OWASP CONSUMER TOP TEN SAFE WEB HABITS

SAFE PRACTICES FOR CONSUMERS ON THE WEB

INTRODUCTION

Today, more and more of our personal lives is spent connected to the Internet. We spend a significant amount of time checking email, looking at social media, logging into our financial accounts, shopping, and more.

01

PROTECT YOUR SECRETS

Recommendations:

CONSUMERS SHOULD FOCUS ON:

- Use different passwords for each site
- Use long passwords not based on a dictionary word
- Don’t share your password

TECH SAVVY USERS SHOULD ALSO:

- Use a password manager
- Enable 2 factor authentication
- Select fake and/or random answers for security questions

02

GUARD YOUR PRIVACY

Recommendations:

CONSUMERS SHOULD FOCUS ON:

- Limit information shared on social media, including online “quizzes”, location, vacation plans, etc.
- Use HTTPS; check your browser’s address bar for the secure icon
- Check your privacy settings on all social media and mobile apps

TECH SAVVY USERS SHOULD ALSO:

- Delete/shred information which is no longer needed
- Encrypt important information
- Use Internet search engines which do not collect/retain search information for sensitive searches
- Encrypt all your communications when browsing by using a VPN or browsers that have built-in proxy or VPN feature.

03

USE SECURITY SOFTWARE AND SERVICES

Recommendations:

CONSUMERS SHOULD FOCUS ON:

- Enable the firewall on your personal computer and WiFi/Router
- Install anti-virus software and IDS and regularly scan your computer

TECH SAVVY USERS SHOULD ALSO:

- Use VPN
- Use browser's plugins which enforce security
- Use encrypted emails and messaging services

04

SECURE YOUR ENVIRONMENT

Recommendations:

CONSUMERS SHOULD FOCUS ON:

- Change all default passwords
- Disable guest accounts
- Set your devices to ask before connecting to WiFi networks and remove networks no longer being used

TECH SAVVY USERS SHOULD ALSO:

- Configure your home devices (WiFi access points, Routers, TVs, etc.) to be secure (i.e., change default passwords, update firmware, rename routers and SSID's, turn off uPnP, etc.)
- Configure your system to only use Whitelisted applications
- Don't use administrator or system accounts for routine tasks/work

05

PERFORM ROUTINE MAINTENANCE

Recommendations:

CONSUMERS SHOULD FOCUS ON:

- Use current version of software and enable auto-updates where possible
- Regularly patch your systems – Computers, phones, routers, WiFi, etc.
- Use modern browsers

TECH SAVVY USERS SHOULD ALSO:

- Uninstall unsafe software, including Java, Shockwave, Flash
- Uninstall software you don’t use
- Regularly run external port scans to check for unused services

06

THINK TWICE BEFORE TRUSTING

Recommendations:

CONSUMERS SHOULD FOCUS ON:

- Password protect your systems, devices, accounts, etc.
- Question emails, even from friends and family and do not click on links from unknown users
- If something doesn't seem right, ask the source directly or do some research (via Google or some other means) before taking any action

TECH SAVVY USERS SHOULD ALSO:

- Don't leave your systems unattended, use lockout screens
- Use software from official web sites and app stores, do not give applications excessive permissions
- Verify downloads against checksums

07

PLAN FOR THE WORST

Recommendations:

CONSUMERS SHOULD FOCUS ON:

- Backup important data, including passwords and encryption keys, and store in a safe place, offsite
- Configure your devices to be secure, for example to use disk encryption, in the event they are stolen or lost
- Use surge protectors

TECH SAVVY USERS SHOULD ALSO:

- Use online services and storage to backup data. Encrypt sensitive data
- Print off account recovery sheets (i.e. Google 10 passwords) and store offsite at a friend's place or at the bank
- Have backup Internet access

08

CLEANUP YOUR DEVICES AND ACCOUNTS

Recommendations:

CONSUMERS SHOULD FOCUS ON:

- Logout of accounts when you are done using them
- Periodically review and delete online accounts no longer needed or used
- Delete files no longer needed, including temporary files, text messages and chat logs, email (don’t forget sent mail), recycle bins, and old SSH keys

TECH SAVVY USERS SHOULD ALSO:

- Periodically review and delete system accounts no longer needed or used
- Periodically clean your browser cache
- Properly clean and sanitize computer equipment before discarding

09

AVOID UNNECESSARY RISKS

Recommendations:

CONSUMERS SHOULD FOCUS ON:

- Avoid malicious/underground websites
- Avoid creating accounts for “shady” and sites you do not use regularly
- Do not do important tasks (pay bills, trade stocks, etc) on unprotected networks

TECH SAVVY USERS SHOULD ALSO:

- Use non-persistent virtual machines for riskier sites
- When creating DNS domains, use a privacy service to hide your home address if you have an unlisted telephone number
- Understand the risks of unsigned and side-loaded applications. Do not use them on your primary phone or system

10

BE VIGILANT AND ON ALERT

Recommendations:

CONSUMERS SHOULD FOCUS ON:

- Think through online/digital activities and compare them to what you would do in the "real world"
- Use account monitoring services
- Review online account activity

TECH SAVVY USERS SHOULD ALSO:

- Beware of tech-support scammers
- Be savvy on client-side and social engineering attacks
- Use credit monitoring and freeze, and similar services to protect your credit

SUMMARY