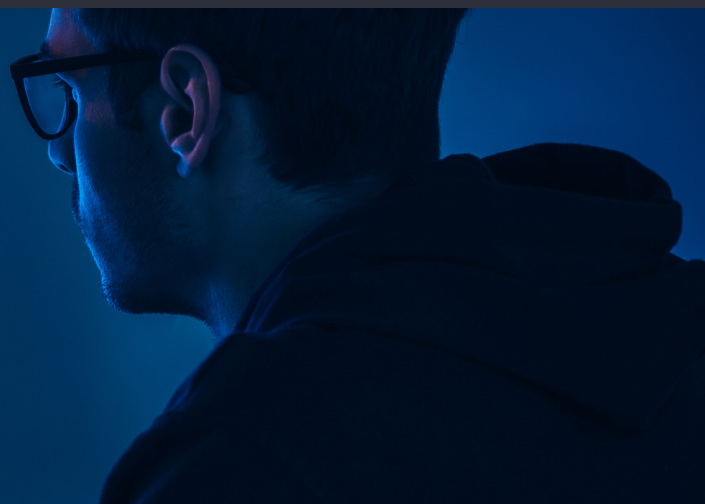


inside zhero

Let's take a look at what is happening at Zhero



MESSAGE FROM IZAK

Although National Cybersecurity Awareness Month (NCSAM) is behind us for another year, that doesn't mean that anybody can afford to be laid back when it comes to protecting their IT systems and precious data. Cybercrime, in its many forms, is a clear and ever-present danger to businesses of all sizes and a threat that we simply cannot ignore. As Bill Gates, the co-founder of Microsoft, says:

"Security is, I would say, our top priority because for all the exciting things you will be able to do with computers - organising your lives, staying in touch with people, being creative - if we don't solve these security problems, then people will

hold back".

And coming out of NCSAM, we have something to celebrate. REvil, the vicious ransomware gang behind the attacks on Colonial Pipeline, Kaseya, and many others has been toppled. REvil's demise is the focal point of *Inside Zhero* this month.

With REvil now in the annals of history, let's all work together to make our world, online and offline, at work or play, safe and secure for everybody.

Izak Oosthuizen
Bestselling Author and
Founder and MD of Zhero

ZHERO PROMOTES TWO KEY LEADERS

Zhero is pleased to announce the appointment of Karen Wilson as its new Director of Client Services, and Davin Swart as Operations Director, effective immediately.

KAREN WILSON

Karen has worked in a variety of industries over the past 30 years with her primary focus being within the IT sector. By using the experience she has gained, Karen is well placed to co-ordinate behind the scenes and get Team Zhero to deliver a simple and transformative experience to all their clients.



DAVIN SWART

With over 10 years of experience in the IT sector, Davin has extensive knowledge in the IT landscape ranging from engineering, architecture, project management and operations. With his unique approach to understanding the challenges faced by businesses in today's everchanging world of technology, Davin brings a fresh approach to simplifying operations on a global scale.



Karen and Davin's dedication to the company and combined experience make them the ideal candidates to carry Zhero into the future to secure and continue recent growth.

Commenting on the appointment, Managing Director, Izak Oosthuizen said, *"I feel this is the best step to move the company forward. This restructuring of Zhero's leadership team is aligned with our vision and will ensure the company's future success while expediting growth and new acquisitions."*

