



THE MALWARE REPORT

Securing the Perimeter: A Discussion on Cyber Security

Participants:

Matt Grant, host

Randy Abrams, director of technical education, ESET LLC

The Malware Report Transcript

Title: Securing the Perimeter: A Discussion on Cyber Security

Episode: 111

Location: http://www.eset.com/podcasts/021809_ESET_Bellvue.mp3

March 5, 2009

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Matt Grant: Hi, this is Matt Grant; you're listening to The Malware Report with Randy Abrams. Hi Randy, thanks for being here.

Randy Abrams: It's great to be back, Matt.

Matt Grant: I wanted to spend some time today talking about an event you recently attended in Bellevue, WA that was titled, "Securing the Perimeter," a public-private sector discussion on cyber security. Can you tell us a little more about this event?

Randy Abrams: Yes, it was a really, really fascinating event. It's not everyday I sit at a table next to an admiral, major general and the keynote was done by Rob McKenna, Attorney General for the state of Washington. What was really cool about this meeting was seeing how many people get it and have an understanding of things. This meeting was under the auspices of the Bellevue, Washington Chamber of Commerce, but it

was an event coordinated by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and the U.S Chamber of Commerce with a variety of other state and local government and private parties participating in it. I was on one of the panels. One of the interesting things Mr. McKenna pointed out was when it comes to identity theft; Washington State has reduced their ranking in terms of the incidents of identity theft. Thirty percent of the cases of identity theft come from physical attacks like people leaving their purses and wallets in cars which get stolen. The stats that were interesting to me were: 10% are believed to be from online losses and 8% from mail being taken out of mail boxes. Not too long ago mail coming out of the mailbox was ahead of online threats. That gives you some insight on where the trends are going.

Matt Grant: Absolutely. Where did the need for the event come from? Is it the increase of online-based cybersecurity threats as opposed to identity fraud via regular mail?

Randy Abrams: There's a variety of places it came from. Predominantly, I believe it was last year or maybe early this year when Bush signed into law the "Cybersecurity Council" if you will. The Department of Homeland Security mandate is to work with the private sector because the government cannot secure all the critical systems in our country. Critical systems include communications, which are privately owned companies and power, which are privately owned companies as well as the military networks. The government is doing things to secure their own networks, but realize we need a holistic approach to this.

Matt Grant: So Randy, was there an educational element involved with this event as well?

Randy Abrams: Yes, the education ran really deep through the whole event. The primary purpose of this event was education, to educate members of the local Chamber of Commerce. They're doing this in a variety of chambers; there's going to be one in March in Ann Arbor, MI and

another one in April in San Diego. Pretty much everyone was really stressing education is essential. Admiral Mike Brown several times told how essential education is. Unfortunately, that's one of twelve steps on the DHS program - I think you can look up the Department Homeland Security "12 Step Project." One of the steps is education. Unfortunately, Bush did not sign the implementation of that into the law. Admiral Brown thought this was one of the crucial things we need to have something akin to the Kennedy Space initiative where he said, "By this date, this is what we're going to do." In the closing remarks for the governmental panel, three out of four people on the panel stressed the importance of education.

Matt Grant: Interesting. How would folks find out? Was this an event open to the public or just the Chamber of Commerce?

Randy Abrams: This one I believe is the Chamber of Commerce, but the Chamber of Commerce people can join.

Matt Grant: Okay, fantastic. Is there a place folks can go to find out if an event down the road like this is offered in their area? I know that part of this event today was sponsored by Stay Safe Online organization (www.staysafeonline.org). Is that a Web site where folks can visit for additional information?

Randy Abrams: Yes, it's definitely a great Web site to visit fairly regularly for information such as this but to also increase your own knowledge so you're safer online. I'm a big fan of that organization.

Matt Grant: What are next steps in terms of what folks should be doing online and also what those local organizations need to do with the awareness to help members of their city to stay safe online as well?

Randy Abrams: It's real interesting, Admiral Brown had a saying, "you crawl, walk and then you run." Right now the government is rolling over to start crawling, but within the next year he expects them to go from walking to running. However, if private industry doesn't also do their part

while the government is running, the private industry will be rolling over to crawl. There was a list of resources provided for business people where they can get more information and kind of a roadmap for where we're going. The bleak truth is that technology is a long way behind in solving the problem. There's a social aspect that involves education. You're going to have to not only have education, but use it. Use the technology tools coupled with the education if you're going to secure your internet.

Matt Grant: Great point, Randy. Certainly appreciate you taking the time to speak about the event. If you have any further questions for Randy on this topic and would like to learn more, please feel free to e-mail him at askeset@eset.com. This has been Matt Grant and you've been listening to the Malware report.

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