Social networking and OPSEC

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Nov. 2, 2009 -- Facebook, MySpace, Twitter and thousands other networking sites are everywhere on the internet, becoming digital international communities. You can join any one to create your own village of connections. The more information you provide on your profile, the more connections you make, but there is a danger if you're not careful.

According to a survey by [Webroot](), members of online social networks may be more vulnerable to financial loss, identity theft and malware infection than they know, and a lot of the risk is related to their own online behavior. Among the most notable:

- Two-thirds do not restrict any details of their personal profile from being visible through public search engines like Google

- Over half are not sure who can see their profile

- About one third include at least three pieces of personally identifiable information

- One quarter accept "friend requests" from strangers.

Many of us, who've been with the Department of Defense for a number of years, probably have heard about the importance of OPSEC when it comes to military operations, (for those who have not, immediately see the Security Office for your briefing) but OPSEC extends far beyond just military applications. OPSEC can be extended to your own online behavior for personal reasons…like protecting your bank account.

Some simple steps you can take with your own online profile:

- Change the default privacy settings.

- Be careful what you post & limit personal information.

- Only accept "friend requests" from people you actually know.

Latest educational information on ways to protect yourself on-line

US Computer Emergency Readiness Team (US-CERT) http://www.us-cert.gov/cas/tips/

A Guide to Facebook Security and Privacy http://www.thetechherald.com/article.php/200938/4434?page=1

Parents Guide to MySpace http://www.parentsguidetomyspace.com/report/howtoremoveinfoonmyspace.shtml

Social Media Security Guides http://socialmediasecurity.com/security-guides/

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