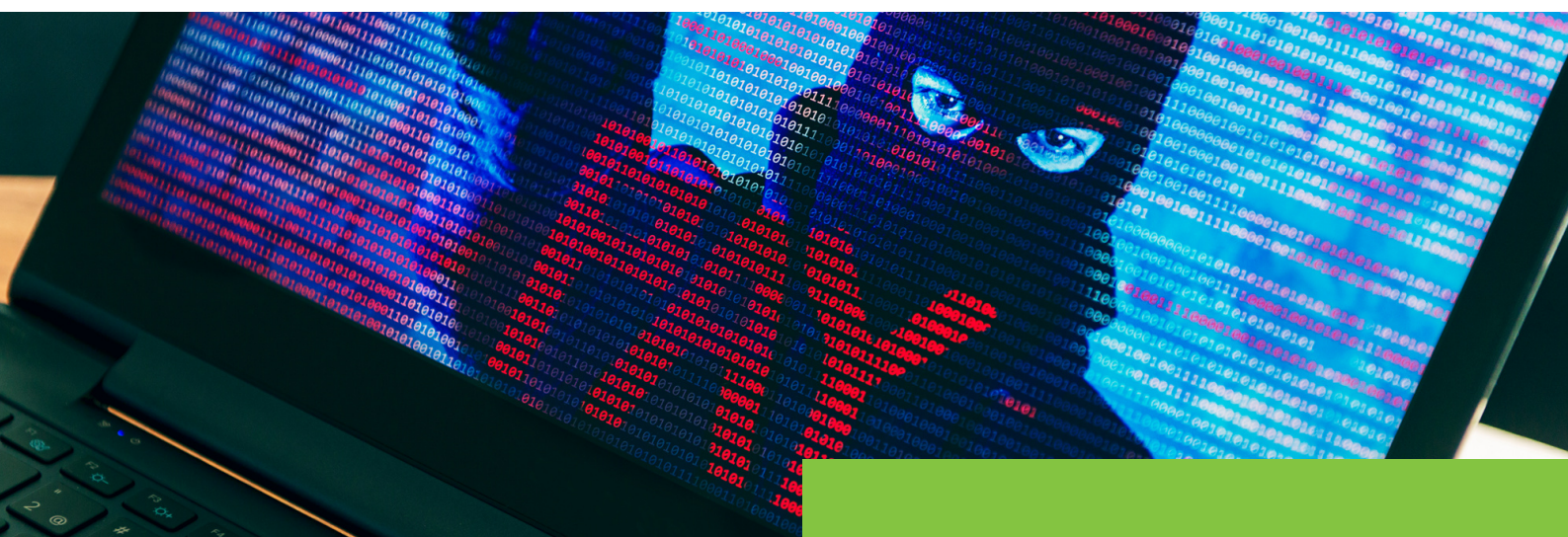
These appointments mark an exciting new chapter for Zhero. We are confident that the promotions of these candidates will strengthen our capacity to deliver excellent IT faster.

THE RANSOMWARE DEVIL

In late October, the Russian-led cybercriminal mastermind group, REvil, was hacked and taken offline through the cooperation of the FBI, the Secret Service, and the Cyber Command in the United States and cybersecurity organisations from other countries, including those in the UK.

REvil was responsible for the attack on the Colonial Pipeline in May that resulted in widespread fuel shortages on the U.S. East Coast.

Other REvil victims include Apple, Kaseya (an IT solutions provider for MSPs and enterprise clients), U.S. meatpacker - JBS, Acer, and the now-bankrupt foreign exchange bureau, Travelex. It's estimated that REvil made annual profits of more than \$100 million.



REvil AND RaaS

REvil primarily operated in a Ransomware-as-a-Service (RaaS) hacking outfit. This involved developing the malware used to hold computers or IT networks for ransom and then providing the malware to its affiliates. These affiliates would then proceed to infect their targets – usually enterprises or SMB operations.

RANSOMWARE

A type of malicious software designed to block access to a computer system until a sum of money is paid.

If a victim paid the ransom, the amount was split between the operator and the affiliate. In the case of the Russian hacker group, the affiliate would get 70% of the amount paid and REvil the remaining 30%.

TEMPORARILY SHUTDOWN

In early July, following the Kaseya attack which infected 1000s of victims with ransomware, REvil went offline.

REvil's temporary shutdown proved to be a headache for some victims who had paid the ransom to receive a decryption key. Although REvil typically offered a help desk function to assist victims with getting their data back, when the hacker group disappeared, so did the support. Some companies lost enormous amounts of data and had no option but to rebuild their entire IT systems. Mike Hamilton, CISO of Seattle-based ransomware remediation firm Critical Insight, said:

"They got their decryption key, and when they started to use it, they found that in some places it worked and in other places it didn't. These ransomware gangs have customer support, but all of a sudden, they went dark. They're completely gone, and so there is no help, and these folks are just stuck. They're going to end up losing a lot of data, and they're going to end up spending a lot of money to rebuild their network from scratch completely."

