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Defeat Your 'Curse of Knowledge' & Make Your Security Messaging More Impactful

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TRANSFORM



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What is the ‘curse of knowledge’?

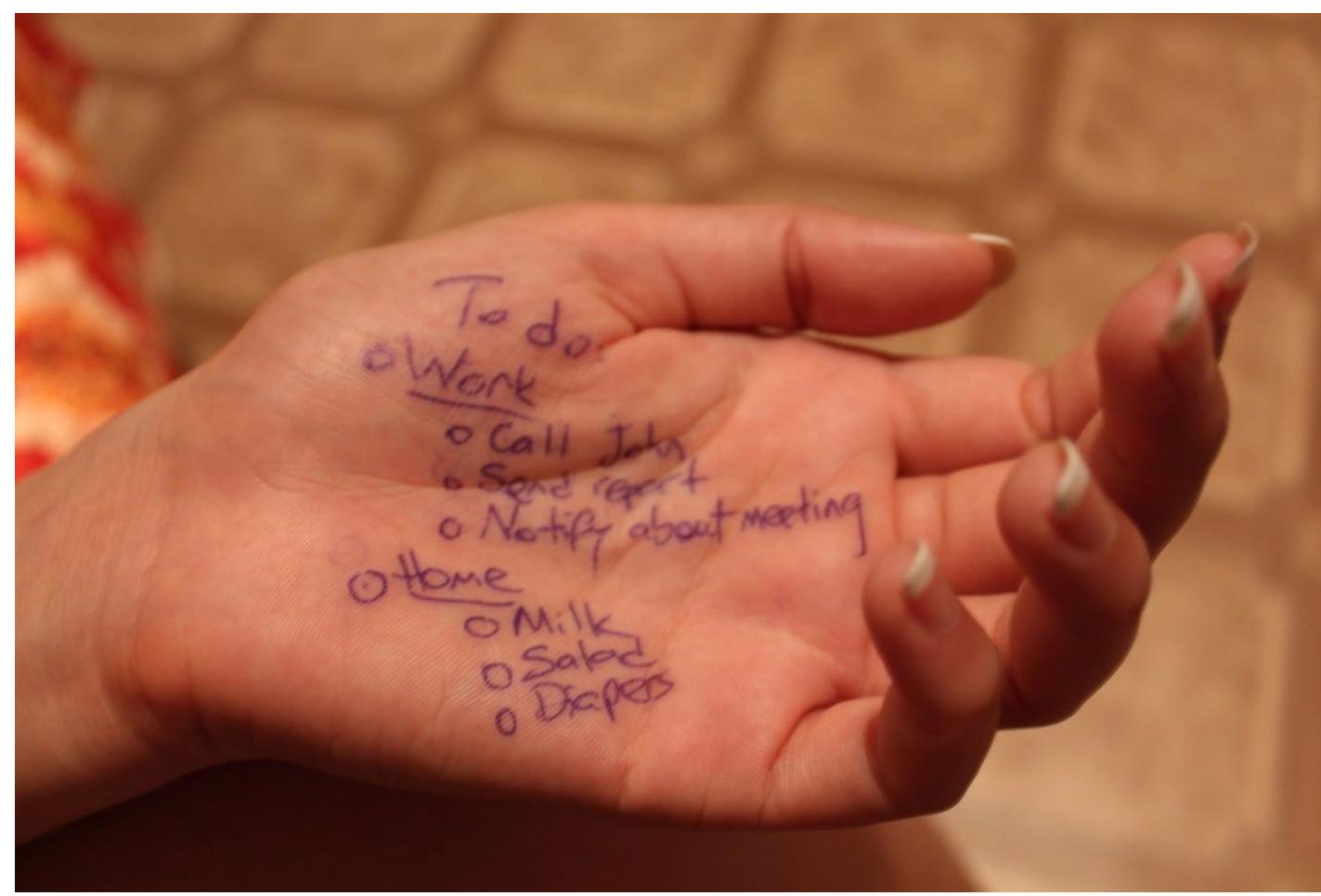


What is the 'curse of knowledge'?

YOU KNOW TOO MUCH



What is the ‘curse of knowledge’?



Curse of Knowledge: TERMINOLOGY

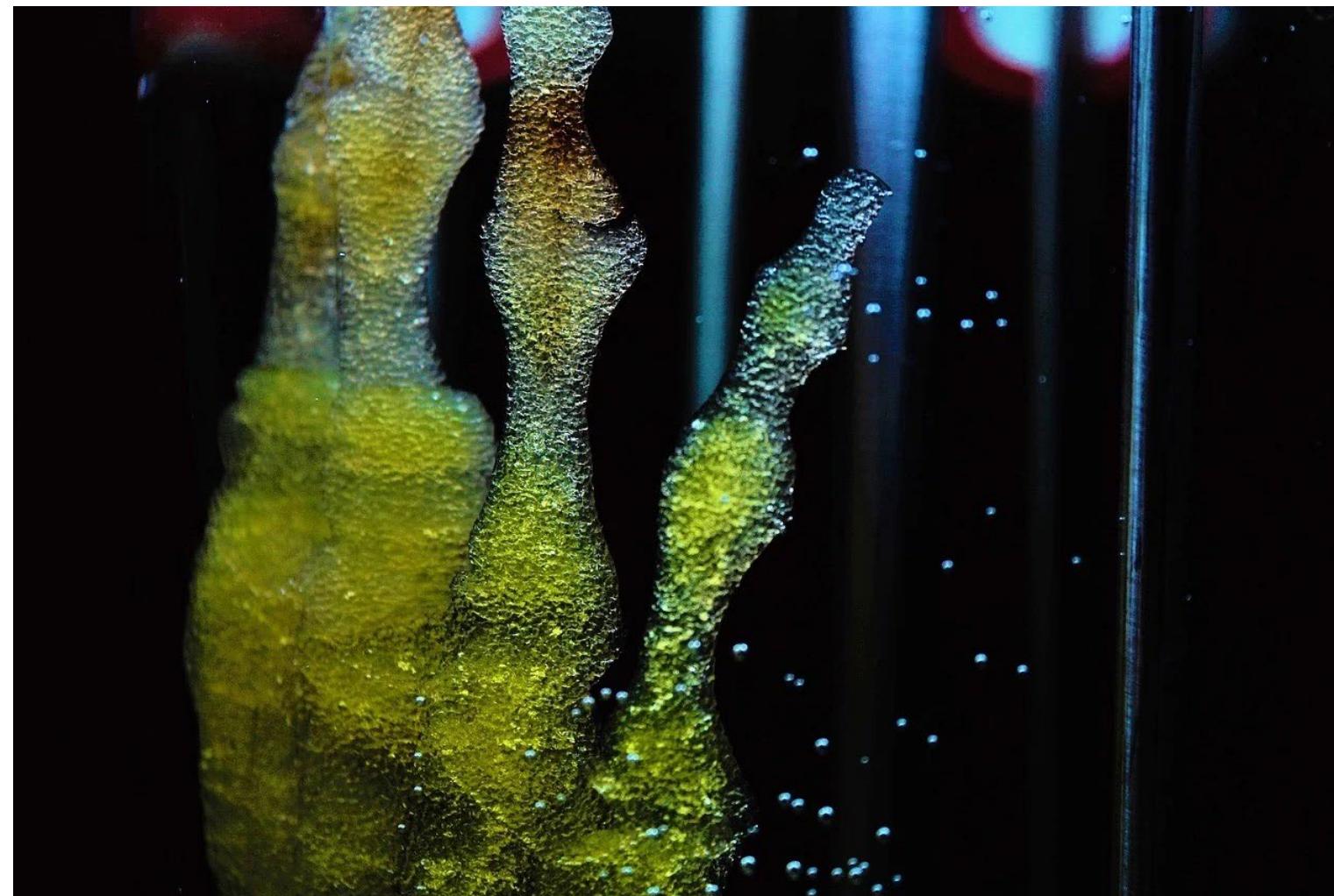
RANSOMWARE:

A form of malware designed to encrypt files on a device, rendering any files and the systems that rely on them unusable. Malicious actors then demand ransom in exchange for decryption.

—Cybersecurity & Infrastructure Security Agency



Testing the curse of knowledge



Bioprinting ~ Self-driving cars ~ Surgical robots

Testing the curse of knowledge



JARGON ARTICLES:

“Not really good at science”

“Not interested in learning about science”

Ohio State University, 2020

Testing the curse of knowledge



NO JARGON ARTICLES:

“I like science”
“Science kind of person”

Ohio State University, 2020

Testing the curse of knowledge



**READING JARGON LED PEOPLE
NOT TO BELIEVE THE SCIENCE**

“When you have a difficult time processing the jargon, you start to counter-argue. You don’t like what you’re reading. But when it is easier to read, you are more persuaded and you’re more likely to support these technologies.”

