
Windows Live ID security breached

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A big-time security breach was found today in Windows Live ID by a 19 year old Dutchman, Erik Duindam. Worldwide about tens of millions of people are using windows Live ID to proof ownership of a certain e-mail address. Upon registration of such an ID, a user receives an e-mail with a link to confirm. This is a standard procedure on the Internet. Every Microsoft service build around Microsoft Live trusts this ID blindly. It should guarantee that the user is the one owning the e-mail address, but it does not.

"A critical error was made by the Microsoft programmers that allows everyone to create an ID for virtually any e-mail address", says Erik. The procedure indeed checked out to be very simple: After registration on www.live.com with a valid e-mail address that the user does have access to, the confirmation link is received. Before using it however, it is allowed to change the initial e-mail address to one that even cannot exist, or you do not own. After logging out a second time and confirming using the first link, the Microsoft system simply confirms the account, using the new and unowned e-mail address.

Erik Duindam has been involved in computers and building websites ever since he could handle a keyboard. *"I just wanted to have a Windows Live ID for my company mail but I misspelled my e-mail. That led to the test and I just registered mail@cnn.com to prove it. If I would make such an error, I fear that I would loose al my clients immediately", said Erik, "it looks like the responsible programmers at Microsoft were asleep while developing".*

NOTE (NOT FOR PUBLICATION)

You can check this story out by registering for a new account on www.live.com and change your e-mail address through www.passport.com before confirming with the first link you received. You can also add mail@cnn.com as a new contact in MSN Messenger so you can talk to Erik directly. **Just to be clear on this: Erik does not work for CNN nor does he pretend to do so!**