Master Thesis Research Cycle

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Practice problem

Content

In practice it is challenging for users to assess the privacy risk of mobile health (mHealth) apps before actually downloading and using it.

Due to the high volume of apps in the app stores (Enck et al., 2001), manually reviewing each app regarding privacy risks is not feasable.

Relevance

Resolving the challenges in evaluating the privacy risk of mHealth apps, before usage and of large volumes, will result in an improved decision making process for users and reduces the danger of exposing vulnerable information.

Furthermore it would change the perspective on the app market since the privacy mistakes of competitors would be visible.

Automating the review process for large scale app assessments even has the potential to grow new privacy evaluation service markets. (Enck et al., 2001)

Research question

How and to what degree can the privacy risk assessment of mHealth apps be automated and support the users mHealth app decision making?

Research problem

Content

It is yet unclear to what degree of detail the privacy risk assessment of mHealth apps can be automated and applied to the high volume of apps available.

Furthermore it is unclear what implications the availablity of privacy risk assessments has on users and the app market.

Relevance

The automated process of assessing the privacy risk helps to reduce the costs of reviewing each individual app and enhances the information experience users get while researching mHealth apps.

The existance of an automated privacy risk assessment exposes new possibilities for research in the privacy risk area and to provide solutions and best practices for minimizing the privacy risk of apps.

Research answer

An automated privacy risk assessment tool that allows users to easily assess the privacy risks a mHealth app poses.

An overview of the implications this tool has on users mHealth app decision making and potential market changes via individual user interviews.

References

Enck, W., Octeau, D., McDaniel, P., & Chaudhuri, S. (2011). A Study of Android Application Security. *USENIX Security …*, (August), 21–21. http://doi.org/10.1007/s00256-010-0882-8