

Massive Children's Charity Scam Being Run Through Facebook

July 24, 2012 - If you happen to be on Facebook and you get solicited to donate to a children's charity, the chances are pretty good that your computer has been infected by malware and that you are being targeted by hackers. And unlike most such attacks, this one is very sophisticated. It also happens to be global in nature.

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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 artists behind this attack are using a variation of malware named Citadel. If your computer becomes infected, and you then log onto Facebook, you will quickly begin to see a pop-up window that solicits you to donate \$1 for a children's charity. What the crooks really want is your credit card information and other personal data on you.

As previously mentioned, this is a sophisticated attack on a global scale. If you are English speaking, the charity differs from the one that would be seen by someone who speaks German. In fact, there are several language variants of the attack, and all of them appear to use proper grammar, different wording and different charities.

According to an article in ZDNet, there are no children's charities that are currently soliciting via Facebook. But that knowledge may not be enough to help everyone. The way that the attack is run, the people behind it appear to have the ability to change what consumers see on a moment's notice. That means that they are not locked into using a children's charity to tug at your heart strings. By tomorrow, they could be doing the same thing but their charity could be something about preventing abuse to animals. Or anything else for that matter.

Anyone who is on Facebook and who gets a pop-up solicitation to donate to any cause would be wise to run a virus scan on their computer before doing anything else. Anyone who thinks that they may have already fallen for this scam should

contact their credit card company and have a new card issued. The crooks behind this scam don't appear to be soliciting enough information to commit full-blown identity theft, but they are certainly getting some people to give them their credit card information. Most of those people are going to be in for a real surprise the next time they open their credit card bills.

byJim Malmberg

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