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Cybercriminals Confess the Top 5 Tricks, Sneaky Schemes and Gimmicks They Use to Hack Your Computer Network

The contemporary world is rife with digital thieves. They're penetrating the complicated data structures of huge credit-monitoring companies like Equifax, scooping up the personal information of millions of people. They're releasing sensitive customer data to the public from discreet businesses like Ashley Madison. They're watching webcam feeds of our celebrities without them knowing; they're locking down the systems of public utilities like the German railway system; they're even managing to steal thousands of gigabytes of information directly from high-profile government entities like the CIA.

They're also targeting small businesses exactly like your own and extorting them for thousands and thousands of dollars. When running a company, it's vital to have a dedicated security team, equipped with the most up-to-the-minute security technology, on your side to protect you from these malicious cyber threats. But it's not enough to leave it to somebody else. You also need to be informed. Read five of the most common ways hackers infiltrate your network on page 2!

Client Spotlight:



The Up Center is South Hampton Roads' oldest and largest non-profit family services agency serving over 10,000 individuals, children and families each year. Through 23 innovative services and community collaboration, we provide the resources needed to bring thousands of South Hampton Roads families from a place of crisis to wholeness. Our programs meet the diverse needs of individuals, children and families, including: mental health counseling, early childhood home education and youth mentoring, foster care to adoption, financial and housing education and counseling, and disability services. Our vision is a healthy community where children and families thrive. For more information please visit www.theupcenter.org or call us at (757) 622-7017.

**November 2017
Virginia Beach, VA**

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Continued...

1. Phishing Scams

You receive an e-mail in your work inbox coming directly from a high-ranking employee with whom you've been working on a project. Inside is a link he needs you to click to access some "vital information," but when you click it, it rapidly installs a host of malware on the computer, spreads through the network and locks out everyone in the company.

Phishing scams are the oldest trick in a hacker's book – ever received one of those "Nigerian Prince" scams? – but they're still wildly successful. Not only that, but they're becoming increasingly more sophisticated. As Thomas Peters writes for "Newsweek," "The best messages look like they're trying to protect the company. One well-meaning system administrator even offered to post a PDF that could deliver malware on an internal server because it was called, 'How to avoid a phishing attack.'" How's that for irony?

2. Social Engineering

Social engineering is a type of "hacking" that uses real, well-intentioned people to carry out its schemes, rather than intricate lines of code. This is especially effective for gathering sensitive information that can later be used in another type of attack – e-mail passwords used for phishing scams, for example. Maybe your IT guy receives a call from the "secretary" of one of your clients, pretending that they're experiencing problems with your service due to some firewall, a problem that your IT professional is more than happy to help out with. Before you know it, the caller knows the ins and outs of your entire security system, or lack thereof. Social engineers have been known to use phone company customer service departments, Facebook and other services to gather Social Security or credit card numbers, prepare for digital robbery and even change the passwords to your central data network security.

3. Password Hacking

You may think that your passwords are clever and complicated, filled with exclamation points and random numbers, but it's rarely enough. With information gathered carefully from social engineering or a simple check on your employees' social media accounts, hackers can easily use brute-force to figure out that your password is the name of the family dog, followed by your anniversary (for example). That's if they didn't already manage to steal your password through one of the techniques listed above.

3. Fault Injection

Sophisticated hackers can scan your businesses' network or software source code for weak points. Once they're located, they can surgically attempt to crash the system through links on your website to malicious malware or steal and erase vast swathes of information.

4. USB-based Malware

At the last conference you attended, someone probably handed out free branded USB sticks to keep their business top-of-mind. Hackers will sometimes covertly slip a bunch of infected USB sticks into a company's stash. The instant somebody tries to use one, their computer is taken over by ransomware.

So What Can I Do About It?

It's a scary world out there, with virtually everyone left vulnerable to digital attack. Knowing the strategies hackers deploy is half the battle. But, frankly, these techniques are constantly changing; it's impossible to keep up by yourself.

That's why it's so important to utilize only the most up-to-date security solutions when protecting your business. Hackers move fast. You and your security technology need to stay one step ahead.



EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

Dustin Brown, Network Administrator

Born in Portsmouth, VA, Dustin is the youngest full-time member of 360IT Partners at 21 years of age upon being hired. During his time off, he enjoys spending time with his fiancé, Molly, as well as modifying and working on different vehicles. He is an avid fanatic of the Chicago Bears, Cubs, Bulls, and Blackhawks, and enjoys following multiple styles of racing and motorsports.

Shiny New Gadget of the Month:



E-mail Signature Rescue

The business world runs on e-mail. According to LifeWire, around 269 billion e-mails are sent around the world each and every day. But for every e-mail sent, millions go unread, and those that do are often found wanting. How, in the midst of all that noise, can you possibly get your own work e-mails to stand out?