Hillary Shulman, Asst. Professor of Communication, Ohio State University

Testing the curse of knowledge



JARGON IMPACTS:

- Greater resistance to persuasion
- Lower support for tech adoption

Ohio State University, 2019

A real curse



Curse of Knowledge: JARGON

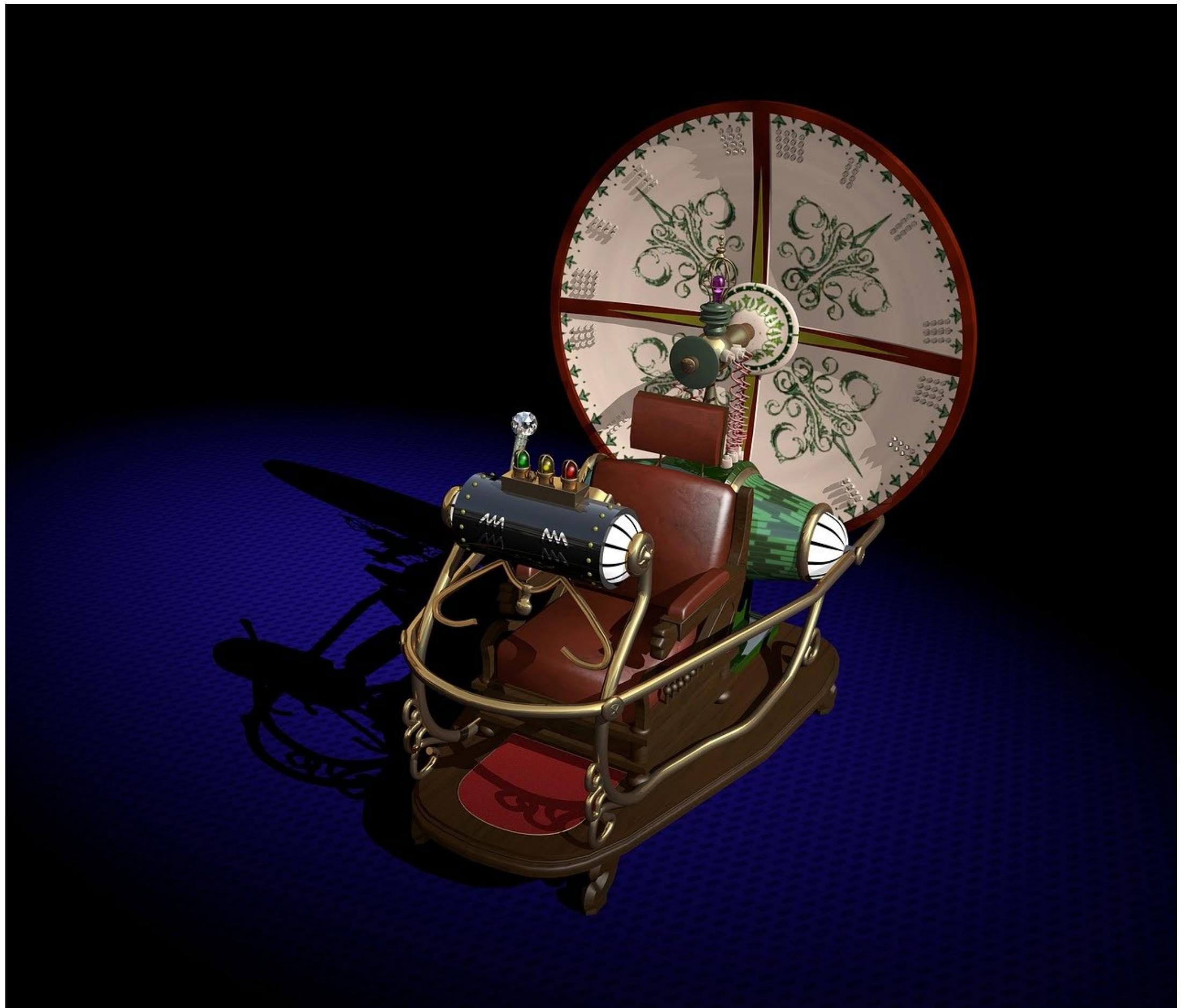


“They should know it”
“They NEED to know it”

JARGON: What to do

DE-JARGONIZER

www.scienceandpublic.com



JARGON: Translate



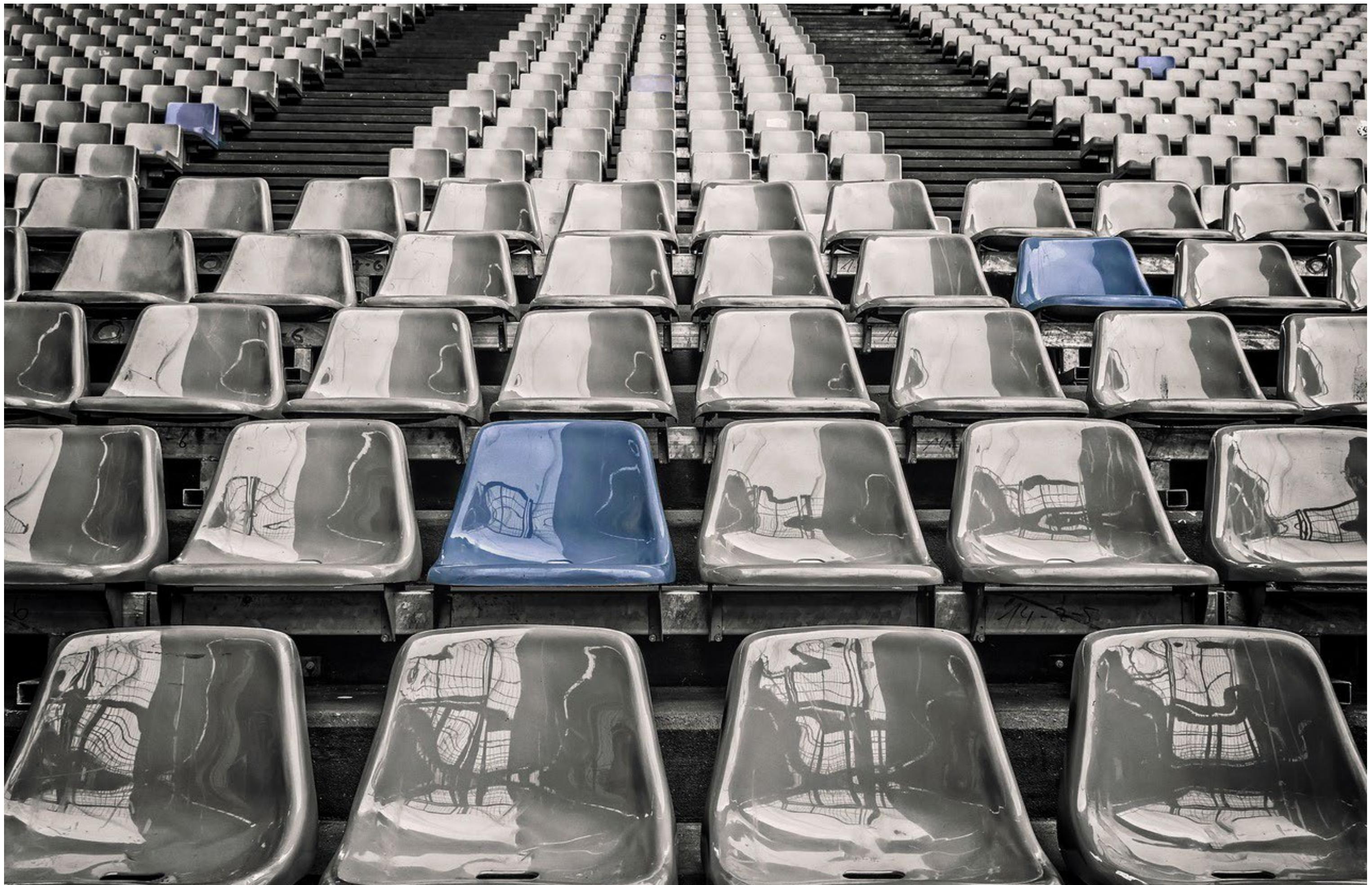
SIMPLIFY & EXPLAIN:

“This system works because of AI integration through motion scaling and tremor reduction.”

Vs.

