OCTOBER IS
NATIONAL CYBER SECURITY AWARENESS MONTH
#BeCyberSmart

KEEP "PHISHERS" AT BAY

On a global scale, the cybersecurity space is as busy as ever. Phishing, one of the oldest cyber scams, is continuing to quietly wreak havoc. According to recent reports, 43% of cyber attacks in 2020 featured phishing or pre-texting, while 74% of U.S. organizations experienced a successful phishing attack last year. Below are a few quick best practices and tips for dealing with phishing threats.

Know the Red Flags

Phishers aim to make their content attention-grabbing. Sometimes it can be difficult to discern whether email content is genuine or a potential threat. Be on the lookout for awkward or unusual formatting, urgent requests to click a hyperlink or open an attachment, or subject lines or content that demandd an immediate action. If you come across any of these red flags, handle with caution. It's better to be safe than sorry.

Verify the Source

Many phishers will try to impersonate someone you may already know or a legitimate organization as a way to trick you into believing their malicious content is actually trustworthy. Don't fall for it. If you sense that something may be out of place or unusual, or you see red flags in the email, reach out directly to the purported sender to confirm whether the content is authentic and safe. If not, break-off communication immediately and flag the incident through the proper channels.

Be Aware of Vishing & Other Phishing Offshoots

Voice phishing (or vishing) has become a primary alternative for hackers to gain sensitive information from unsuspecting individuals. Vishing is the fraudulent practice of making phone calls or leaving voice messages that seem to come from a legitimate organization to trick people into revealing personal information or giving money. You should always be wary of any sort of communication that asks for personal information, whether it be via email, phone, or chat. If anything seems unexpected and suspicious, again, break-off the interaction immediately and contact the organization directly. Phishing may be "one of the oldest tricks in the book," but it is still incredibly effective. By exercising caution and deploying these few fundamentals, individuals and organizations can decrease their chances of becoming a victim.