Enter E-mail Signature Rescue (emailsignaturerescue.com), a business dedicated to creating custom, professional e-mail signature templates for all kinds of companies and teams. Using their proprietary software, it's easy to build a robust and beautiful HTML e-mail signature template that will make your e-mails pop. Signatures may seem small, but they can go a long way toward convincing a recipient that you mean business.

5 Ways to Handle Bad News in the Workplace and Move On

Every company has its ups and downs. How your organization deals with those intermittent challenges is just as important as how it celebrates its victories, if not more so. Maybe your quarterly earnings have come in below expectations, or maybe a long-admired senior manager has decided to leave the firm. Maybe you've had to let someone go, or maybe the team isn't reaching its potential. As a business leader, you need to relay the news to your team quickly – in a way that doesn't have any additional repercussions, like hurting the company culture. But how do you do that?

Talk About It

It may sound simple, but it's anything but. Clear and open communication doesn't come naturally to many leaders. So, you have to be intentional about it. If you know something bad is going to happen (or already has), gather your team in a room as soon as possible to talk about the news. Opening up the conversation is the single most important step.

Be Transparent – Don't Sugarcoat the Bad News

It's no use gathering your team to share news if you're going to hold back information. When times are tough, trust is often the first thing to erode if people feel like they're not being told the whole truth. Ensure that when you gather your team to talk, everything is on the table – no secrets. Bad news is bad news; there's no sense trying to spin it positive. You have to be genuine.

Hear from Everybody

The opinion of a senior vice president should have no more weight than that of your front-desk receptionist. If you want a real team atmosphere, you have to be willing to hear everyone's voice and address any questions or concerns. This will go a long way toward reinforcing that "we're all in this together" feeling and the fact that you're open to differing opinions. Whether or not you can answer every question or address every issue isn't important, but listening to each person is crucial.

Determine A Path Forward

It's not enough to get things out on the table. You have to be able to move forward in a deliberate way. Once everyone has been heard, make a plan for how things are going to proceed. Maybe you develop a way for each team member to contribute to bringing in new business or recruiting top performers. Whether the task is small or large, be sure you make a plan to address any underlying problems that may have caused the issue in the first place. Get buy-in from your team and get to work.



As the founder of Petra Coach, Andy Bailey can cut through organizational BS faster than a hot knife through butter, showing organizations the logjams thwarting their success, and coaching them past the excuses we all use to avoid doing what needs to be done. Andy learned how to build great organizations by building a great business, which he started in college. It then grew into an Inc. 500 multimillion-dollar national company that he successfully sold and exited.

Want to Win A \$25 Gift Card?

Here's this month's question:

You are finally done fiddling around with the computer and it is time to shut it down. Which is one reason you should you go to start and hit shut down rather than just turn the computer off by flipping the switch?

- A) There is no reason to go visit start. It is perfectly safe to just flip the switch.
- B) Flipping the switch could cause your computer to explode.
- C) By just turning the switch, you risk losing anything you worked on, even if you saved it to the hard drive.
- D) Because your computer sometimes installs updates when you shut it down properly.

E-mail Haley at haley@360itpartners.com right now with your name, company, and answer! She will put all the correct answers in a hat and draw the winner at the end of the month.

Watch Out For This Netflix Phishing Scheme.

There is a massive scam going on that is targeting Netflix customers. The scam is telling subscribers that their account is about to be cancelled and in order to prevent the suspension, they must enter their account information. This personalized, well - designed email has the subject line "Your suspension notification" and explains your account will be suspended due to a billing problem. There is a link where the subscriber is taken to a copycat Netflix landing page which requires their log-in information and billing information including their credit card number.

Always take precaution when you receive emails asking for personal information. There are a few ways you can protect yourself from falling for these phishing schemes. Hover over any links to confirm they lead to URLs they claim. If you want to check your account, never click links through the email. Instead, go to the home page of the site itself and log in to your account to check your settings and see if any issues exist.

- KnowBe4 11/07/2017

Top Tech Accessories to Make Your Life Easier.

The best gadgets help us navigate our lives with ease, making particular processes that much more hassle-free. With technology, it's often the little things that make all the difference in the world. Take AUKEY's car phone mount, for instance. At only \$7.99 on Amazon, there's no reason you should be fumbling with your iPhone while you're using Google Maps on a road trip. The clip attaches directly to any air vent, putting your phone front and center for easy viewing and reducing the need for dangerous fiddling.

Or, pair an Amazon Echo with the Tp-Link Smart Plug Mini (\$29.99), which allows you to activate all kinds of devices with your voice or your phone. It's the perfect first step toward a smarter home and a world of convenience. If you've got a phone that's always dying, hook it up to an Anker battery case, which can extend the battery life of most phones by as much as 120%. For more small-scale tech solutions, check out Business Insider's list of "50 must-have tech accessories under \$50."

- Techcrunch.com 5/24/2017

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