

# TechTips Newsletter



Insider Tips To Make Your Business Run Faster, Easier And More Profitably



## U.S. DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS EXPERIENCES DATA BREACH

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has announced that they have experienced a data breach. The breach, as of this article's writing, affects upwards of 26,000 veterans registered with the VA. The breach was uncovered by the Financial Services Center (FSC) as they noticed unauthorized third-party activity in their network.

According to the press release, the investigation has so far revealed the following information and response from the VA:

*'These unauthorized users gained access to the application to change financial information and divert payments from VA by using social engineering techniques and exploiting authentication protocols. To prevent any future improper access to and modification of information, system access will not be reenabled until a comprehensive security review is completed by the VA Office of Information Technology.'*

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**October 2020**



This monthly publication provided courtesy of Richard Lynn, VP of Sales and Marketing Tech Hero

### Our Mission

To build a community of successful minded entrepreneurs that inspires excellence, encourages collaboration and expands the capacity of all members to achieve great things.

The VA office is warning veterans who are likely to have been affected by the breach. Additionally, which is a look into just how deep this breach goes, the U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs is offering free credit monitoring to anyone with compromised Social Security data.

When contacted by members of the press, the VA was fairly tight-lipped about what they think caused the breach. This is understandable as the investigation is still ongoing and is a matter of national security. Security experts did have some commentary on the situation, however, which may shed some light on specific concerns.

Ilya Sotnikov, vice president of product management at Netwrix, had this to say when interviewed by Threatpost's Tara Seals:

*'It's too early to say whether new configurations related to the change to work from home played a role in VA hack or not, but it might be a good reminder for other companies to review decisions made in March and April as they were quickly adopting to the new ways of staying productive... the VA needs to ensure they are taking every security step necessary to not only protect financial data, but also the sensitive personal and healthcare data for the veterans it serves.'*

Should more developments arise on this Veterans Affairs data breach, they will be reported on. — *Derek Kortepeter for Techgenix*

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## Client Spotlight

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With over 30 years of experience, in 2005, Ron Hudson Jr. joined forces with Kyle Everly of Everly's Flooring, a nationally recognized installation firm established in 1988. This strategic move aggressively positioned Hudson-Everyly Commercial Flooring as one of Orlando's top recognized commercial flooring dealers. Both Ron and Kyle have years of industry knowledge and great expertise with highly technical products specified in all areas of the commercial flooring world.

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## PHISHING CAMPAIGN SPOOFS TEXAS.GOV DOMAIN, TARGETS COMPUTER VENDORS

Researchers at Abnormal Security are warning of a convincing phishing campaign targeting Texas computer vendors. The phishing campaign sends emails that impersonate the Texas Department of State Health Services, even going so far as appearing to originate from the `dshs.texas.gov` domain. Further adding to the legitimacy of the attack is the use of the official Department of State Health Services seal affixed to the emails.

The post from Abnormal Security notes that the campaign primarily targets Microsoft Office 365 users and has been shown to bypass Proofpoint security protocols. At the moment, it has reached roughly 50,000 individuals. Abnormal Security summarizes the phishing campaign's attack methodology as follows:

*'The email addresses the sales department with a brief message expressing interest in purchasing 20 laptops and 200 external hard drives with specifications for each. The order form contains a phone number and a billing address for the items to be sent within the next 30 days. The attached PDF is disguised as a Request for Quotation (RFQ), but is actually a scam for fake solicitation of goods. There is no ship to address (listed as TBD), and the phone number provided is not associated with the bill to address, although the area code is in Texas and does match the area code for the department of state health services phone number. This is a social engineering tactic aimed to engage recipients into requesting the ship to address, either by email or phone.'* — Continued on next page...

There is no indication who is behind the phishing attacks, and more specifically, why they chose to target Texas businesses. It is not known, or at least not mentioned in Abnormal Security's post, how many victims there have been among the 50,000 addressees targeted. If you have a business located in Texas, be on the lookout for this particular social engineering phishing campaign. While it currently targets Microsoft Office 365 clients, this could change at any time. Practice common sense, especially when you are supposedly being contacted by a government agency.

