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Ethics Paper-Ethical Hacking

According to Merriam-Webster, hacking is defined as “a usually creatively improvised solution to a computer hardware or programming problem or limitation”. Hacking can lead to theft, breaches in privacy, or merely used to screw up flights. While hacking is usually seen as something that is bad it can be used for good. An ethical hacker can be hired to search a company’s system for breaches that leave the company susceptible to the exploitation of other hackers. These hackers point out flaws in a company’s system in exchange for a monetary reward. Many of them are freelance yet some are hired. Finding these flaws can ultimately save the company money and customers. Hacking is morally wrong but can also morally good when it is done ethically.

In a CNBC news article, Arjun Kharpal writes about how an Israeli researcher, Yosi Dahan, who considers himself an ethical hacker. Dahan hacked into United Airlines and found a hole in the security; he then told United about the hole he found. At the time he did not know that United Airlines had a freelance ethical hacking program.

Did Dahan do the right thing? I think not. It was nice and all how he wanted to help United by finding the breach and telling them about it, but he fails morally by hacking in the first place. Even though United encouraged freelance ethical hacking, Dahan did not know that

United offered this program. He thought that if he just hacked in then they would be happy to reward him for any problems he found. It is like a someone who freely decides to break into a bank and he successfully makes it to the vault. He does not have any intentions of robbing the bank, but he is expecting them to reward him for the flaws he found in the bank's security. It is the same with hacking. Ethical hacking does not give hackers the right to hack anyone. They should be hired by companies or freelance for a company that offers a freelance "Bug Bounty Program" (CNBC).

Hackers may be tempted to say that they have the right to hack others because they left their system susceptible to breaches. But what gives them the right to virtually trespass on someone else's system? In "Ethics and Professional Responsibility in Computing", Loui and Miller state that "a hacker may try to justify gaining unauthorized access to unsecured data by reasoning that because the data are not protected, anyone should be able to read it. But by analogy, someone who finds the front door of a house unlocked is not justified in entering the house and snooping around." And just like the Bible says, "Just as you want others to do for you, do the same for them." (Luke 6:31, CSB) How would they like it if another hacker hacked their system, invading their privacy?

In Conclusion, hacking is a wonderful way to explore and become better acquainted with a computer system. However, hacking has its limitations; when someone is trespassing into other's system and virtually invading privacy is wrong. Nevertheless hacking is not all bad. It can be used to test the security of a computer to find and fill holes. A hacker should not merely hack someone's system even if their intentions are pure. The only time hacking is ethical is when they are hacking their own system or when they are hired or freelancing for someone who offers

a “bug bounty program”.

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