**Secure Online Voting Cannot Be Achieved Yet**

Since the foundation of a democratic country is the election of the state representatives, there is no doubt we must to take it seriously. Despite the innovations of technology changing almost every part of our lives, voting and elections have remained the same. For that reason, for the last few years, people have been trying to change the old ways of voting by moving it online. Since it is a relatively new and not yet developed method, many advantages, as well as disadvantages have been discussed. In this essay online voting’s flaws and concerns will be raised.

There are many major concerns about moving the voting online. First and foremost, we do not know how to build secure online voting systems. In an article called “Coding for Voting”, Robin K. Hill, the author, explains the ethical responsibility of the computing professional with respect to voting systems. She proposes that our profession is to be taking steps toward the establishment of computing ethics. The author states, that the article about voting procedure implementation into software and hardware. In her view, in order to promote trust, we need accuracy, reliability, as well as security from malicious intervention. The first responsibility of the computing professional is to understand why trust in voting is critical, because democracy relies on voting to reveal the collective will of the electorate. We should also know the criteria for an acceptable election system, meaning that voting should be easy for everyone, all candidates should be presented neutrally etc. Besides all that, the code must be a quality work – it must be efficient and maintainable. She also explains the last responsibility of the computing professional: to announce and explain vulnerabilities, errors, quirks and unknowns, and to suggest solutions. This responsibility is the main and final one, because it revolves around trust. For that reason, we must notice each mistake in order to debug it as soon as possible, because any problem may result in future distortion. Even knowing that, critical security holes can linger unknown for years even on well-tested platforms. Since the idea of online voting is rather new, there have not been any reliable tests done, therefore we cannot look at online voting like it is an accurate or even a remotely reliable option compared to regular ballot voting.

Even if we built a system that was reliable, meaning votes cannot be altered or changed in any way, from the past decade we have learned that majority of information online can be hacked. This raises serious concerns for voting online – if votes can be traced down to an individual by hackers in any way, we cannot use that voting system, since privacy should be the biggest concern and must be secured under all circumstances. Collin F. Lynch, the author of “Online Voting Still Security Pipedream”, states, that the technical measures proposed do not present a solution to the unique needs of elections. Voting is a two-party semi-anonymous transaction, meaning voters must be able to vote without revealing how they voted lest they be subject to intimidation or vote selling. If a system allows outsiders to connect a voter to a vote, we can deem that system unacceptable. Relevant laws in most jurisdictions mandate public access. If anything, it is the e-voting that has hidden the process from the general public. Paper, when properly secured with a clear chain of custody, provides a public, machine-independent check which online voting cannot do – since all votes are just numbers of data on the ‘cloud’, we have no way of for sure knowing if the voting system is legit. All in all, online voting will not be achieved, until a system can prove, that no vote can be traced back to a person.

In conclusion, with technology progressing faster than we have ever seen, there is no denying, that online voting is the future of elections, or voting in general. We can all agree that it is faster, easier and much more time-consuming. The problem is that there is no way to implement it right now. We do not have a secure online voting system which we could use, and we cannot have a system with flaws, since it would not be reliable. Even if we had said system, we must to make sure all votes are anonymous. A voter must be able to vote without revealing who they voted for, otherwise that would be a massive breach, rendering the system unusable. We can all agree that a reliable, secure and accurate system will be developed in time, but until that happens, we should stick to regular voting on ballots.

References:

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