From: "MIT Tech Connection" <techconnection@mit.edu>
Subject: Small Science, Big Changes
Date: October 31, 2018 11:21:00 AM EDT
To: dr.duane.thresher@alum.mit.edu
Reply-To: techconnection@mit.edu

Latest news for MIT alumni.

Read Tech Connection Online ›

MIT ALUMNI

TECHCONNECTION

OCTOBER 2018

IN THIS ISSUE

Catch fast-breaking Institute news on the *Slice of MIT* blog, Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat, YouTube, and Instagram pages and connect with other alumni by joining the LinkedIn group.

Helping Small Science Make Big Changes

Niroui will utilize the new MIT.nano to focus on developing innovative tools and techniques.

Farnaz Niroui SM '13, PhD '17 is returning to MIT for the third time, following her stints as an undergraduate intern, a master's and PhD student, and now as a professor in the electrical engineering department and researcher in the recently opened MIT.nano. Learn how Nirouri's research will be enhanced by the new facilities.

Phishing Attempts

The MIT Alumni Association has learned of recent phishing attempts from outside entities that have been sent to our alumni. Click here to learn more—and how to protect yourself.

From: "Dr. Duane Thresher" <dt126@caa.columbia.edu>
Subject: Re: Small Science, Big Changes
Date: October 31, 2018 2:34:44 PM EDT
To: "techconnection@mit.edu" <techconnection@mit.edu>, aacomments@mit.edu
Cc: "president@mit.edu President" <president@mit.edu>, "reif@mit.edu Reif" <reif@mit.edu>

I'd have sent this with my MIT email address using the MIT alum outgoing mail server but it is broken and those responsible for it are too IT incompetent to fix it.

Speaking of IT incompetence, in your newsletter below you have:

"Phishing Attempts

"The MIT Alumni Association has learned of recent phishing attempts from outside entities that have been sent to our alumni.

"Click here to learn more—and how to protect yourself."

The "Click here" goes to the non-MIT URL:

http://emclick.imodules.com/wf/click?upn=hpP9iphrV3FXP2t3GxIpBAhX-2FHAG0tsEWICDz1533JtH7anuH5Q6I17ZcmTd5yOe6d8XffQuZFZ4ZFFnpfJBju9Qv1ZcarH2ir4m2sbFnRY-3D_LEsB1I-2BBM3vSMwq2NJc9l1xA9A2d8lI-2BZdnWjgSVSpseDCGA8640NGySfQtMcixz-2BzaIYhxizkd7VzLAlLjqiveDkAinGsSl-2Bp03tzvecBtYxQ-2BBjrU5f5DctsJ7c-2B4nkuQk5J1b3kQ9ZiV-2BpPjAh0wyMFCUXtTBAxFDQmQDQjdCzoDJQaacVAo26s5qG2j89F0q5PoaI7ahlRcOiL1VuYdwxwZvUHb8PYGbddviNsunFDTN5pxwBYtbmW4M1iWQ89hmGo7aArrfwON5E3xrsPWMMLl8Y-2B1jQgJdM74llbY9zYlFjp90TNvxsQt4E80KiER43qCIQ037MdXJkJ8UMwbM856WjhCHCI78nfqZrto9F2DeMg1jfETAWXafHmAnyJcAFNu6DvncRX4MTwN5B6f1-2Fo-2BdMIfz1MN4BL5kgyrTczisyXiLVnFGguecmwTQwybb8UNYHKgjcrxRoYwcr-2FNMB8OzsovTD3ql0HZGYaTHgBey2EouyDjnqTnlJZpC

Even as you give advice on how to protect yourself from phishing, you violate the cardinal rule of protecting yourself from phishing: don't click on links in emails unless you see the link URL and it is not suspicious, i.e., is that of the email sender. Your hidden link URL is about as suspicious as it can get.

The most successful phishing emails are those that pretend to help you protect against phishing emails.

It's embarrassing -- and bad for my business -- when MIT, which should be the premier IT competent university in the world, issues such foolishness.

Does anybody responsible for this newsletter actually have an MIT education, particularly in Course 6?

Duane Thresher, Ph.D.

