Defeating the Hacker: A non-technical guide to computer security

By Robert Schifreen

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The current struggle between IT security and computer hackers is reaching crisis point. Corporate dependency on computers and the Internet as well as the rapid spread of broadband into more households has resulted in a feeding ground for hackers around the world. Estimated damage costs are now making their way into the billions. The need for some good advice is long overdue.

Robert Schifreen, a self-confessed ex-hacker, made history in 1985 when he became the first person in the world to face a jury trial in connection with computer hacking. His subsequent acquittal in the High Court led to a change in UK Law and the introduction of the Computer Misuse Act 1990. His 20 years experience in IT security now lends itself to global radio and TV broadcasts, as well as appearances at conferences and lectures around the world.

Keeping your company's computers free from hackers, viruses, spammers, phishing attacks, social engineers and all the other things that can result in loss of data is a difficult job. *Defeating the Hacker* is a book about how to protect your computer systems becoming another victim of the hacker. It's an instant primer into all the things that can go wrong, with advice on how to stop it happening or, if it's too late, how to fix the damage.

- Presents unique, UK based, insider information on hacking and security from someone who has operated on both sides of the divide
- Develops a populist seam within a hot IT area: security
- Shows readers how and why hacking is made possible, whilst suggesting ways to avoid being a victim of it
- Written in a dynamic, conversational, yet knowledgeable, style
- Filled with information and anecdotal evidence aimed at IT professionals and those with a more general interest

Defeating the Hacker allows the reader to learn how to protect their computer systems with advice from someone who knows how to break into them.

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Editorial Review

Review
"...It's hard to imagine that there's any category of computer user -- domestic, small business, corporate -- who won't find something of value in this book....Defeating the Hacker is a useful and well-written book, particularly for home and small business users...." (*ZDNet.co.uk*, April 2006)

"...Schifreen is now a kosher security expert and **Defeating the Hacker** is his non-technical guide through this murky world....It's hard to imagine any kind of computer user who won't find something useful here...." (*The Glasgow Daily Record,* April 2006)

"It's accessible and easy to read and the best thing is that every chapter has five practical points at the end for you to act on to improve your company's security." (*Radio Five Live*, April 2006)

"...definitely worth reading..." (*The Register*, July 2006)

From the Inside Flap
Robert Schifreen is a classic 'poacher turned gamekeeper'. During the early 1980s he was an active computer hacker. In 1985 he exploited information that he found on the British Telecom Prestel computer system and managed to discover the system manager passwords. Armed with these, he was able to log in as any of the system's 50,000 customers, including His Royal Highness Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh.

Shortly after this, Robert was arrested and subsequently became the first person in the world to be tried by a jury in connection with computer hacking. He was ultimately acquitted on all charges, which resulted in a change in the law. In the UK, the Computer Misuse Act 1990 now outlaws unauthorised access to a computer.

Defeating the Hacker reveals information and practical advice on all the problems facing IT security today.

Key highlights include:

• creating your information security policy
• international laws and standards
• making wireless networks secure
• protecting your web site
• how hackers use search engines
• the curse of spam
• securing your premises
• planning for the worst

From the Back Cover
"Excellent, practical, comprehensive; peppered with good data, colourful anecdotes and practical common sense action points enabling you to solve some big problems in an intelligent way. A great read and an even greater "Handbook.""
—John Madelin, Director of Corporate Development, RSA

"This is a refreshingly different approach to writing about security."
—Martin Veitch, Executive Editor, *IT Week*

According to a **survey carried out by Lloyds TSB,** 54% of all PCs and laptops have been infected with a computer virus

Computers and the Internet are a virtual battleground for IT security and hackers. For years, systems have been attacked and defended; the cost of this cyber war has spiralled and will continue to rise. As technology improves, so do the hacker's weapons of mass destruction.

Defeating the Hacker is a book about hackers, crackers, phishing, pharming, spammers, scammers, virus-writers, Trojan horses, malware and spyware, and how to keep them at bay. Whether you are working in the office or from home, shopping online or checking your e-mails, the hacker could be stalking your computer system.

So what makes this book different from other security books? Quite simply, the author used to be a world-famous hacker. So you're getting advice from someone who knows just how exhilarating it can be to break into other people's computers and who has, in the past, got his kicks from exploiting information surrounding a member of the Royal Family.

This gripping book shows you how to protect yourself, your computer and your organisation with practical advice from someone who has now beaten the addiction, and for the first time, reveals all the dirty tricks to watch out for!

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Sonja Johnson:

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Mark Thomas:

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