SEPTEMBER NEWSLETTER

RWK IT SERVICES

Vol. 4 Ed. 1 | September 2023

Web of Shadows: Unmasking the Hazards of Public Wi-Fi

The bustling coffee shop was a haven for students and professionals alike, seeking solace in the aroma of freshly brewed coffee and the comfort of free public Wi-Fi. Sarah, a diligent college student, settled into her usual corner, laptop open and textbooks scattered around her. Oblivious to the lurking dangers, she eagerly connected to the unsecured network, ready to dive into her assignments.

Unbeknownst to Sarah, a figure sat in the shadows, hidden behind a screen and cloaked in malice. The hacker, a master of deception, had set up a rogue hotspot, mirroring the café's legitimate Wi-Fi. As the connection bars on Sarah's device lit up, the hacker's trap was sprung. With a few deft keystrokes, they positioned themselves between Sarah and the online world.

As Sarah typed away, the hacker intercepted her data with ease. Bank logins, social media credentials, personal messages – all flowed into their virtual grasp. The café's hustle provided the perfect cover, as the hacker reveled in their cyber heist, a modern-day pickpocket blending into the crowd.

Days turned into weeks, and Sarah remained unaware of the breach. Gradually, strange occurrences tainted her online life. Unauthorized purchases, odd messages sent from her accounts, and a growing unease settled upon her. It wasn't until her bank statement revealed unexplained withdrawals that she connected the dots. Panic gripped her as she realized her personal information had been compromised.

Desperation led her to Mark, a tech-savvy friend with a knack for unraveling digital mysteries. Mark inspected her laptop and identified the rogue hotspot as the culprit. Sarah's trust in public Wi-Fi had cost her dearly. Anger and shame welled up within her – she had fallen victim to a faceless criminal, ensnared by the convenience she had grown accustomed to.

Mark explained the concept of a "man-in-the-middle" attack, where hackers position themselves between a user and their online destination, intercepting and stealing sensitive information. Sarah learned that these hackers capitalize on unsecured networks, exploiting the trust individuals place in public Wi-Fi connections. Mark's reassurance and guidance motivated Sarah to take action.

With Mark's assistance, Sarah fortified her online security. She began using a reputable virtual private network (VPN) to encrypt her internet connection, rendering her data unreadable to potential hackers. She also activated two-factor authentication on her accounts, adding an extra layer of defense. The journey to reclaim her digital life was arduous, but it empowered Sarah to regain control.

Sarah's story serves as a cautionary tale, a reminder that the convenience of free public Wi-Fi comes at a steep price if not approached with caution. The main points to remember are:

- *Never use public Wi-Fi. Use your hotspot.*
- *If you have a company VPN, that you know and trust, use it.*
- *Know that one reason some VPN services are available for free is that the company makes money selling your data. Have your IT team vet any VPN you intend to use before you use it.*

Free Wi-Fi is never free...
are you willing to take the chance?

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New Employee Alert!

WELCOME

Kelly C.
Service Manager

Syre
Data Integrity Specialist

Best Practices for Protecting Yourself Online

Use strong passwords - Use a phrase or multiple words to make your passwords stronger.

Keep the security software, operating system and internet browser up to date and make sure automatic updates are enabled.

Learn to recognize phishing and scamming attempts. Think twice before clicking any link.

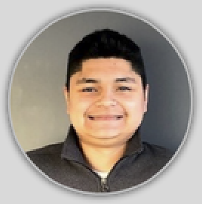
Do you think you've been a victim of a scammer or a phishing attempt or are you not sure?
REPORT IT!

ReportFraud.ftc.gov

Team Celebrations!

Denis
September 1
RWK Anniversary

Fabyan
September 2
Birthday



Brian
September 4
RWK Anniversary

Daniel
September 6
Birthday

Steve
September 10
RWK Anniversary
September 11
Birthday

Isaac
September 18
Birthday