* CEO, Apscitu Inc., IT consulting for VIPs
* CEO, Thresher Networks LLC
* Network engineer, Arctic Region Supercomputing Center (ARSC, a DOD facility)
* PhD, supercomputing, Columbia University & NASA
* MS, supercomputing, University of Arizona & NCAR
* BS, Electrical Engineering & Computer Science, MIT

From: Julie Barr <jkbarr@mit.edu>
Subject: Automatic reply: Small Science, Big Changes
Date: October 31, 2018 2:37:02 PM EDT
To: "Dr. Duane Thresher" <dt126@caa.columbia.edu>

Thank you for your email. I will be out of the office Wednesday, October 10, through Wednesday, October 31, without access to email. I will return your message when I am back in the office. For immediate assistance, please contact Brian Geer at bdgeer@mit.edu.

Best,

Julie

Julie Barr | Digital Content and Editorial Manager

600 Memorial Drive, W-98 | Cambridge, MA 02139

617-253-4189 | jkbarr@mit.edu

Check out *Slice of MIT*, the MITAA blog.

From: "Duane Thresher, Ph.D." <Dr.Duane.Thresher@alum.MIT.edu>
Subject: Your email security incompetence
Date: November 1, 2018 6:16:28 PM EDT
To: Julie Barr <jkbarr@mit.edu>
Cc: mdiv@mit.edu, jbaletsa@mit.edu, jaren@mit.edu, "MIT President Reif" <president@mit.edu>, "Reif at MIT" <reif@mit.edu>, bdgeer@mit.edu

Julie Barr,

After my email about your huge blunder in email security (see phishing email at bottom) I got your "I'm on vacation for 3 weeks email" (below). Now having a name for who was responsible for such IT incompetence I looked you up on LinkedIn.

Under your current job as "Email Marketing Strategist/Multimedia Writer at MIT" I read that your duties are "to ensure that all Alumni Association messages use best email practices". I wondered if you were qualified to do that so I looked at your education there: only a BA in sociology from a low-ranked non-MIT university. Of course. No IT education.

Your duties also include "meet alumni needs". You fail there too. MIT alumni require IT competence.

Just having an automatic vacation response to emails is yet another huge email security blunder. It's the exact information hackers look for. With that information a hacker could spoof a convincing personal email from you like:

"Brian [a name you also foolishly provided], as you know I'm on vacation. I forgot my MIT account password. Could you change it to "FOOLIMAHACKER"? Otherwise having a great time. See you in a couple of weeks."

That is the most effective hacking technique there is.

I'm going to add you to my Media IT Incompetents Hall of Shame

https://apscitu.com/Stop-IT-Incompetence/Media-IT-Incompetents/Hall-Of-Shame.html

You and MIT should reconsider your working at MIT.

Duane Thresher, Ph.D.

* CEO, Apscitu Inc., IT consulting for VIPs
* CEO, Thresher Networks LLC
* Network engineer, Arctic Region Supercomputing Center (ARSC, a DOD facility)
* PhD, supercomputing, Columbia University & NASA
* MS, supercomputing, University of Arizona & NCAR
* BS, Electrical Engineering & Computer Science, MIT

From: "Duane Thresher, Ph.D." <Dr.Duane.Thresher@alum.MIT.edu>
Subject: Data breach warning
Date: November 2, 2018 11:37:02 AM EDT
To: "mdiv@mit.edu" <mdiv@mit.edu>, "jbaletsa@mit.edu" <jbaletsa@mit.edu>, "jaren@mit.edu" <jaren@mit.edu>
Cc: MIT President Reif <president@mit.edu>, Reif at MIT <reif@mit.edu>, Julie Barr <jkbarr@mit.edu>, "bdgeer@mit.edu" <bdgeer@mit.edu>, "gbourne@mit.edu" <gbourne@mit.edu>

Mr. DiVincenzo, Mr. Baletsa, and Mr. Wilcoxson:

I chose you to cc my emails below about dangerous IT incompetence in the MIT Alumni Association (MITAA) because you list "Data and Privacy/Internet" in your legal practice areas.

In the newsletter, MITAA wrote "The MIT Alumni Association has learned of recent phishing attempts from outside entities that have been sent to our alumni."

MITAA probably caused this themselves.

Hackers are always on the lookout for such IT incompetent emails. Then when they spoof them and simply substitute their own dangerous suspicious links for the already-suspicious links readers have become used to, they are quite successful. Ransomware in particular uses this approach -- click on the link, download the ransomware.

Additionally, MITAA probably negligently made alumni email addresses available to outside entities. For example, by making their contact list available to Facebook, Yahoo, etc., which were then hacked.

