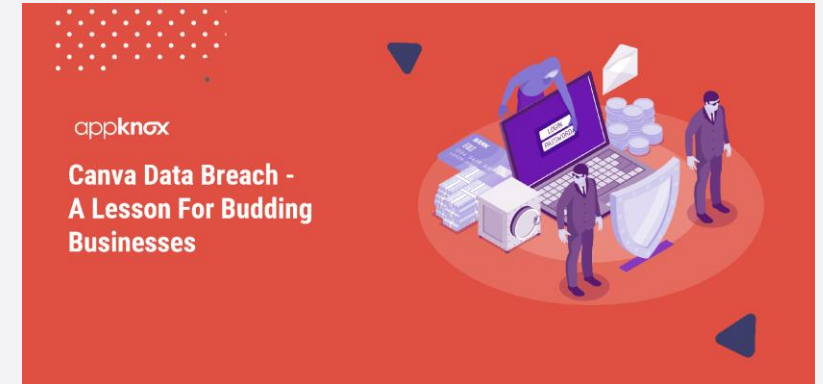
Although many of the passwords were stolen, the passwords had been salted and then protected with a hashing function called bcrypt.

bcrypt is one of the strongest hash algorithms there is since its iteration count can be dynamically increased with time.

However, Canva later realized in 2020 that the passwords were decrypted and sent out emails to make sure every user had changed their passwords since then.

Canva is valued at a massive sum of 3.2 billion. Knowing their value there should always be a plan in case of a cyber attack.

Canva should have cultivated healthy cyber security practices.



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