



Press Release

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BrockU researcher speaks to Competition Bureau's online scams warning

Canada's Competition Bureau this week warned Canadians about an array of internet and social media scams that defraud Canadians.

"Emails have been used as a common vector for spreading viruses and worms," says Teju Herath, information systems professor at Brock University.

"Emails also tend to be common mechanism to carry out various on-line scams including phishing."

A common method is "phishing," an email fraud method that gathers personal and financial information from recipients. "If the email looks like it comes from a source that people can relate to - such as a bank where you have an account - you'll likely trust that email and will respond accordingly," says Herath.

Herath is on an international research team that examines how users process emails, what makes them more likely to respond to phishing emails, and what makes them use email security software or choose not to use such solutions, among other subjects.

Phishing and the spreading of virus and worms are now taking place in social networks by acting like messages to be shared or forwarded.

"Several security surveys have identified this as a concerning issue," she says. "Done in a social environment these attacks and scams can be effective since the messages come from trusted network of people entities."

Herath is available for interviews on these issues of email risks and phishing.

She can speak to a wide array of issues, including:

- * Phishing
- * who are most likely to respond
- * email security solutions being created to address the problem
- * Likelihood of people using these security solutions

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