You might think, "well, its only the Alumni Association system that will be hacked, not any of MIT's core systems". However, hackers often first hack less-defended but connected peripheral systems and then "pivot" their way into the core systems. It's a classic very-successful strategy.

As IT lawyers reading the news about the many data breaches in business and government, you probably think that if you are hacked you will just offer a year of worthless credit monitoring and it will all blow over.

There are some serious differences in your case though.

First, you work for MIT, which is supposed to be the IT leader in the world. Imagine the damage to MIT's reputation if you are hacked. And if you damage MIT's reputation you damage

the reputations of all MIT alumni, including mine.

Second, you will have been warned by one of your own alumni, with a degree in IT (Course 6), and have ignored it.

Third, if you let hackers steal the private data of alumni, you will be sued by your own alumni, including me.

All of this is an unimaginable legal and publicity nightmare for you.

So, I demand that you do something about this. Those in IT support must have an IT education, not degrees in sociology. Why not let students in Course 6 provide this IT support? I also offer my IT consulting services. If I, a Course 6 MIT alumni, am not good enough for this compared to what you are currently using, then an MIT education has no value.

If instead you choose to threaten me with legal action I am more than willing. I am based in Virginia so you will have to sue in federal court but I will make this easy for you. Keep in mind though that I will be subpoenaing all relevant records.

Let me know.

Sincerely,

Duane Thresher, Ph.D.

* CEO, Apscitu Inc., IT consulting for VIPs, https://Apscitu.com/
* CEO, Thresher Networks LLC
* Network engineer, Arctic Region Supercomputing Center (ARSC, a DOD facility)
* PhD, supercomputing, Columbia University & NASA
* MS, supercomputing, University of Arizona & NCAR
* BS, Electrical Engineering & Computer Science, MIT

From: "Duane Thresher, Ph.D." <Dr.Duane.Thresher@alum.MIT.edu>
Subject: MIT Admissions hacking warning
Date: November 4, 2018 7:48:19 PM EST
To: "mdiv@mit.edu" <mdiv@mit.edu>, "jbaletsa@mit.edu" <jbaletsa@mit.edu>, "jaren@mit.edu" <jaren@mit.edu>
Cc: stu.schmill@alum.mit.edu, mmyang@alum.mit.edu, admissions@mit.edu, <gbourne@mit.edu>

Mr. DiVincenzo, Mr. Baletsa, and Mr. Wilcoxson:

While I was warning you about the MIT Alumni Association being hacked (see email history below), my wife, Dr. Claudia Kubatzki, discovered another huge hacking vulnerability at MIT. She googled (actually duckduckgo.com, which doesn't track you) MIT and one of the top sites was for MIT Admissions at

http://mitadmissions.org

which is the official MIT Admissions website. Incredibly stupidly, it is a .org domain. My wife got her PhD at the University of Berlin and I, an MIT alum, always tell her how MIT is the top IT university. Now she just scoffs at me.

I looked around the mitadmissions.org website and found out why it has a .org domain:

http://mitadmissions.org/about/about-web/

"MITadmissions.org is the official website of MIT's Office of Undergraduate Admissions. We are located on our own domain (i.e., not on mit.edu) for historical reasons: when we started our blogs back in 2004, we had to use external hosting and an external domain name in order to do so. Since then, we've built up a following and sense of home at this domain, so we've just stayed here."

When you are sued for gross negligence when thousands of applicants to MIT are ripped off, that explanation is going to sound ridiculous to the judge and jury.

Doubt that?

Go to

http://mit-admissions.net/

I guarantee that nothing bad will happen if you go. I can guarantee that since I own mit-admissions.net.

When you go there you will find a webpage that is indistinguishable from the mitadmissions.org webpage; even the icon is the same. Most people, especially foreigners, would not doubt the legitimacy of the webpage. I could even make it secure, i.e. https, since I own the domain, if I wanted to take the time (and it wouldn't cost me anything). The whole webpage plus domain took less than an hour to create and cost only $11 (and I could have gotten the domain for even less elsewhere).

If you click anywhere on that webpage, you will harmlessly go to one of my company's relevant webpages, but just as easily you could have gone somewhere dangerous, to download ransomware or be asked for money for example.

