

Ring, Amazon sued by man who says hacker bothered his kids

December 31 2019, by Levi Sumagaysay, The Mercury News



Credit: CC0 Public Domain

A man is suing doorbell maker Ring and its parent company, Amazon, after he says a hacker communicated with his children over the internet-connected camera he had bought as "additional security" for his family.

In a lawsuit seeking class-action status, John Baker Orange of Alabama said his three kids, ages 7, 9 and 10, were playing basketball when they heard someone comment about their play. The person also urged them to come closer to the Ring camera, which he bought in July.

"Ring does not fulfill its core promise of providing privacy and security for its customers, as its camera systems are fatally flawed," the lawsuit states. Orange said he did not know he was supposed to use [two-factor authentication](#) in addition to a password.

The lawsuit also mentions seven other incidents of Ring devices being hacked, which have been in the news lately. In Mississippi, an 8-year-old girl heard a man tell her through a Ring camera that he was Santa Claus, then called her a racial slur. In Connecticut, a man said someone yelled obscenities at his mother-in-law through a Ring camera. In Texas, a couple woke up to an alarm and someone demanding \$350,000 worth of bitcoin.

In response to those incidents, Ring has blamed users, the lawsuit says. Ring has said its cameras were accessed by people reusing old passwords that may have been compromised in other security breaches. The company has also encouraged people to use two-factor authentication, something the lawsuit says Ring should have done in the first place.

The lawsuit also mentions that hacking into Rings has become so "commonplace that there is even a podcast dedicated to live and recorded hacking events wherein malevolent third parties take control of Ring devices and terrorize occupants for entertainment." It also says Ring users continue to be at risk because others may have gained access

to sensitive details of their lives without their knowledge.

When reached for comment Monday, a Ring spokeswoman said the company does not comment on legal matters. Amazon has not returned a request for comment.

Ring, which Amazon bought last year, makes internet-connected doorbells and cameras. The company has partnerships with hundreds of police departments around the country for the Neighbors app, which allows law enforcement to ask Ring users for video footage when they are investigating crimes. Ring devices have also made news when they help catch thieves who steal packages, or capture a crime on [camera](#).

Orange's lawsuit was filed Dec. 26 in U.S. District Court for the Central District of California in Los Angeles. It seeks at least \$5 million in damages and a jury trial for negligence, invasion of privacy, breaches of implied warranty and contract, unjust enrichment and violation of California's Unfair Competition Law.

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Citation: Ring, Amazon sued by man who says hacker bothered his kids (2019, December 31)
retrieved 24 April 2024 from
<https://techxplore.com/news/2019-12-amazon-sued-hacker-bothered-kids.html>

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