“This system works because of programming that makes the robot’s movements more precise and less shaky.”

Who is your audience?



TV news audience

- Distracted & busy
- Ready to change channel
- All levels of knowledge
- Good
- Imperfect but trying
- Knowledgeable in other areas



Your audience

- Distracted & busy
- Ready to change channel
- All levels of knowledge
- Good
- Imperfect but trying
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Real viewer email

- “I watch you every morning on the news”
- “I got arrested for wreckless driving after the crash”
- “My husbun is the sweetest”



What to do

- Make it understandable
- Use real-world examples
- Make it personal
- Tell a story
- Explain why
- Put yourself in their chair



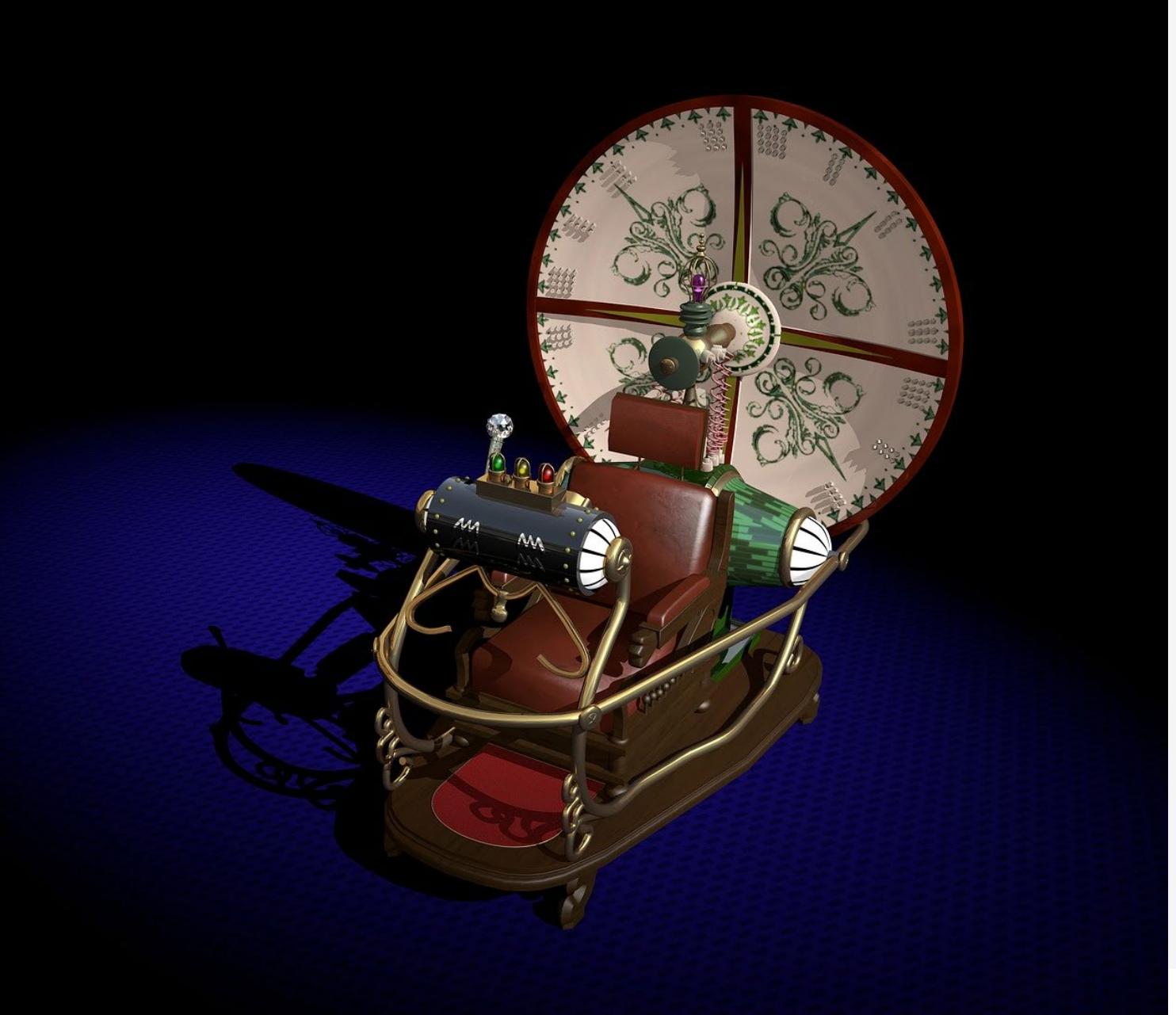
1. Make it understandable

DE-JARGONIZER TEST



Result

Ransomware is a form of malware designed to **encrypt** files on a device, **rendering** any files and the systems that rely on them **unusable**. **Malicious** actors then demand **ransom** in exchange for **decryption**.



Common: 79%, 26

Mid-Frequency: 18%, 6

Rare: 3%, 1

Suitability for general audience score: 88

Number Of Words: 33

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1. Make it understandable

DE-JARGONIZER TEST

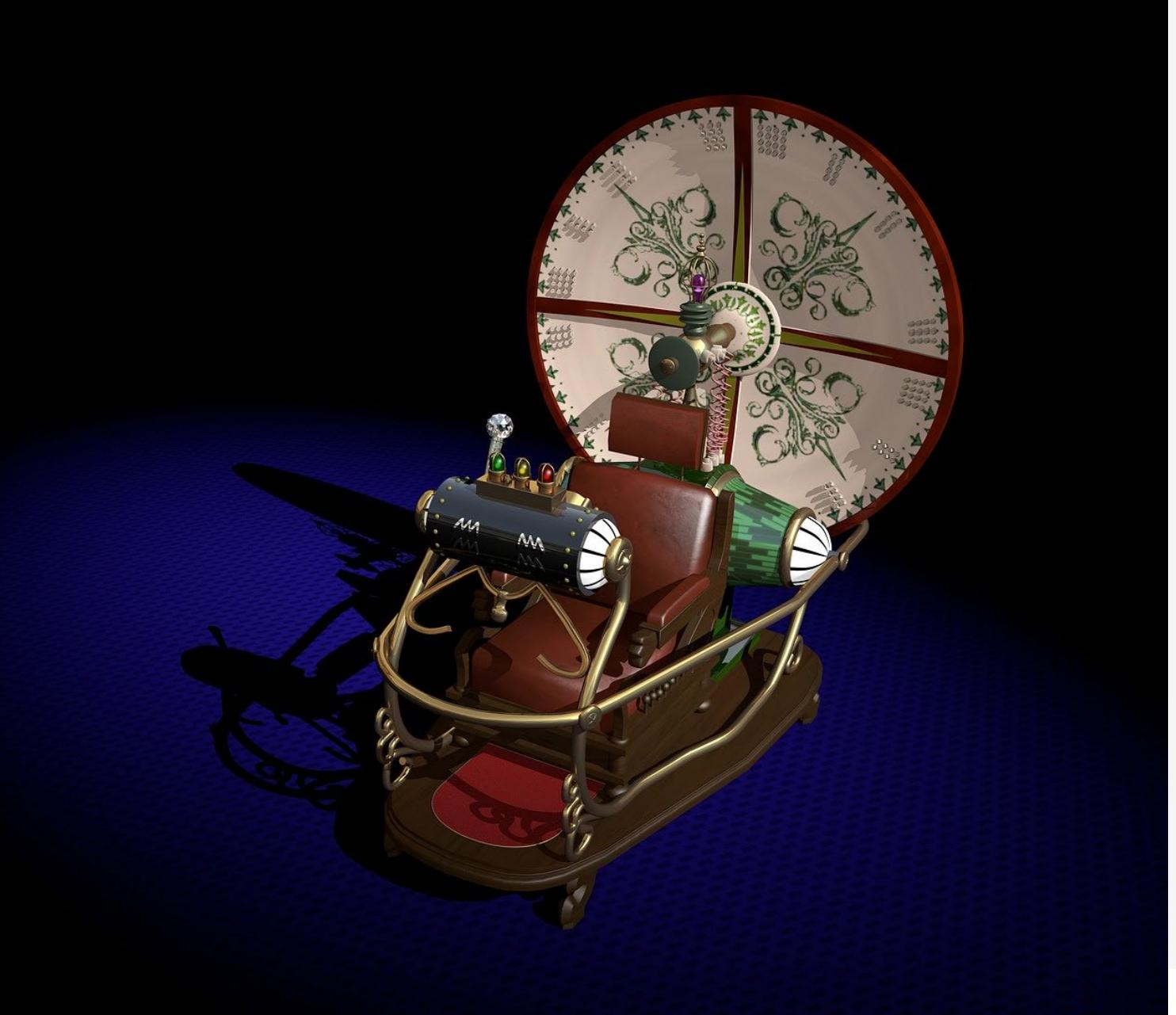
Rare: Decryption

Mid:
Ransomware
Encrypt
Rendering
Unusable
Malicious
Ransom



Result

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DE-JARGONIZER TEST

Rare: **Decryption**

Mid:

