

## Personal Security and Identity Theft Expert Discusses Consumer Vigilance and “Smart Suiting” of Personal Computer Security Systems

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(BOSTON, Mass. – May 3, 2006 - IDTheftSecurity.com) Reports last week indicated that phishers continue to exploit security flaws in news ways. Voice over Internet protocol, also known as VoIP, has become the latest target. According to Robert Siciliano, personal security and identity theft expert and president of IDTheftSecurity.com, phishers’ ever-improving scams again underscore the need for consumer education efforts, which should promote vigilance and smart use of security technology.

“Successful education of consumers is the best line of defense against identity thieves, including the ones who operate online,” said Siciliano, who presents workshops to Fortune 500 companies nationwide. “Consumers need to know what security technology is right for their habits.”

Author of “The Safety Minute: 01,” Siciliano provides consumer education solutions to Fortune 500 companies and their clients. Siciliano has appeared on CNBC’s “On the Money” multiple times this year to discuss identity theft.

Siciliano encourages consumers to consider “smart suiting” their personal computer systems with software that supplements antivirus and antispyware solutions. A recent press release from Spain-based Panda Software announced availability of what the firm calls “proactive technology.” Proactive technology performs tasks that software to combat viruses and spyware does not, such as striving to recognize whether the user’s personal computer has become a zombie—i.e., one that a computer hacker uses, unbeknownst to its owner, as a server for phishing and other online scams.

“Right now, consumers seem to know only so much,” Siciliano said. “Their lines of personal defense are down. Recent studies and surveys suggest that industry has a long way to go in teaching consumers how to take precautions against online scams. In fact, in many cases, consumers still need to learn that they must, indeed, even take these precautions.”

Such studies include “Why Phishing Works” by collaborating researchers from Harvard University and UC Berkeley and a survey of UK consumers by British firm MyCallcredit.

The research also may explain why phishers’ scams are so effective. As reported by NetworkWorld and others, a new phishing tactic has gained prevalence. Ostensibly to verify bank account information, spoof e-mails encourage recipients to call a listed toll-free number.

Phishers perpetrating these attacks set up inexpensive VoIP systems that emulate legitimate organizations’ phone systems. With the mechanics of their ruse in place, the scammers then field victims’ calls, all in an effort to fool those who dial the provided phone number into revealing personal and financial information.

“Consumer education and security technology go hand in hand,” Siciliano concluded. “But sometimes, commonsense is all you need. Vigilance is the number-one antidote to online scams.”

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Identity theft affects us all, which is why Robert Siciliano, president of IDTheftSecurity.com, makes it his mission to provide consumer education solutions on identity theft to Fortune 500 companies and their clients. A leader of personal safety and security seminars nationwide, Siciliano has been featured on CNN, MSNBC, Fox News, “The Suze Orman Show,” “ABC News with Sam Donaldson,” “The Montel Williams Show,” “Maury Povich,” “Sally Jesse Raphael,” and “The Howard Stern Show.”

The media may reach Siciliano at 1 (888) SICILIANO (742-4542). Visit his Web site, [www.IDTheftSecurity.com](http://www.IDTheftSecurity.com) , or his blog, [www.IDTheftSecurity.blogspot.com](http://www.IDTheftSecurity.blogspot.com) . Siciliano's full contact information follows:

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