From Phishing to Smishing â€“ New Scams Arriving Via Text Message

If the word â€œsmishingâ€• is missing from your vocabulary, then you definitely want to read this article. The word is a combination of â€œSMSâ€• from text messaging and â€œPhishingâ€•; which describes email scams. And the latest scam is now arriving a cell phone near you offering a free Wal-Mart or Target $1,000 gift card. All you have to do to get it is give up a little highly sensitive personal information. Wow! What a deal!

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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);
})();

If you receive one of these messages, youâ€™ll be asked to click on a link to receive your prize. And if you click on the link, youâ€™ll be asked to enter some credit card information to cover the costs of shipping and handling for your brand new gift card.

Frankly, if you enter the requested information, you will be the one providing a gift cardâ€¦ to the scam artist on the other end of that text message. You will very quickly find that your credit card is being used to make purchases for someone else.

Wal-Mart was the first store to find its name being used in the scam and the company is aware of the problem. The company issued a statement earlier in the year about the scam, urging victims to contact the FTC and report any issues. Target is a newer addition to the scam and, as far as we know, the company hasnâ€™t said anything publically about it yet.

If you get a message like this on your phone, donâ€™t fall for it. The message may very well have a link in it that looks like it comes from the company that is named in the message. Just remember, if it sounds too good to be true, it probably is.

NBC New covered the story earlier in the year. Here is a video of that story.

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byJim Malmberg
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