

New Banking Identity Theft Scam Coming to a Cell Phone Near You

June 18, 2015 – A new scam is making the rounds and it is using text messaging as the vehicle to reach potential victims. The message appears to come from a bank and simply tells the user to call their bank immediately. The phone number to call is provided in the message.

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(function() {  
var s = document.createElement('SCRIPT'), s1 = document.getElementsByTagName('SCRIPT')[0];  
s.type = 'text/javascript';  
s.src = 'http://widgets.digg.com/buttons.js';  
s1.parentNode.insertBefore(s, s1);  
})();
```

```
(function() {  
var po = document.createElement('script'); po.type = 'text/javascript'; po.async = true;  
po.src = 'https://apis.google.com/js/plusone.js';  
var s = document.getElementsByTagName('script')[0]; s.parentNode.insertBefore(po, s);  
})();
```

The scam appears to have started last week in California. People there began receiving the aforementioned text messages. Most of the messages appeared to come from Wells Fargo Bank but Bank of American was also mentioned in some of them.

Anyone who called the number provided was greeted by an automated attendant that asks the caller to provide a wide variety of information including their address, social security number and bank account numbers.

We expect the scam to spread across the country rapidly because it has one of the lowest barriers to entry of any scam we've seen. A high school student with minimal programming skills could easily design the application to automatically send the text messages from any Android based phone. All that is needed is a list of telephone numbers. And setting up the automated attendant to handle responses from the text messages wouldn't be any more difficult.

It wouldn't be surprising to see a version of the scam directing recipients of the text messages to visit a website either. Again, the barrier to entry for this is minimal.

Anyone who suspects that they may have been tricked into responding to the scam should notify their bank immediately and should seriously consider freezing their credit file.

by Jim Malmberg

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