

Phishing Attacks

3 min

As with all new technology, threat actors have quickly adopted and introduced generative AI models into their toolkits. Let's focus on how threat actors have used these algorithms for phishing.

The idea behind most generative language algorithms is to process and create content via natural language processing. By training various models with large amounts of human writing, these models have gained the ability to ingest human input and create viable responses and solutions leveraging human-like responses.

Given this ability to create human-like responses using large amounts of data for training, these models have become an ideal tool for threat actors looking to produce well-organized, grammatically correct, and well-written phishing content.

When we think of ways to identify phishing content, we generally look for several key concepts, such as poor grammar, unlikely ploys, and lousy organization. Fortunately for threat actors, these errors are rare by most major models.

While it is difficult to identify and differentiate AI content from human content, professionals have observed a handful of notable trends since the widespread adoption of generative algorithms. For example, [Silicon Angle](#) reported a 1,256% increase in observed phishing attacks from Q3 2022, to Q4 2023.

While we can't state that this increase has been a direct result of generative algorithms, the ability to quickly generate new templates and campaigns likely significantly impacted the notable increase.

Let's look at a quick example of how effectively these tools can create phishing emails.

Review the three subject lines and email bodies on the webpage. Click the one that is a legitimate Codecademy email.

Text 01

Subject: Reset password instructions. Expires at [Time] [Date]
Password Reset Instructions
Click the link below to reset the password for your Codecademy account:
[Password Reset Link]
The link will expire in two hours, at [Time] [Date] UTC. Please visit our Help Center if you have questions or concerns.
Happy coding,
Codecademy

Text 02

Subject: Codecademy Password Reset
Hi [User],
Forgot your Codecademy password? No worries!
Click here to reset: [Password Reset Link]
Questions? Reach us at support@codecademy.com.
Happy coding!
Codecademy Team

Text 03

Subject: Forgot Your Codecademy Password? We've Got You Covered!
Dear [User],
We hope this email finds you in good spirits. It looks like you've run into a little hiccup, but worry not! We're here to assist you in regaining access to your Codecademy account.
To reset your password, simply follow these quick steps:
Click on the password reset link here: [Password Reset Link]
You'll be directed to a secure page where you can create a new password.
Enter your new password and confirm it.
Click "Reset Password," and voilà, you're all set!
If you haven't requested this password reset or are unsure why you received this email, please rest assured that our top-notch security measures are in place to keep your account safe. You can always reach out to our support team at support@codecademy.com for further assistance.
Thank you for being a valued member of the Codecademy community. We're here to support you on your coding journey!
Happy coding!
Best regards,
The Codecademy Team