SOCIAL MEDIA THREATS

Social media has become an important part of doing business today. Any company that wants to connect with their market, manage their brand and promote new business must have a social media presence. Unfortunately social media has also become a threat to an organization’s information security.

Messages and other communication sent via social media can contain malware and other hidden threats. Cyber-criminals also use social media websites to masquerade as potential clients while gathering information. These venues can also be used to send targeted attacks or to access a company’s network. Care must be taken and security precautions must be in place when dealing with social media communication.

WHAT ARE THE DANGERS?

☐ Social media communications may contain viruses, malware, key-logging software and other threats.
☐ Some other links or attachments in social media messages request the user to re-enter their password, which then is recorded by cyber-criminals.
☐ Even seemingly harmless messages and requests can be used to extract valuable information about a company’s security measures.
☐ Social media contact lists, credentials and identities can be stolen and used or sold by cyber-criminals.
☐ Communications on social media can lead to online friendships, but the identity of the person on the other end can be fraudulent and malevolent.
☐ Social media can also be used to anonymously attack the reputation of a company.

HOW TO PROTECT AGAINST SOCIAL MEDIA THREATS:

☐ Any computer that is used to communicate via social media should have the most current anti-virus and anti-malware software running.
☐ Operating system security updates and software patches should be kept up-to-date.
☐ Employees should be educated on the basic precautionary measures and best practices of social media use.
☐ Remember that social media “friends” are not always who they appear to be.
☐ Never provide sensitive or private information on a social media website.
☐ Keep your social media passwords secure and make sure they are different from any other passwords you have.

Key Points

- Social media websites can deliver malware.
- Cyber-thieves use social media to steal data.
- Social media identities are sometimes fraudulent.
- Social media security guidelines are critical.