Phishing campaigns love using this tactic because it works. Don't fall for it.— *Derek Kortepeter for Techgenix*



## MICROSOFT LISTS: WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT THIS NEW PRODUCTIVITY APP

Microsoft has added another app to its Microsoft 365 arsenal. Microsoft Lists, which was unveiled in May at the Build 2020 developer conference, has just been added to the Microsoft Teams app to help organizations keep track of information and organize their work. Along with enterprise customers, Microsoft is making the Lists app available for its government customers. Microsoft Lists is not to be confused with Microsoft Tasks or To Do. It is accessible via the Teams app and includes various templates allowing users to easily track information across several projects and tasks.

*Continued on next page...*

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Cloud Portal

Did you know about our new Cloud Portal? This new tool will allow you to open tickets directly with us here at Tech Hero at the click of a button!

To try it out, just go down to your system tray and look for the small blue IT icon. After you've double clicked on it you will need to sign in (You will only need to do this once!)

Once you are in you can click around explore the software.



If you have any questions, feel free to reach out to us at the number below!

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Microsoft debuted the application as a means of smart information tracking in Microsoft 365's arsenal of applications. The company has already started rolling out the Lists app for Microsoft 365 business users. Here are some of the additional details and features of this all-new Lists app.

### What makes Microsoft Lists unique?

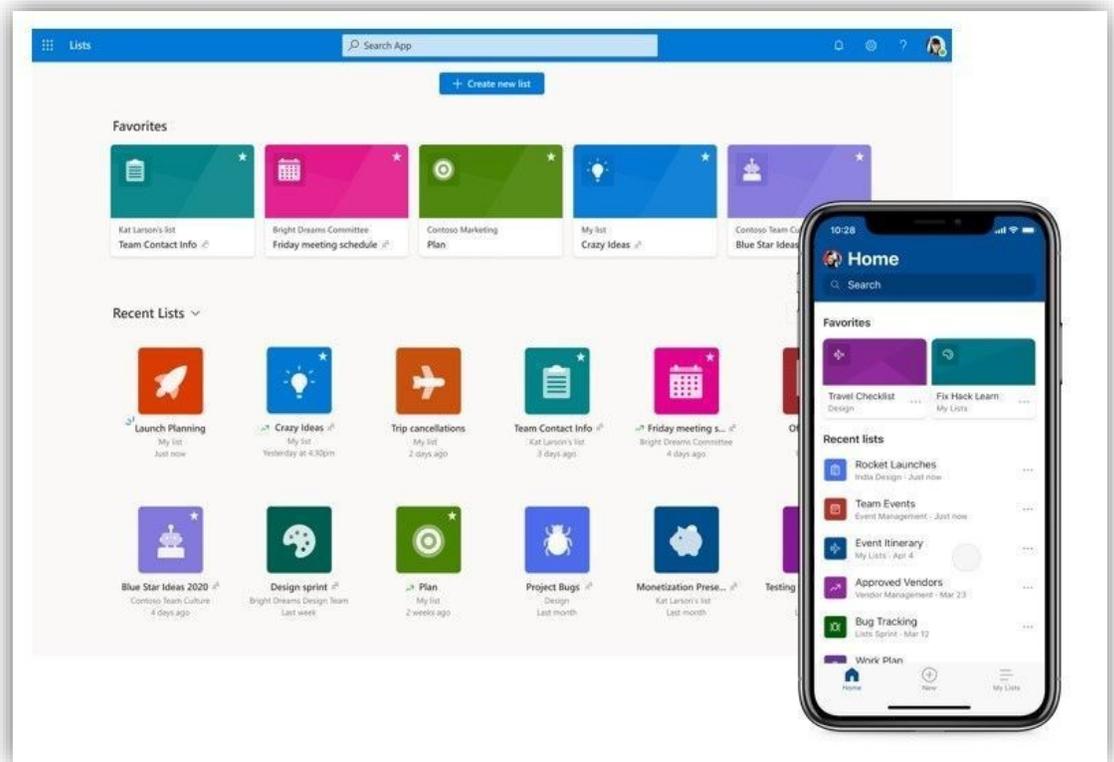
Microsoft Lists allows users to perform a variety of tasks. Using this new tool, business users will be able to track issues, build and manage agendas, manage inventory, manage information such as FAQs, list out status reports, and more. However, this app, as discussed above, is available only to business users, unlike Microsoft ToDo, which is available to everyone subscribed to Microsoft 365 services.

