Article

Aug 2022

5 Cyber Security Terms You Should Know

Do you know your phishing from your malware? Check out our top 5 cyber security terms and definitions to help you stay safe online.

You've clicked on this article because you want to protect your data online.

You want to protect your company, your people and your processes. You might even be searching for the magic information that will stop all the hackers out there trying to get their mits on your data.

This guide is going to show you the basics, the 5 key terms which are imperative for all people operating a computer should know. It may not be the 'be all and end all' when it comes to Cyber Security but it's your first step to protecting yourself online.

Keep reading to find out the most important Cyber Security terms that our team implore you to know.

Phishing

You might have been hacked!

Have you ever received an email or text message from someone that seemed too good to be true? Maybe it was about a free trial, fake parcel or your 'boss' and after checking out the linked website you know something doesn't look quite right. That is called phishing.

These malicious groups try anything possible to access your data by luring you in with fake sites, hoping you'll not be educated enough and input your data like credit card information.

What should I look out for in a phishing scam?

Malicious groups have been known to send fake text messages and/or e-mails pretending to be AusPost claiming to have a delivery or that you've just received a speeding ticket. Phishing scams are becoming more sophisticated and intricate as time progresses.

- We recommend NEVER to input your data on suspicious websites.
- If you aren't expecting an e-mail, you can always call the impersonated company such as AusPost and confirm whether is it legitimate or not.
- Ensure all your software is up to date.
- Check for grammatical errors or poorly structured sentences.
- Have you checked where the e-mail the content came from? Does it look like info@waterstons.com.au or does it look like info123$@waterstons.com for example?
- When in doubt, do not open attachments, input data or click links.

MFA or 2FA

MFA or Multi Factor Authentication AKA 2FA strengthens your security online.

After you input your regular password, the MFA platform you're linked to will send you a notification. This will be sent to your chosen back-up e-mail or phone number to confirm it's really you.

Imagine this: You're out enjoying a stroll, or a lovely meal and you've received a notification that someone or something is attempting to log into your e-mail account, social media or work networks.

Your MFA platform pops up and you select that it is not you attempting to access the account. You then can appropriately mitigate the risk by reporting it to your workplace or changing your passwords on social media accounts. You may have just avoided having your identity or data stolen.

We highly recommend using an MFA platform to secure yourself online.

Exploit

"To use something to one's own advantage."

An exploit can use data, software or a sequence of commands to infiltrate systems.

Exploits use bugs or vulnerabilities to gain access and control to computers or larger systems. An exploit also gives the attacker an opportunity to increase their system privileges to do real damage.

How can I protect myself from potential exploits in my system?

Great question, we recommend consulting with your internal Cyber Security team or hiring the expertise of experienced Cyber Security Engineers to thoroughly assess your systems, processes and audit your people to ensure that your systems are protected against potential exploits.

Malware

What do you get when you put 'malicious' and 'software' together? Malware.

It is a blanket term that describes malicious software and programs. Malware is specifically designed to gain unauthorized access to your computer. It's designed to damage and cause disorder.

Sometimes, you won't even know it's there.

How do I know there is malware on my device?

Signs of malware include but are not limited to...

- Your device is operating slowly seemingly out of the blue.
- You might have unauthorized charges on your card.
- An increase in random pop-ups and advertising.
- Random new applications or software has been downloaded without your authorization that is separate from regular system updates.

When you're unwell, you visit the doctor for their expertise. So, leave it to the professionals if you suspect something sinister on your device. Get in touch with Waterstons Australia to keep your data safe.

Vulnerability

A vulnerability is a flaw or flaws in your systems.

These vulnerabilities are exploited by malware and/or an attacker. Dysfunctional systems can lead to hackers getting inside your network, which could result in them stealing data, giving themselves access to certain systems and launching attacks on a device or devices.

How can I make my systems less vulnerable?

Firstly, if you're not a cyber security professional it can be very difficult to spot holes in your systems. We recommend leaving it to the professionals and letting them patch holes and reconfigure systems for optimal protection of your data.

Human error is the largest threat to the cyber security architecture. Errors made by humans can expose data or create exploitable access points for hackers. Such as opening a phishing e-mail or not keeping software up to date.

Network vulnerabilities like unsecure Wi-Fi, old hardware and out of date software are high contributors to vulnerabilities in your systems.

These are just a few examples of types of vulnerabilities that your systems can experience. It is imperative to stay vigilant, educated and consult with the professionals to maintain and protect your data.

Cyber Security is a serious issue that impacts all of us, especially those in the corporate world. These 5 key terms are to help you on your way to creating your thorough cyber security strategy and plan.

We could continue this list and you'll be here forever; you'll feel overwhelmed and probably bored.

That's why throughout this article, we suggest speaking to professional Cyber Security Experts who have years of experience and are ready to provide expert solutions and protect you, your data and your company.

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