



Indian Computer Emergency Response Team

Department of Information Technology
Ministry of Communications & Information Technology
(Government of India)



Representing the ecosystem of Internet - Bharat Model

Security Newsletter

15th February, 2011

As internet is becoming an integral part of our lives, it is important that we are aware of the threats we face in the Cyberspace. Cybercrime is on the rise as is evident from the number of cases that are reported in the media. A month back hackers stole an unknown number of login credentials belonging to users of Dating site PlentyOfFish. This month eHarmony has confirmed that a hacker gained access to some of its users' information. Such incidents have become common, also indicating that the Cybercrime is not only affecting organizations but also individual users. The need of the hour is to be aware and adequately equipped to protect ourselves online.

Keeping this in view, with the support of Indian Computer Emergency Response Team (Certin), Department of Information Technology, VeriSign India and Sify Technologies Ltd we are releasing this edition of our Security Newsletter.

Threats of Online Dating and Romance and Safety Measures to Protect Oneself Online

Today many youngsters are moving online to date or find love. There have been several instances that they have fallen prey to cyber scammers, who are always on the look out to take advantage of a vulnerable heart. In this newsletter we would be discussing some of the top dating and romance threats, and the safety measures which need to be taken to protect one self online.

- **Online Dating Scams** - Millions of people today use online dating sites to broaden their networks and meet potential mates, But not everyone on these sites are sincere. There are scammers hoping to lure you in with false affection, with the goal of gaining your trust, and eventually, your money.
- **Love Exploits** - Such threats have you looking for love in all the wrong places - like dangerous websites designed to steal your information. One recent example of this is the Koobface worm, which targeted Match.com users by sending messages that appeared to be from other users, inviting them to look at photos and videos on a Match.com look-a-like site. When users tried to log in to the malicious site, it recorded their usernames and passwords and attempted to install a Trojan.
- **Holiday/ Occasion Day Spam & eCards**—Scammers know that holidays are the perfect time to send out themed messages and eCards, knowing they will grab your attention. Spam messages with subject lines such as “The Perfect Valentine’s Day Gift” may contain a link to a dangerous website that asks for personal information. And a message that appears to be an eCard from a loved one could actually download malware on your machine when you click on the link, leaving you with an infection, rather than affection.

Safety Tips

- Always use a well know site and try and check out the site before registering. It is also advisable to take reference from friends who have used the site earlier.
- Design your dating profile with care - think about the image you want to project.
- Never disclose personal information, such as your full name, address and phone number
- Vet potential dates by checking whether their profile information matches other online information posted in other social networking sites.

- If a potential date asks you for a loan or any financial information, immediately report them to the dating site
- Never click on links in emails or eCards from people you do not know.
- Use legal software to protect yourself online



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