Ransomware

Encrypt

Rendering

Unusable

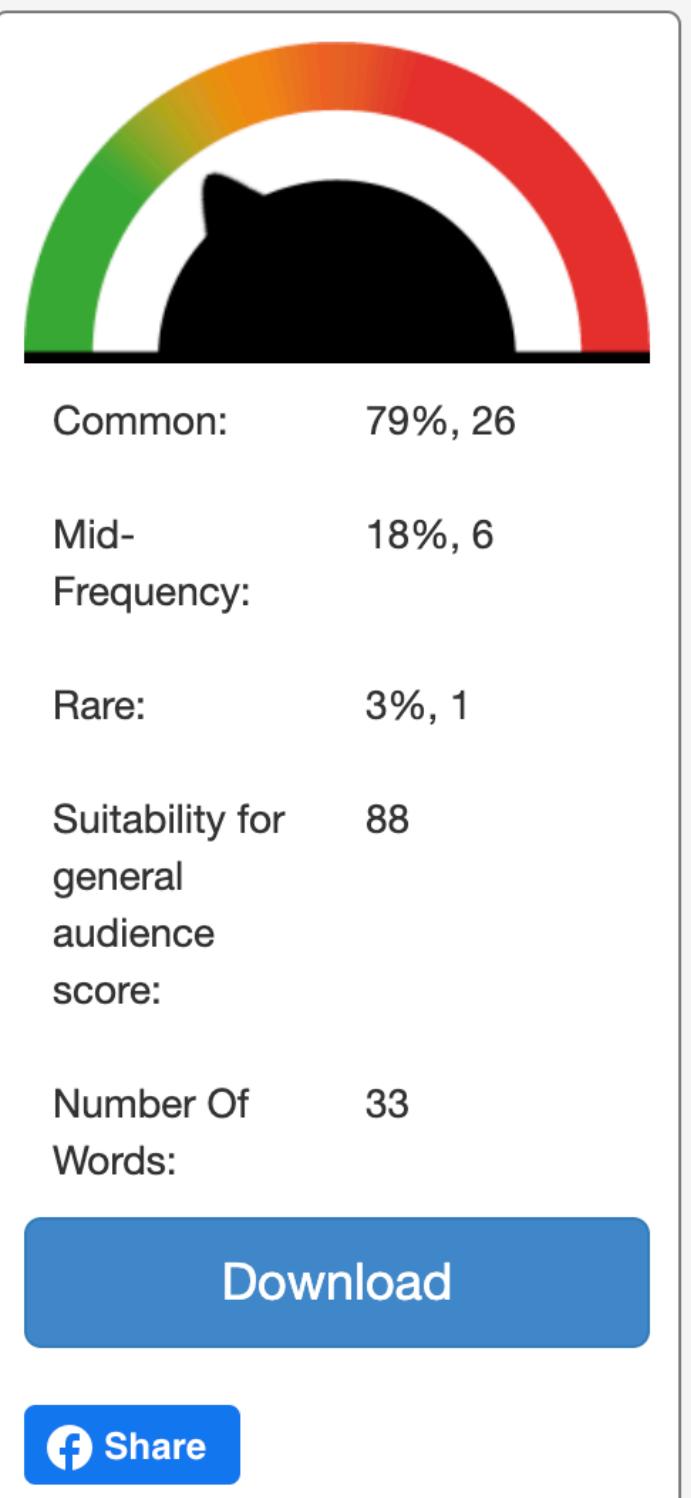
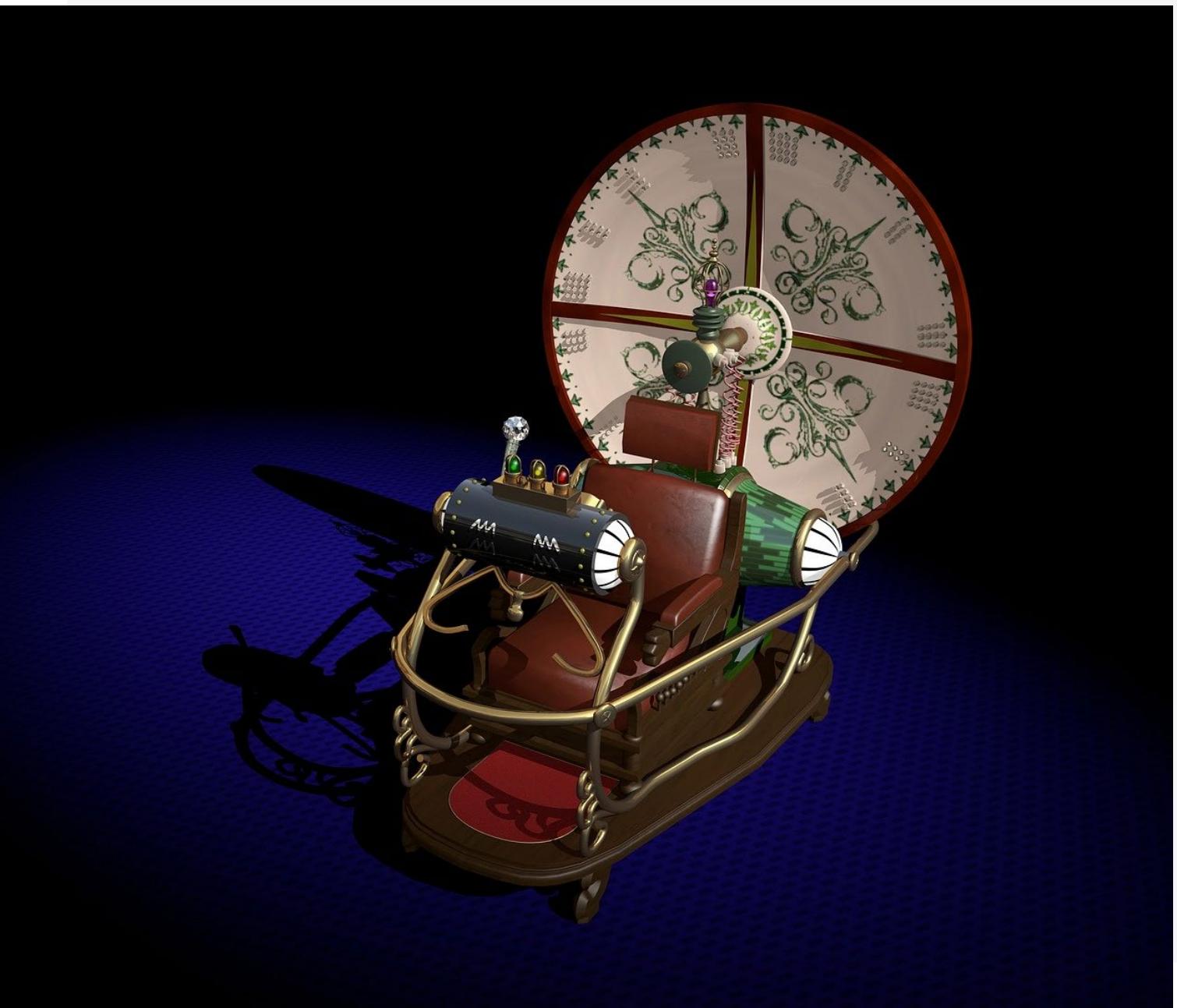
Malicious

