



## Alphonso: China's Ears in Your House

It's no secret that information is big business today and that just about every new item in your house is spying on you. That trend isn't slowing down either, as the fastest-growing six-figure job in America is for app-developers. What isn't generally known, however, is that one of the biggest cyber snoopers on the planet has strong ties to the Chinese government.



That company is Alphonso Inc. According to its advertising:

Alphonso is a TV data and measurement company, and the market leader in providing brands and agencies with real-time TV ad campaign measurement, closed-loop attribution for TV ads, and TV audience extension across digital devices. Alphonso TV Data Cloud services are used by hundreds of Fortune 500 brands and agencies in the US.

With video AI technology embedded in tens of millions of smart TVs (including Sharp, Toshiba, Hisense, Seiki, and Skyworth), TV chipsets, set-top boxes, and other connected devices, Alphonso understands what programming and advertising people watch on TV. Its SaaS offering, Alphonso Insights, delivers actionable TV measurement and closed-loop attribution with offline data in real-time, to help brands understand the true impact of TV advertising.

Did you catch that? "Alphonso Insights delivers actionable TV measurement and closed-loop attribution with offline data in real-time." So, yes, Virginia, there is a cyber-stalker in your house.

One of the companies Alphonso partners with is Hisense, which is a Chinese-owned company. Hisense also manufactures TVs under the Sharp and Toshiba brands, making it even harder to avoid supporting a communist-owned company or having your personal information shared with the folks who have created the "Social Score."

It is not a stretch to believe that Hisense is engaged in the same nefarious intelligence gathering as another Chinese government company, Huawei, which the FCC designated as a national security threat because of the "backdoors" it built into its hardware.

When telecom-equipment makers sell hardware such as switching gear, base stations, and antennas to cellphone carriers — which assemble the networks that enable mobile communication and computing — they are required by law to build in ways for authorities to tap into the systems for lawful purposes.

These companies also are required to make sure they can't gain access without the consent of the network operator. Only law-enforcement officials or authorized officials at carriers are allowed into these "lawful interception interfaces."

US officials said Huawei had built equipment that secretly preserves its ability to access networks through these interfaces, without the carriers' knowledge. The officials didn't provide details of where they believe Huawei can do so. Other telecom-equipment manufacturers don't have the same



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ability, they said.

The Huawei backdoor is just one of several Chinese Communist Party (CCP) owned companies that spy on citizens and companies of other countries such as TikTok and Tencent.

The threat of Hisense incorporating unknown backdoors is growing. The National Pulse released an article revealing current Alphonso “Senior Business Development Director Gary Hsieh previously worked at HiSilicon, a subsidiary of Huawei.”

Hisense’s “strategic goal overseas is to grow market share, so there is a willingness at the corporate level to accept lower returns,” Paul Gagnon, IHS Inc.’s director of TV sets research, reported to the *Wall Street Journal*.

Of course, Alphonso can help make up for the reduced profit by selling the data Hisense collects. Considering Alphonso’s intrusive use of stealth to collect data on Americans, Hisense can become a data broker.

In July, AG Robert Barr attacked several U.S. companies for openly working with the Chinese government saying:

Over the years, corporations such as Google, Microsoft, Yahoo, and Apple have shown themselves all too willing to collaborate with the CCP. For example, Apple recently removed the news app Quartz from its app store in China, after the Chinese government complained about coverage of the Hong Kong democracy protests. Apple also removed apps for virtual private networks, which had allowed users to circumvent the Great Firewall, and eliminated pro-democracy songs from its Chinese music store. Meanwhile, the company announced that it would be transferring some of its iCloud data to servers in China, despite concerns that the move would give the CCP easier access to e-mails, text messages, and other user information stored in the cloud.

Other companies openly working with China include Bloomberg, ABC, MSNBC, NBC, CNN, the *Washington Post*, and the *New York Times*. When one considers China’s ability to spy on us through applications such as Zoom, then the Xi Jinping’s 2013 dictate that technology is a “national weapon in modern times,” becomes more ominous.

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