Security Awareness Newsletter

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Shoulder Surfing

Shoulder surfing is a form of social engineering attack where an individual, known as the "shoulder surfer," observes another person's confidential information by watching over their shoulder or from a distance. This technique is commonly used in public places such as coffee shops, airports, and public transportation systems, where people often use their laptops, smartphones, or other devices to access confidential information.

Shoulder surfing can lead to a variety of security risks, including identity theft, financial fraud, and the exposure of sensitive business information. Hackers and cybercriminals can use the information gathered through shoulder surfing to gain access to personal accounts, steal sensitive data, or launch targeted attacks.

To protect themselves from shoulder surfing attacks, individuals should be aware of their surroundings and take steps to safeguard their confidential information.

Here are some tips to avoid shoulder surfing attacks.

Avoid using confidential information in public places:

Try to limit your use of sensitive information such as passwords, credit card numbers, and personal identification numbers (PINs) in public places.

Use privacy screens:

Privacy screens can be attached to laptops and mobile devices, making it more difficult for others to view your screen.

Position yourself strategically:

When using your laptop or mobile device in public places, sit with your back against a wall or in a corner, facing the entrance or exit. This makes it more difficult for others to observe your screen.

Be aware of your surroundings:

Always be mindful of who is around you and what they are doing. If someone is standing too close or appears to be watching you, move to a different location.

Use two-factor authentication:

Two-factor authentication adds an extra layer of security to your accounts, requiring a second form of identification in addition to your password.

In conclusion, shoulder surfing is a serious security risk that can lead to the exposure of sensitive information. By taking steps to safeguard confidential information and being aware of their surroundings, individuals can protect themselves from shoulder surfing attacks in public places.

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