Ransom



Result

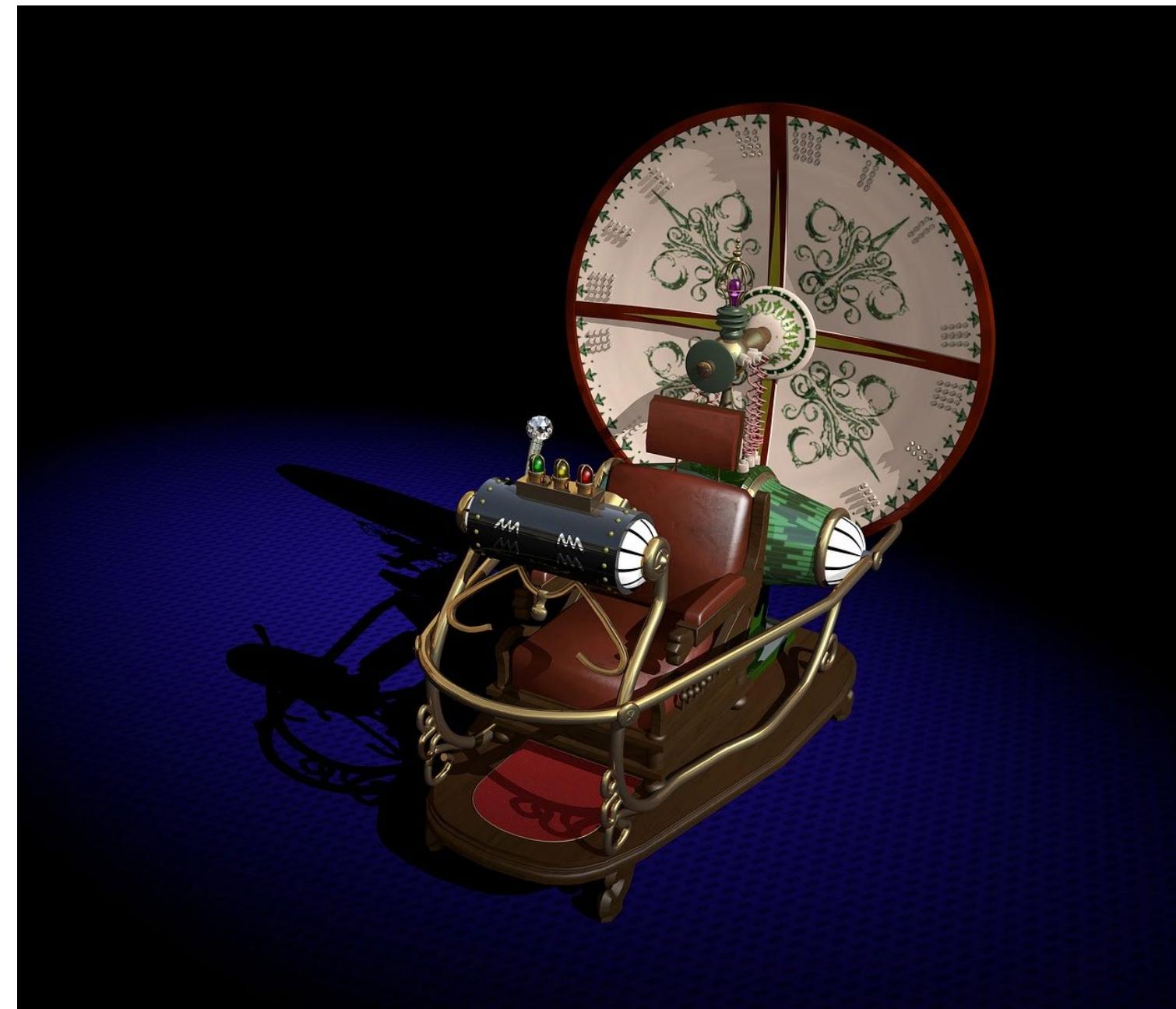
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1. Make it understandable

DE-JARGONIZER TEST

Multi-Factor Authentication – An authentication system that requires more than one distinct authentication factor for successful authentication. Multi-factor authentication can be performed using a multi-factor authenticator or by a combination of authenticators that provide different factors.

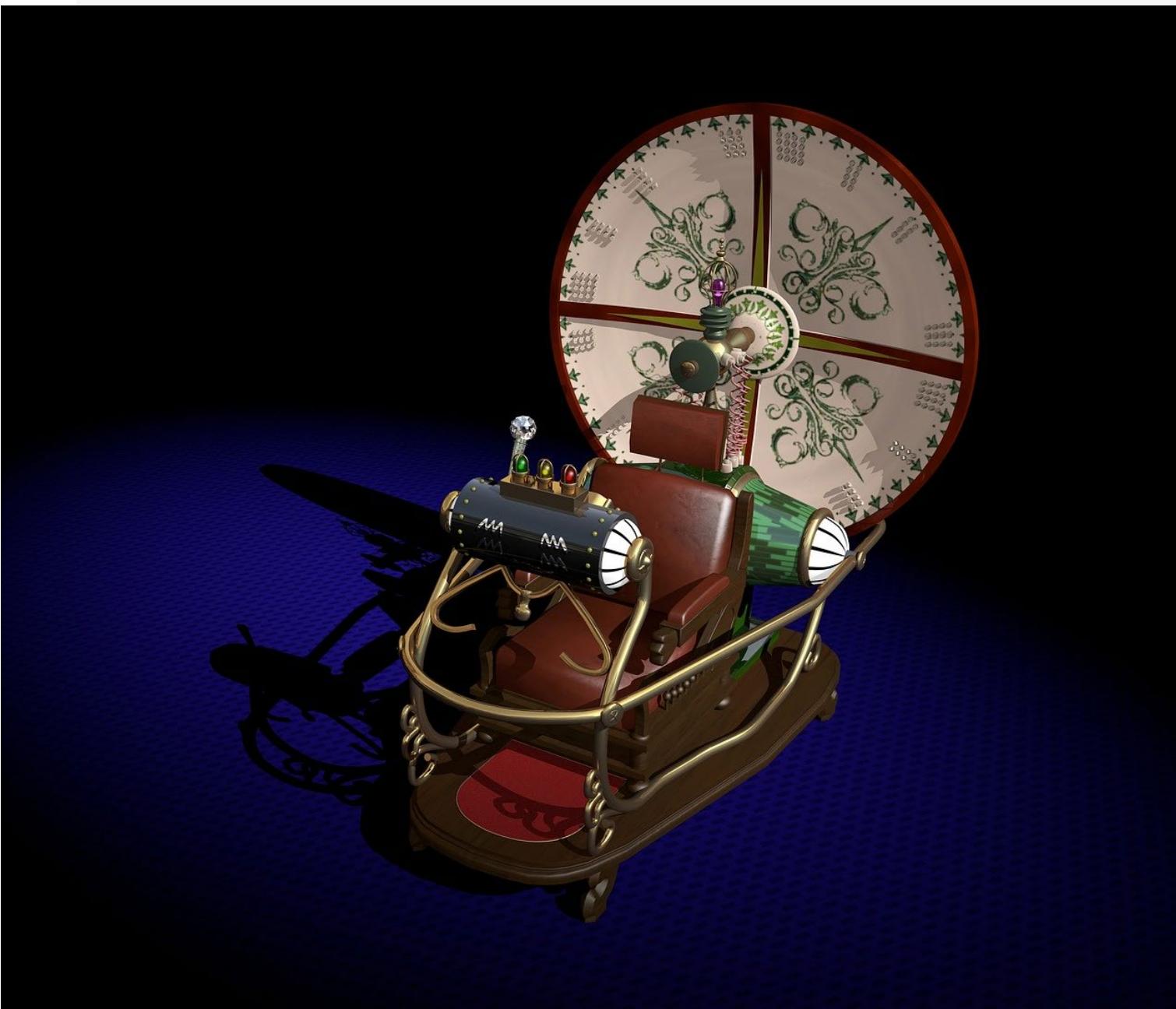


1. Make it understandable

DE-JARGONIZER TEST

Result

Multi-Factor **Authentication** – An **authentication** system that requires more than one **distinct authentication** factor for successful **authentication**. Multi-factor **authentication** can be performed using a multi-factor **authenticator** or by a combination of **authenticators** that provide different factors.