I checked and through domain.com you might also own:

mitadmissions.com
mitadmissions.net

Through networksolutions.com you might also own the better:

mit-admissions.org
mit-admissions.com

I say "might" because none of these domains forward to the canonical mitadmissions.org, although that may be because you don't know how to do this.

If you are going to get domains, always get the .com, .net, and .org versions. These are the three of the original seven top-level domains that are available to anyone and their recognizability grants them authenticity.

As you now realize, you forgot mit-admissions.net and I own it now.

At this point you might be tempted to shout that you are going to sue me. You're more than

welcome to, but keep in mind that mit-admissions.net does nothing harmful, I've immediately told you about it so you can remedy it, and I offer remedies, which you really should be paying me several thousand dollars for.

Every department at MIT should at least have a .edu domain. Not everyone can get a .edu domain so it offers some authenticity. The Department of Commerce granted Educause the right to administer .edu domains. Just go to educause.edu (or .com, .net, .org), click on the .EDU tab at upper right, fill in your desired domain, and click Register. mitadmissions.edu is available. Domains are $40 and the application form is not too involved. And it is an application form -- you can be turned down if they decide you don't meet the criteria.

They actually should turn you down. Like most other MIT departments, Admissions should have an mit.edu subdomain: admissions.mit.edu. One security advantage of this is that MIT would administer your domain, not some questionable company like domain.com or networksolutions.com (at least it wasn't godaddy.com) or even educause.edu.

(You can still keep mitadmissions.org and redirect it to mitadmissions.edu or admissions.mit.edu.)

IT support at MIT can help you set this up. Or I offer my IT consulting services.

In any case, I demand that you fix this vulnerability. If you refuse I will sue you. As an MIT alum I have standing and the damages are to my reputation, as I explained.

I also demand that you forward this to all members of the MIT Corporation Board or give me their contact info:

http://corporation.mit.edu/membership/all-members

I know you won't. As that webpage says "Mailings to the Office of the Corporation will not be forwarded to members nor will members' personal contact information be disclosed." Like all government and businesses these days, you are not allowed to talk to anyone in charge.

But once you refuse I will have tried to work this out with everyone in the MIT hierarchy, and my lawsuit cannot be dismissed for failure to do that.

I give you 10 business days. That's more than enough time.

Duane Thresher, Ph.D.

* CEO, Apscitu Inc., IT consulting for VIPs, https://Apscitu.com/
* CEO, Thresher Networks LLC
* Network engineer, Arctic Region Supercomputing Center (ARSC, a DOD facility)
* PhD, supercomputing, Columbia University & NASA
* MS, supercomputing, University of Arizona & NCAR
* BS, Electrical Engineering & Computer Science, MIT

From: "Duane Thresher, Ph.D." <Dr.Duane.Thresher@alum.MIT.edu>
Subject: New improved secure MIT Admissions webpage
Date: November 28, 2018 11:55:01 AM EST
To: mitogc@mit.edu, "mdiv@mit.edu" <mdiv@mit.edu>, "jbaletsa@mit.edu" <jbaletsa@mit.edu>, "jaren@mit.edu"

<jaren@mit.edu>, "stu.schmill@alum.mit.edu" <stu.schmill@alum.mit.edu>, "admissions@mit.edu" <admissions@mit.edu>, wespich@mit.edu, "MIT President Reif" <president@mit.edu>, "Reif at MIT" <reif@mit.edu>, rbm@mit.edu, ...

New improved secure MIT Admissions webpage:

https://admissions-mit.org

Also available at:

https://mit-admissions.net

And at:

https://alum-mit.org

Dr. Duane Thresher

* CEO, Apscitu Inc., IT consulting for VIPs, https://Apscitu.com
* CEO, Thresher Networks LLC
* Network engineer, Arctic Region Supercomputing Center (ARSC, a DOD facility)
* PhD, supercomputing, Columbia University & NASA
* MS, supercomputing, University of Arizona & NCAR
* BS, Electrical Engineering & Computer Science, MIT

From: Jason Baletsa <jbaletsa@mit.edu>
Subject: Automatic reply: New improved secure MIT Admissions webpage
Date: November 28, 2018 11:57:39 AM EST
To: "Duane Thresher, Ph.D." <Dr.Duane.Thresher@alum.MIT.edu>

Thank you for your message. I will be out of the office through Friday, November 30th. I will be checking email during this time. If you need immediate assistance, please contact Sheila Murphy at 617.258.5652 or samurphy@mit.edu.

Thank you, Jason