Despite all these features, Lists is not an entirely new application. It is an upgraded version of the existing SharePoint Lists. However, unlike the original SharePoint Lists, the new Lists is available for Microsoft 365 users. Microsoft Lists is very secure. All the information stored is guarded by Microsoft's world-class data protection and security mechanism.

The new Lists app works seamlessly with other Microsoft applications such as Excel, SharePoint, Power BI, Power Automate, and other Power apps. This allows users to work and leverage several Microsoft applications to build powerful information tracking solutions.

Microsoft Lists packs in several organizational and project management features and is all set to compete against leading project management tools such as monday.com and Asana. However, it still misses out on the Gantt chart functionality.

Currently, millions of users use SharePoint Lists and other libraries in Microsoft 365 to track issues, manage tasks, projects, track bugs, status reporting, build and manage agendas, and more. According to Microsoft, the new Lists will allow users to build custom solutions to meet specific user needs without having to code.



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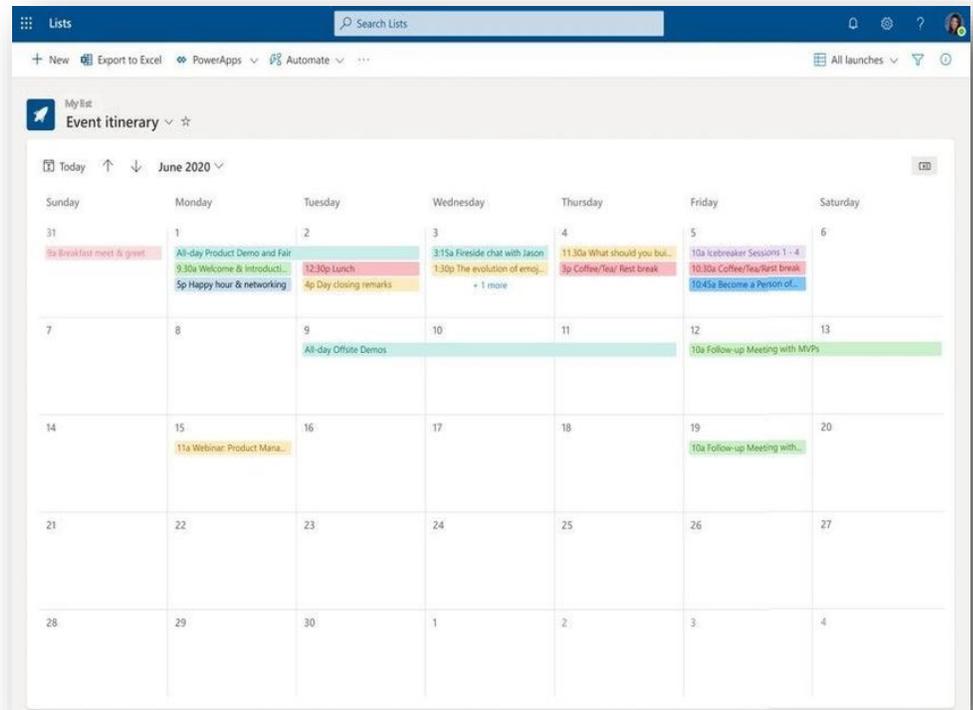
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## Microsoft Lists- Calendar View



### Microsoft Lists features

The app is packed with several features. Below are some of them:

- Customizable views and smart views.
- Timely alerts and reminders to keep everyone in sync and keep posted about the tasks.
- Offers enterprise-grade security and compliance in accordance with the latest Microsoft 365 app suite.
- Available in both web and mobile formats.
- Ready-made templates to suit several businesses.
- Adding tasks as favorites.
- Ability to directly import data from Excel sheets.
- Integration with various Microsoft apps and Power platform.
- Ability to create new lists from the existing lists to use all these new features.
- Custom rules, filters, and set up rules to suit every business or individual's needs.

There are several tools available in the market that serve as an alternative to the Microsoft Lists. However, it, along with several other Microsoft 365 applications suite, makes it a value-for-money proposition. Microsoft Lists is currently being rolled out with targeted completion of the worldwide rollout by the end of this month. — *Sukesh Mudrakola for Techgenix*