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DE-JARGONIZER TEST

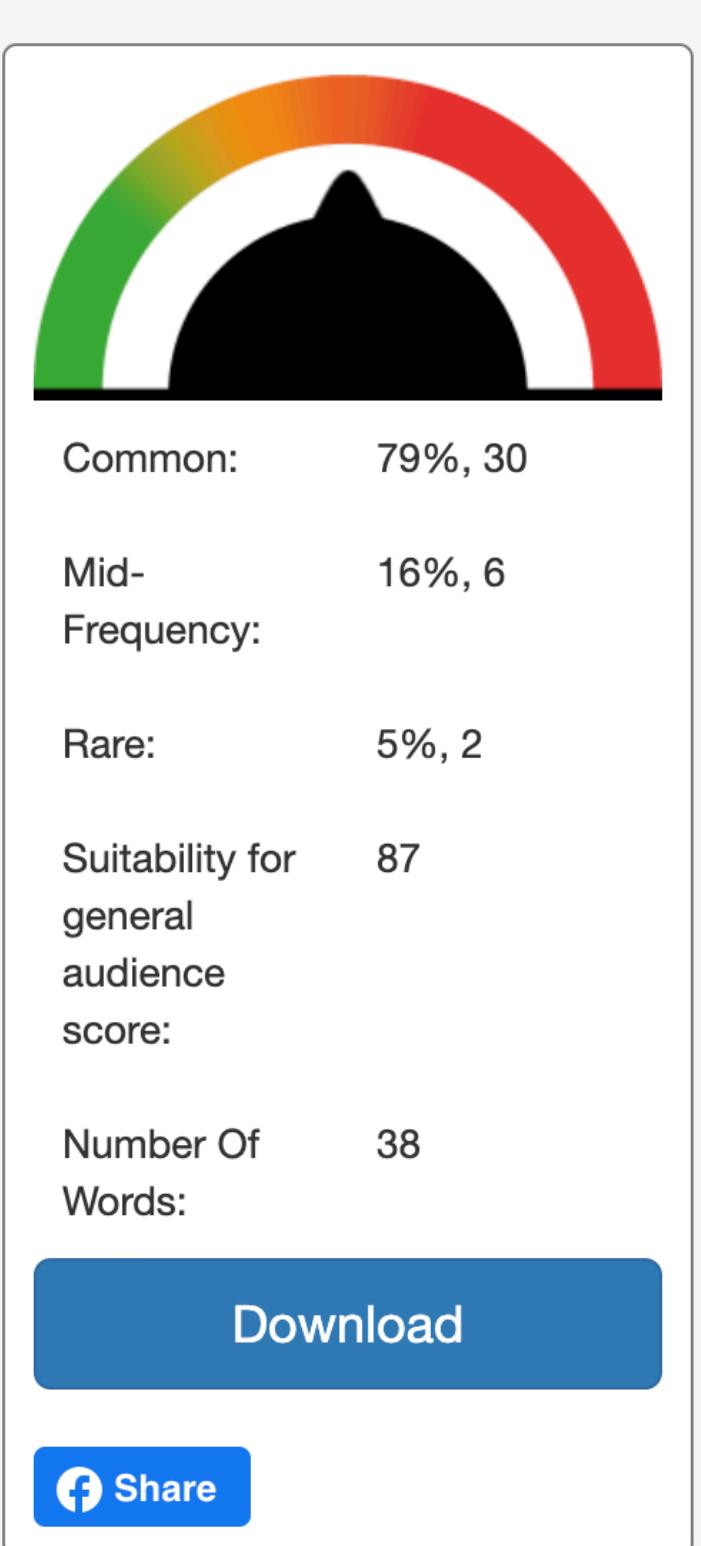
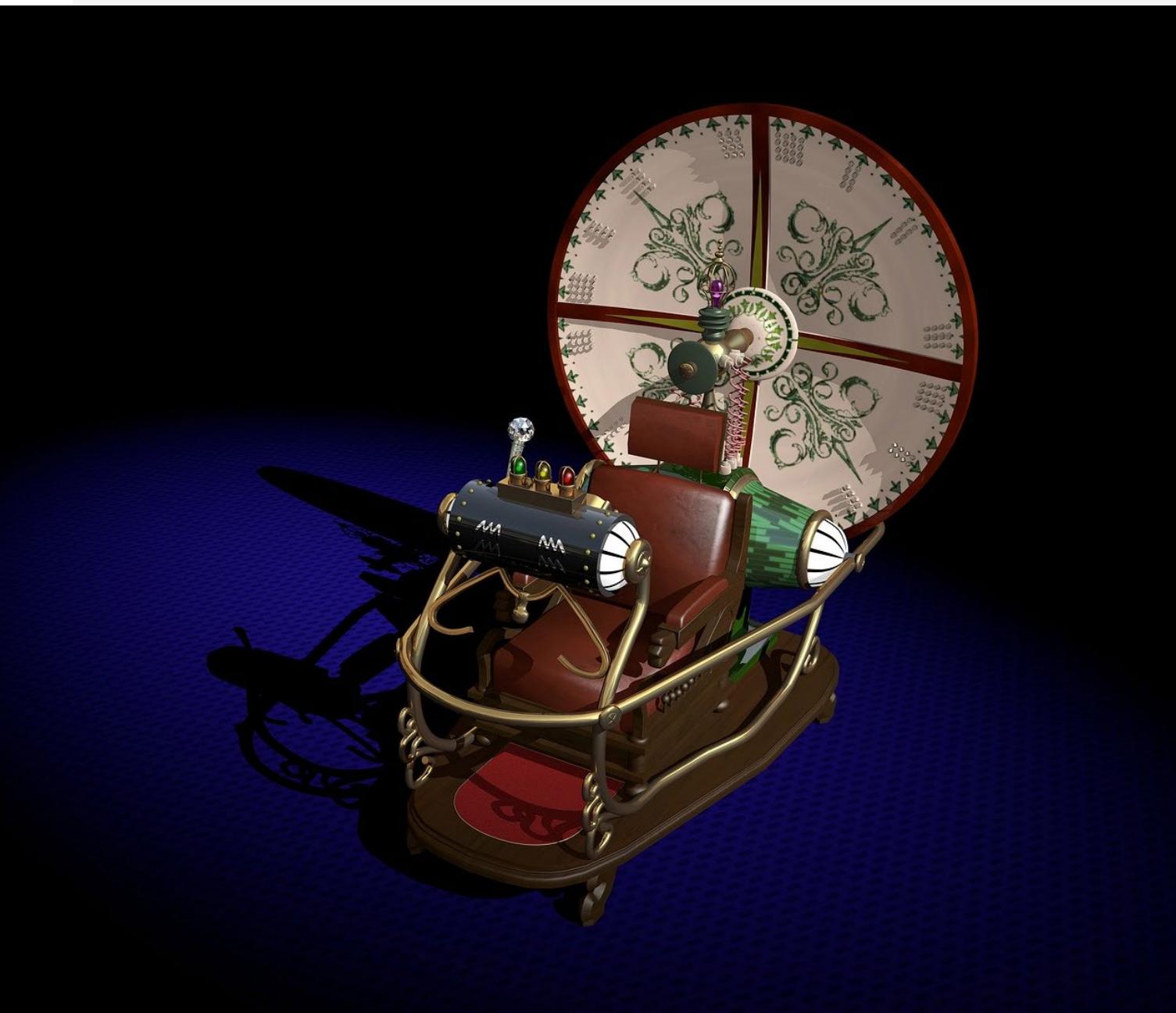
Rare: Authenticator