ENTER THE FBI

After the Kaseya attack in July, the FBI obtained a universal decryption key that allowed those infected via Kaseya to recover their files without paying a ransom. The same key was used to infiltrate REvil's IT infrastructure and when the cybercrime agency restored its websites from a backup after going down in July, it unknowingly restarted some internal systems that were already controlled by law enforcement. Tom Kellermann, and also an adviser to the U.S. Secret Service on cybercrime investigations said:

"The FBI, in conjunction with Cyber Command, the Secret Service and like-minded countries, have truly engaged in significant disruptive actions against these groups. "REvil was top of the list."

And thanks to like-minded cybersecurity agencies, REvil has lost its spot as the #1 purveyor of ransomware. For now.



YOU ARE IN CONTROL

Did you know, more than 60% of network malware infections are caused by social engineering?

RANSOMWARE TIPS

TAKE CONTROL

Ransomware is cited as the #1 threat to businesses. It is also a threat that is almost completely avoidable. Most computers and IT networks become infected when an untrained employee opens an unsolicited email, clicks on a malicious link, or downloads a suspicious file. With ongoing training, you are reducing your risk of becoming a victim of ransomware.

Applying the following strategies will also assist you in securing your systems and reduce the risk even further:

- Do not provide sensitive information via email, text message, instant message, or in an unsolicited phone call.
- Maintain a strong firewall and keep your antivirus software up-to-date and patched.
- Deploy content scanning and filtering on your mail servers.
- Block websites that do not have an HTTPS certificate.
- Avoid using public Wi-Fi for business – if you have to, access it via a VPN.
- Create multiple data backups – on-site, off-site and in the cloud.



KUNDAKALA

Empowering women through art.

WHO WAS KUNDA KIRLOSKAR?

Kunda Kirloskar was an accomplished classical sitarist, businesswoman and award-winning Indian artist. As an independent and enterprising individual, Kunda was an unprecedented homemaker and also an advocate of supporting and educating the children of deprived families. She was also aware that women who worked as domestic helpers in India lacked self-confidence and self-expression although often being the sole breadwinners. It was from these observations that Kundakala was born.

WHAT IS KUNDAKALA?

Kundakala, a social enterprise founded in memory of the late Kunda Kirloskar, operates out of India and the UK. The premise of the operation is to provide women with training and career guidance to ultimately make them financially independent. Kundakala's tailoring workshops use Kunda's art to create products such as scarves, prints and homeware. All attendees are rewarded with paid commissions and then have the opportunity to launch their own business or seek employment in the tailoring industry. Kundakala also offers employability workshops designed to provide practical advice for entrepreneurs or those returning to the workplace.

HOW CAN I HELP?

Kundakala has been well-received and is going from strength to strength but needs ongoing financial support. You can support the endeavour by purchasing high-quality **T-shirts**, **prints** or **homeware** from the organisation's website www.kundakala.org. Kundakala also welcomes donations. All profits from sales and donations go towards making women across the globe stronger, more confident and more independent.



MEET THE TEAM

Anthony Antonie

SERVICE DESK ENGINEER

1. What made you realise you want to go into the IT industry?

I've always been very passionate about IT, specifically hardware. When I was younger I was always busy fiddling with a piece of hardware.

2. What's your most-used productivity skill?

Zhero Wait is the ultimate productivity tool! It helps me to ensure I never miss anything.

3. What do you enjoy the most about your job?

I love working with people, and being in the service industry I often get the opportunity to do just that. I am also very analytical and a problem solver and my work enables me to use these skills on a daily basis.

4. How would you describe yourself?

I am the joker - I always try to lighten the mood by making a joke.

5. Do you have any hidden talents or hobbies?

In my free time, I enjoy playing online games - I am a serious gamer.

6. Are you a sports fan?

Yes, I live for rugby and cricket!

7. What is your favourite film?

James Bond

ZHERO WAIT

Zhero Wait is a bespoke app we have developed to drive productivity and help our amazing team stay on top of things!

I WANT TO
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SPEAK TO US

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