The Little Fuchsia Book of Windows 10 Security

Insight · Microsoft

Introduction

Cybersecurity is always a concern for businesses. As a major upgrade for Microsoft, Windows® 10 offers significant security enhancements:

- Device Guard app scanner
- Secure Boot
- Windows Hello user authorization
- Microsoft® Passport secure sign-on
- Next-gen BitLocker® encryption
- Virtual Secure Mode

Let's look at each of these features in more detail.

Device Guard

Described by CIO magazine as a "really beefy bouncer" for your devices, Device Guard takes a hard look at any app you try to download — on any device running Windows® 10. It then alerts you if an app was developed anonymously or has not been approved by the Microsoft® Store.[1]

Device Guard takes care of a lot of security issues, but it's not intended to replace anti-virus software, Microsoft cautions. Rather, it can help the software do its job better. Device Guard can be used not just by the usual mix of PCs, laptops, tablets and smartphones, but also by point-of-sale systems and ATMs, and even future Internet of Things devices.

You can configure Device Guard to be as aggressive as you want it to be. Acer, Fujitsu, HP, Lenovo, NCR, Par and Toshiba are working with Microsoft to install it on all of their Windows-based devices.

Hello uses biometric technology — fingerprint readers or iris scanners — to identify authorized users. The only catch is you have to have computers with the hardware and software to support Windows Biometric Framework.

Some computers already have fingerprint-reading capabilities, and Microsoft says it's working with its hardware partners to prepare more devices with technology that puts Hello at your fingertips — or in your sights, whichever you prefer.

log in to apps or sites, users log on to the device itself. After that, they can access anything without having to enter passwords.

Next-gen BitLocker

With Windows 10, Microsoft extended the capabilities of its BitLocker® feature. BitLocker enables automatic encryption of corporate apps, data, email and website content as data flows to a device. If users label new documents as corporate, those documents will be encrypted. You can set your devices to designate *all* data as corporate and encrypted. You can also take steps to prevent data from being copied.

Secure Boot

Secure Boot goes a bit further than Device Guard, only allowing a device to run apps your IT administrator approves. This feature was available in Windows® 8, but since the default setting was turned to off, few companies used it. Secure Boot is designed to prevent hackers from

breaking into your system using a USB or micro SD port.

Windows Hello

Windows Hello is Microsoft's leap into a future beyond passwords, which, as we all know, come in two unappetizing flavors: easy to hack or impossible to remember.

Microsoft Passport

Devices with Windows® Hello equipment can also use Microsoft® Passport, which provides two-factor authentication for accessing all apps and programs with a single access code. Instead of using various passwords to

Virtual Secure Mode

The enterprise version of Windows® 10 also contains a feature called Virtual Secure Mode (VSM), which uses virtualization to protect data and credentials on a system's hard drive.

VSM breaks the operating system into multiple containers so that if a device is compromised, a hacker won't be able to access the tokens needed to get around the system without using passwords. VSM is only for computers that have virtualization.

Continuous updates

An additional, much-appreciated feature of the Windows 10 enterprise system is automatic security fixes, patches and updates. If you'd prefer to schedule them manually, you still have that option.

Peer-to-peer updates allow offices with limited bandwidth to distribute updates themselves instead of having each PC download them separately. Otherwise, you don't have to think about it. Updates are pushed to your devices as they become available.

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[1] Shelton, L. (2015, Sept. 10). Top 3 New Security Features of Windows 10. CIO.com.