Mid:
Authentication
Distinct



Result

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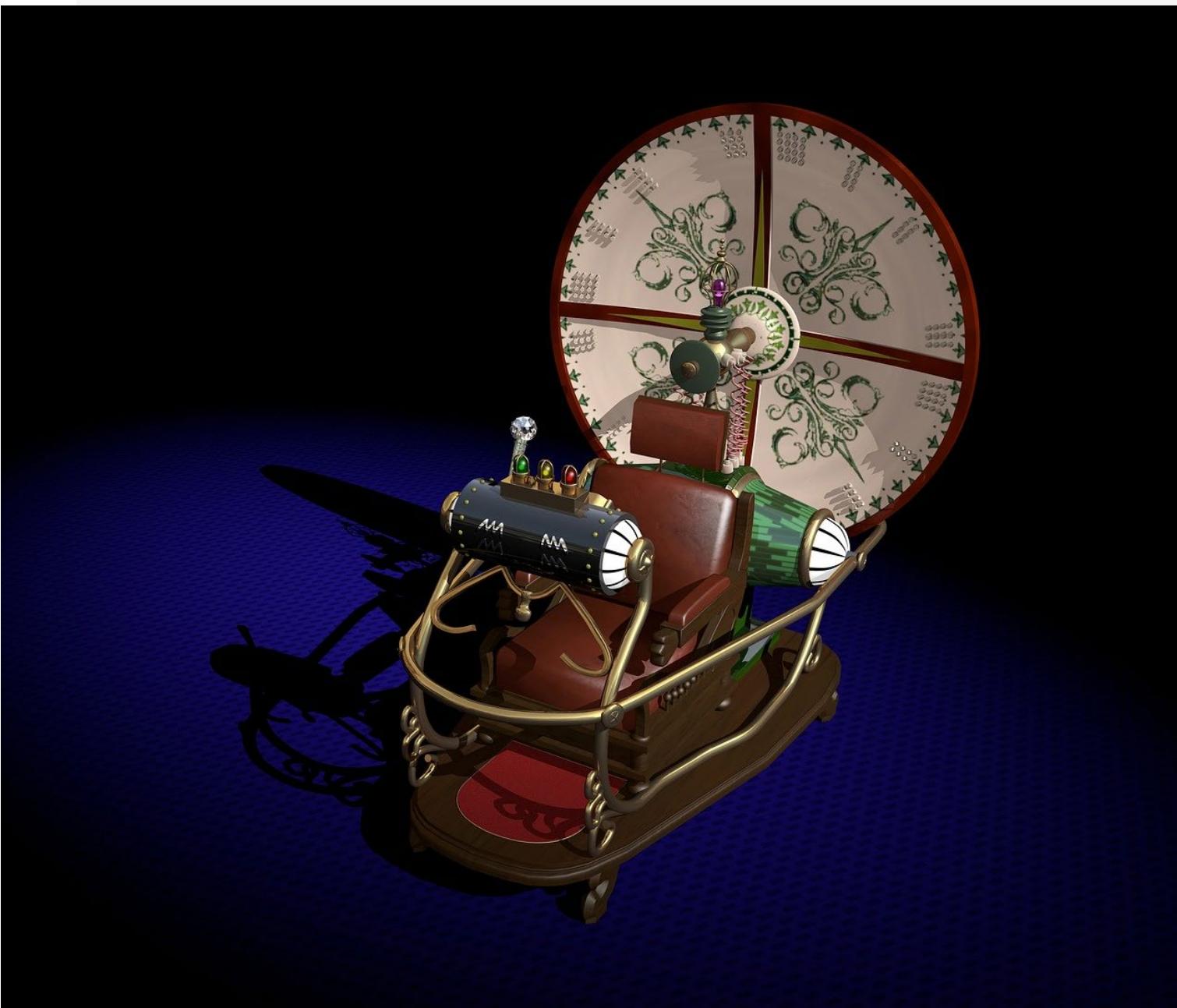
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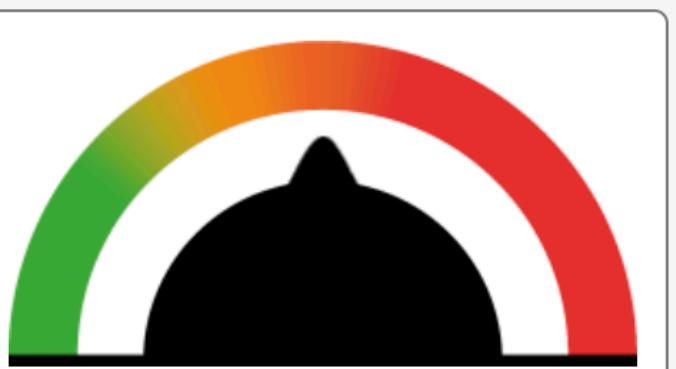
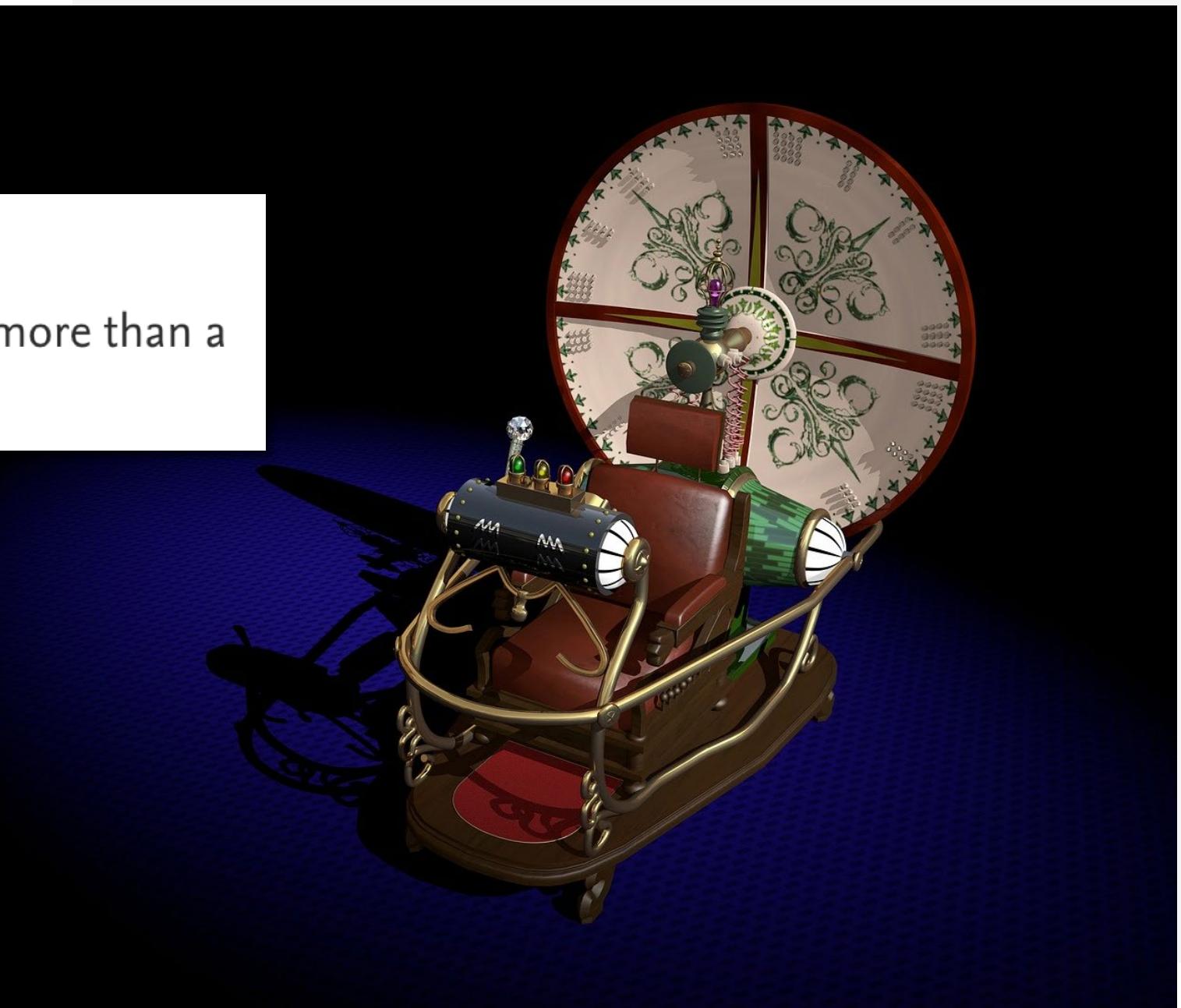
Multifactor Authentication

Multifactor authentication basically means that you use more than a password to authenticate yourself to a computer system.



Result

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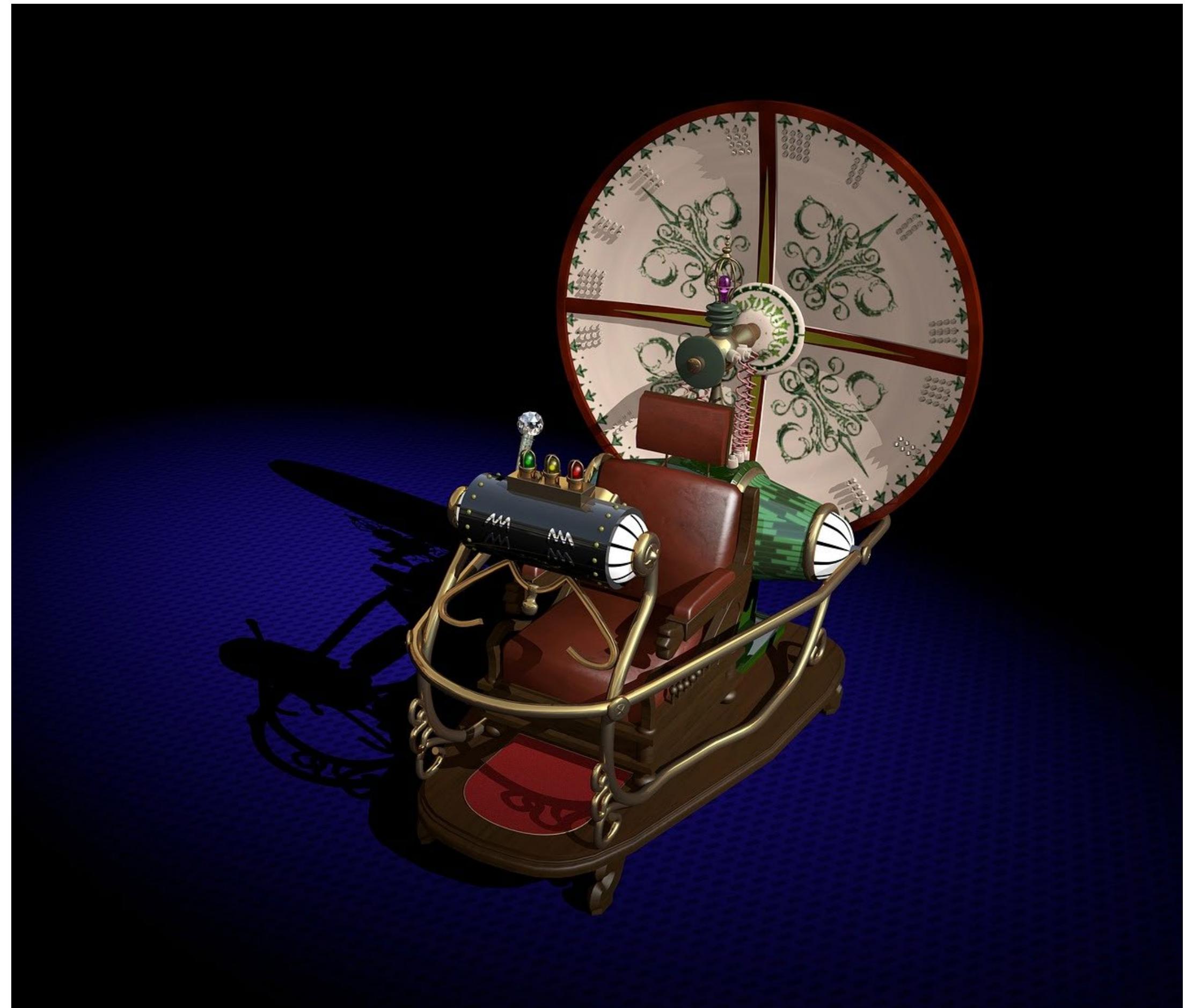
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1. Make it understandable

