INFOSEC101
CONFIDENTIALITY • INTEGRITY • AVAILABILITY

June 16,2014 Release #271

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Hoax

What is it?

Hoaxes are reports of false and unsubstantiated claims, in an attempt to trick or defraud users.

A hoax could be an attempt to solicit money, an attempt to install malware, or an attempt to consume bandwith (by having users forward a hoax email).

Hoaxes in the form of emails do some or all of the following:

-Warn you that there is an undetectable, highly destructive new piece of malware

-Ask you to avoid reading emails with a particular subject line, claiming it contains malware

-Claim that the warning was issued by a major software company, Internet provider or government agency

-Claim that the malware can do something improbable

-Urge you to forward the warning

-Claim that liking a story or individual on Facebook can result in financial windfalls, charitable contributions and free prizes

How to avoid Hoaxes

- Have a policy on virus warnings.
- Don't forward chain letters.
- The best defense against hoaxes is to educate yourself and your users. It is also helpful to search online for information about suspected hoaxes.

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Information Security: It's a Shared Responsibility

REFERENCES

http://www.sophos.com/en-us/threat-center/threat-analyses/threatsaurus/a-to-z-of-threats/h/hoax.aspx

http://www.sophos.com/en-us/threat-center/threat-analyses/threatsaurus/safety-tips/how-to-avoid-hoaxes.aspx

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Document Code: 2014ICT_15SECA025