OLD MALWARE, NEW TRICKS

An old malware scam is remerging with dangerous new tricks, causing significant problems for anyone who uses a web browser – i.e., nearly all of us. Hackers use the “update your browser” scam found new ways to hide malicious files, making it harder for security experts to locate and remove them. We’ll see more of this scam, so you need to be on the lookout.

What Is The Fake Browser Update Scam?

A website gets hacked by cybercriminals, who make a few changes. Namely, hackers use JavaScript requests to covertly replace the existing website content with a deceptive prompt for a browser update. For example, if you use Chrome, you’ll see a pop-up asking you to update your Chrome browser. Click on the update button, and you’ll download malware on your device. Hackers know that users are点击 安全 training to only click on links on trusted sites. They take advantage of that training by hosting their scam on a legitimate site, luring you into their trick.

But this time, the scam has a new tactic. Instead of hosting harmful files on the compromised site as they’ve done in the past, they’ve developed a way to store files on cloud services or even cryptocurrencies blockchain. This makes it a lot harder for cyber security experts to find and remove.

The first scam of this kind, ClearFake, was uncovered in October 2022. Since then, security experts at Proofpoint have identified four threat actor groups using the fake browser update scam to attack victims.

We keep hearing it – cybercriminals are using the latest tech to find new ways to exploit users. This is just the latest example.

What Can You Do About It?

First, no browser targeted in this scam – Chrome, Firefox or Edge – will ever have a pop-up or show you a page stating your browser is out-of-date. To check your browser’s status, go directly through your browser’s settings menu. Also, make sure you’re running very effective antivirus protection on all your devices. Antivirus will constantly run on your device, alerting you to suspicious activity.

Additionally, train your team on this new scam. Because it goes against usual training, you’ll need to step in and talk to them about how to look for signs of the fake browser update scam.

We use browsers to do almost everything, so this won’t be the last time you hear about scams like this. Be sure to keep your systems updated (not your settings, NOT pop-ups) and use a strong antivirus program.

AI: A CHEAP DATE OR THE DOWNFALL OF SOCIAL CONNECTION?

Romance has crossed a new line that sci-fi movies like Her have been hinting at for years...AI relationships. Apps like Replika, Character.ai and Snapchat’s My AI allow you to transform a chatbot into a companion...or lover. In 2018, a Japanese man even married his AI-powered hologram. People use AI chatbots as ‘romantic’ partners, and the ability to customize interactions makes AI a comforting partner. The challenge is to balance these technological advancements with the need for genuine human connection. “When we spend less time with each other, we lose practice in getting along in shared spaces,” Daniel Cox writes in Business Insider. “This is why AI is such a poor substitute for real-world interactions. We need to spend more time with each other.”

What do you think – is AI a cheap date or harmful to humanity?

Wintertime can feel like a wonderland. There’s hot cocoa, cozy fireside conversations, glistening white snowfall...ice storms, power outages and tons of employee sick days. You can’t predict the future, but a business continuity plan – BCP for short – ensures that unexpected events don’t show you down because, in business, every minute counts – literally. Downtime costs SMBs $137 to $427 per minute, according to a 2020 IBM report. Although the loss is smaller, extreme downtime is the ultimate undoing for many SMBs.

This month, while you’re rushing out to buy flowers or before you settle in for a cozy Netflix series, don’t forget to show your BCP some love too.

What Is A Business Continuity Plan?

It’s just like it sounds – a plan to keep your business continuously running in the case of an unplanned event like a natural disaster, cyber-attack or human error. A BCP outlines processes and procedures your company will follow during a crisis. It considers operations, assets, human resources, technology and safety; in other words, it keeps necessary functions in your organization running until the disaster is handled.

Isn’t A Disaster Recovery Plan The Same Thing?

Disaster recovery plans focus solely on restoring your IT systems. It’s one – albeit critical – component of your BCP. If a winter storm knocks out your Internet, a disaster recovery plan restores data access and any IT services you may have lost.

Why A BCP Is Important

Let’s say your office suffers a major fire...