BE YOUR OWN DE-JARGONIZER

- Build in time for de-jargonizing
- Review every word
- Try concepts, not terminology
- Avoid acronyms
- Remember 'Real Viewer Email'



2. Use real-world examples

- Highlight elements that affect them personally
- Explain how the elements affect them
- Avoid scaring people without solutions

Colonial Pipeline paid ransomware hackers \$5 million, U.S. official says

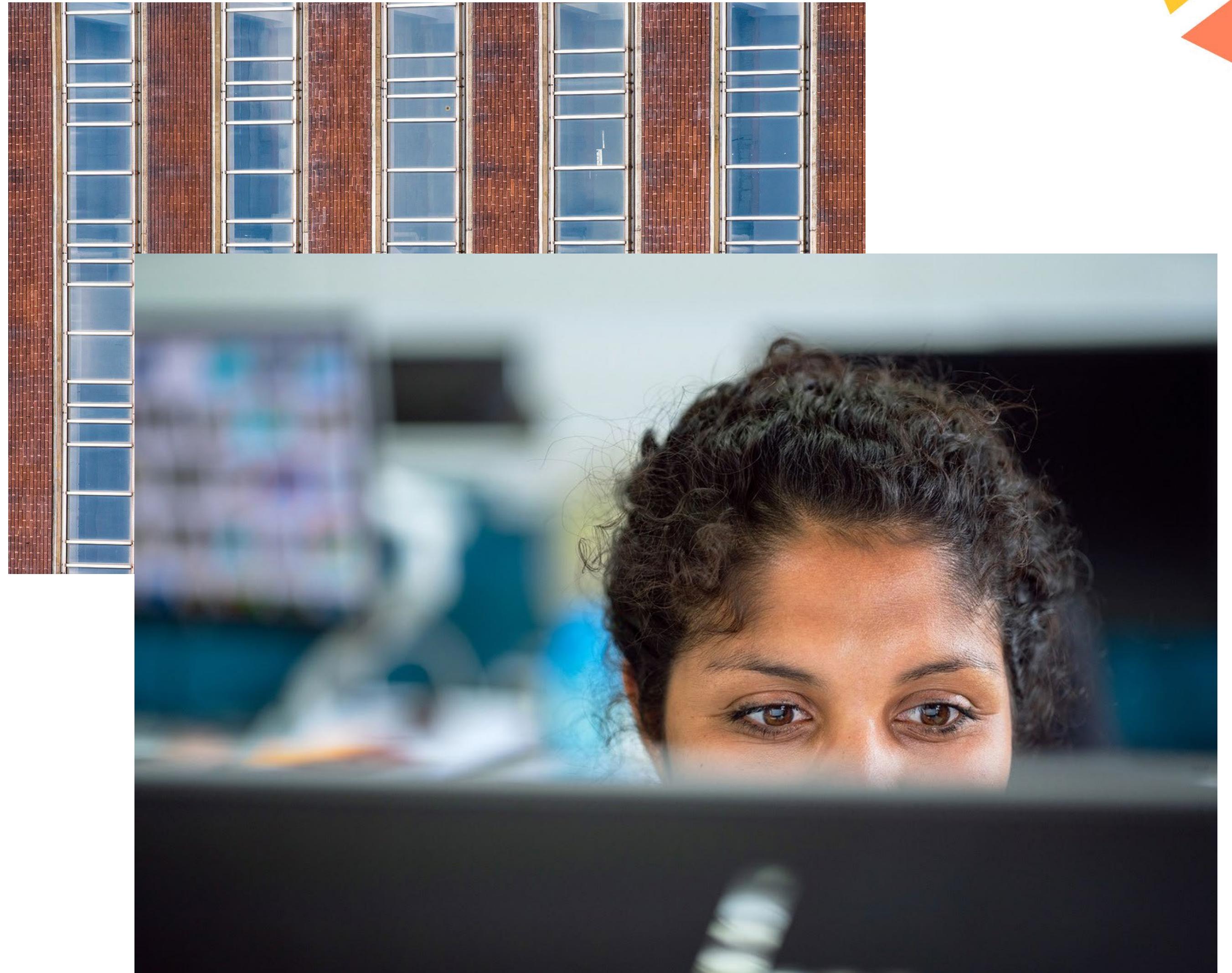
The FBI has historically discouraged but not prohibited American ransomware victims from paying their hackers.



A couple fills up multiple 5-gallon gas tanks at a Wawa gas station run by Colonial Pipeline in Tampa, Fla., on Wednesday.
Octavio Jones / Reuters

3. Make it personal

- It's about people, not businesses
- Tell stories about people & how it impacts them
- What happens at home affects what happens at work



3. Make it personal

Credit agency warns weak cybersecurity defenses could hurt a company's credit rating, even before an attack

IBS Paid \$11 Million to Resolve Ransomware Attack

Ransomware attack sends City of Del Rio back to the days of pen and paper

The Works hit by cyber attack: Retailer forced to close stores after hackers use ransomware

Ransomware Disrupts Meat Plants in Latest Attack on Critical U.S. Business



Ransomware in 2022: We're all screwed

4. Tell a story

- It's not just information
- Include main points and interesting details, if possible
- Read it out loud
- Check with a co-worker or friend



Nordic Choice Hotels hit by Conti ransomware, no ransom demand yet

4. Tell a story



Nordic Choice Hotels has notified the National Security Authority that the hotel chain's IT systems were affected by a computer virus on the night of December 2.

4. Tell a story



Runa Sandvik ✅ @runasand · Dec 5

Turns out the **hotel** I'm staying at is affected by **ransomware** and my key card doesn't work. 😬

...



Runa Sandvik ✅ @runasand · Dec 6, 2021

The Ransomware Hotel doesn't have a process in place to verify the ID of guests who check in, guests who say their room keys don't work, or guests who ask for help getting into room so and so. 🔒

...



Runa Sandvik ✅ @runasand · Dec 7, 2021

The Ransomware Hotel is finally able to issue key cards! No more being escorted upstairs every evening. 😊

...

5. Explain why

- What action we are taking
- Why we're taking it
- How it helps
- What you need to do
- What will happen if you do it
- Do you have any issues, ideas, concerns?



6. Put yourself in their chair

- What will help you?
- What will annoy you?
- What will be difficult?
- How can you help?



How to apply your new knowledge

- Next week: Choose a security message & analyze it for your audience's understandability, personal impact, and helpfulness. Write several versions to see which feels most impactful. Bonus: Ask your audience which kinds of messages help them most.
- In the next 3 - 6 months: Practice the analysis regularly so it becomes part of your skillset. Help your team reach these same goals, if possible. Bonus: Ask your audience if the messages are more helpful and why. Adjust as needed.

The curse of knowledge: DEFEATED!

