

AL2021_59 Dell BIOS Updates Cause Laptops and Desktops not to boot (31st December 2021)

Description

Recent Dell BIOS updates are reportedly causing serious boot problems on a variety of laptop and desktop models.

Summary

Dell Latitude laptops (5320 and 5520) are affected, as well Dell Inspiron 5680 and Alienware Aurora R8 desktops.

On social media channels including Dell's community website page [1, 2] and Reddit page [1, 2], customers have reported booting problems with the latest BIOS version (version 1.14.3 for Latitude laptops, 2.8.0 for Inspiron, and 1.0.18 for Aurora R8).

How it works

Users report that while the affected PCs will switch on, peripheral lighting and displays will not. They'll startup, but then crash due to a blue screen of death.

"Persons have tried to boot after updating the BIOS on the 5320 to version 1.14.3 but the laptops would not boot " The laptop would periodically start up and display a 'Time-of-day not set - please run SETUP application' error, after selecting 'Continue' would force the laptop to shut down again," one of the impacted clients explained. It has started multiple times before shutting down after displaying a blue screen for a little period."

Remediation

There is no patch available to solve this vulnerability at the present. Users of Dell computers, on the other hand, are encouraged to avoid the problem by following the steps outlined below.

- Restore the BIOS to an earlier version. Downgrading an older version of firmware can help you avoid new bugs that haven't been fixed in the newer version.
- Power down the device, remove the battery, hold down the power button for 15 seconds, then reinstall the battery and plugin the charger.

This procedure can be used to fix the booting problem after downgrading or upgrading the BIOS firmware.

The Guyana National CIRT recommends that users and administrators review this alert and apply it where necessary.

References

- Dell BIOS updates cause laptops and desktops not to boot (21st December 2021). Retrieved from Bleeping Computer.

<https://www.bleepingcomputer.com/news/technology/new-dell-bios-updates-cause-laptops-and-desktops-not-to-boot/>

- Dell BIOS updates cause laptops and desktops not to boot (21st February 2021). Retrieve from Dell.

<https://www.dell.com/support/kbdoc/ro-ro/000130652/downgrading-the-system-bios-on-a-dell-system>