INTROSEC HT2020

Problem 5

Demonstrate how two different consequence-based principles of ethical reasoning can be applied to a difficult cybersecurity decision situation of your choice (create and describe your own case/situation). Describe the following issues:

What are the principles called? What do they mean? How can these be applied to your decision situation? Is the outcome of the decision likely to be the same regardless of which principle is applied? Do you at all times prefer one principle over the other (motivate)?

Solution

Case/situation

Lets consider that we have a banking webiste where information of the user's balance, credict card and more are found there. That website though has a security flaw that has not been seen by the cretors of the software. By inserting some php code into the url a programer found out that he can gain access into someone elses bank account by just knowing the ID reference, the password in not needed. The ID reference though can be found more "easily" and also random combinations may lead to it since it usually consists of 5 or 6 digits.

The question here is will that person report the problem to the bank or actually take advantage of that. Lets keep in mind that the person in this case might be someone in need of money, a greedy person, someone trying to build a new business etc.

The principles which I will go over are Egoism and Utilitarianism.

Egoism: egoism has its origins in the greek language and it has the work "ego" in it, meaning "I". It is the act of putting the self interest above the good of the community. Managing to get something for yourself with having the least possible consequences or non at all. The effects of the actions to the rest of the community do not matter to that person.

Utilitarianism: it is the act of putting the community good over all. Trying to get the least consequences for all. It is actions that can bring happines to the majority and also try to minimize the harm that could be caused in for many people.

Application of the principles to the situation

Egoism: in this case the personal good could take over. The person could decide to NOT report the problem and keep the information to himself. In this way he could make use of money belonging to other people with giving the least care about the harm he/she is doing. The harm the person does though could vary from taking one time advantage of the situation to taking continuous advantage of it. But it still deosn'ttake apart from the fact that egoism and personal benefit was chosen against collective good.

Utilitarianism: in this case the person would actually contact the bank and give them details and feedback on this very important issue. The problem could be solved and the amount of damage could be minimized. Each and every person that used that bank could benefit from that action.

Outcome

The outcome as seen from the above applications of the principale is tottal the opossite. In one case one person benefits and chooses personal benefit. On the other case collectivnes is chosen and the problem is reported and solved(hopefully) by the bank.

Personal Opinion

In my opinion and personal believes the principle of utiliarianism should be applied in any case. Lets consider the fact that we night also benefit from actions such as that in our lives. It also a case of morals, to make life better for everyone. Nonone can prosper their own without being part of a community. Therefore it is the right action, in my opinion, to act for the benefit of that community.