

Russian hackers targeted diplomats at nearly 2 dozen embassies in Ukraine with ad for a cheap BMW: report

Fake ad lowered price of BMW 5-series sedan for sale in Kyiv, Palo Alto Networks says

Hackers believed to be working on behalf of Russia's foreign intelligence agency have targeted diplomats in nearly two dozen embassies in Ukraine by trying to get them to interact with a fake ad about a used BMW for sale in Kyiv, a report says.

The scheme, which was uncovered by the Unit 42 research division at cybersecurity firm Palo Alto Networks, reached at least 22 of the 80 foreign missions currently active in Ukraine's capital, according to Reuters.

"The campaign began with an innocuous and legitimate event," the news agency quoted a report from Unit 42 as saying, adding that, "In mid-April 2023, a diplomat within the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs emailed a legitimate flyer to various embassies advertising the sale of a used BMW 5-series sedan located in Kyiv."

Unit 42 said the suspected Russian hacking group, known as APT29, then intercepted the flyer, edited it to lower the vehicle's price and embedded malicious software before emailing it to other diplomats in the region, Reuters reported.

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