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Week 1

Individual Writing Project: Computer and Network Security

The invention of technology has greatly impacted the world both in positive and negative ways. For example, people now have access to more information than ever and have easy access to all their personal information. This makes online transactions easy to access and improves the quality of life. However, there were some unintended consequences; such as, unethical people breaching other’s security to gain personal information. In the article, *Security: Solutions for Enabling and Assuring Business,* they list some of the biggest security breaches. A relatable example listed in the article was when “two third-party Facebook apps datasets were insecure and 540 million records were exposed. This example relates to the book *Ethics for the Information Age* because it shows how technology has evolved to improve life but also had unintended consequences.

The second article, *10 Deadliest Computer Viruses of All Time,* describes some of the viruses that have been catastrophic to the world of the internet. For example, the I Love You virus, which was one of the largest viruses of all time. It caused around $10 billion worth of damage to computers and infected roughly 10% of the world’s computers. Another example of a catastrophic computer virus was the Conficker virus, which was a worm that infected computers by finding flaws in the computer’s OS to create a botnet. This virus caused roughly $9 billion in damage. This is a very unethical practice because the creators of these viruses were just intending to cause chaos. However, the creator of the I Love You virus sent a message saying “Andy; I’m just doing my job, nothing personal, sorry,”. People believe that the creator of this virus was paid because of this message. This is an example of a person doing something unethical for a personal gain.

These issues can also be viewed from different perspectives, such as, the Utilitarian, Social Contract, Kantian, and Virtue approaches. First, the Utilitarian approach is the idea that the right thing to will always be the option that benefits the majority. When applying this idea to computer and network security. It would be beneficial to the majority if people did not create viruses, which is why people are creating software to fight against the problem. Next is the Social Contract approach, which is the idea that it is a rule for people to do the right thing. From this perspective introducing viruses is also very unethical because the people that hack and introduce viruses are doing for either personal gain or just to cause chaos; both of which completely goes against the social contract. Next, Kantianism, which is the idea that the consequences of actions do not matter as long as the duty is fulfilled. From this perspective, hacking and introducing viruses can be viewed as ethical depending on the context of the situation. For example, if one believes that the government is impeding their natural rights, they may view it as an ethical decision to introduce viruses into the government’s network; however, this is an extreme case. Lastly, the virtue approach, which is the idea of having high moral standards. From this standpoint, introducing viruses and hacking into networks is unethical because it is morally wrong to steal or damage one’s property. When applying these ideas to the concept of hacking and viruses, it is typically an unethical practice because the hackers and creators of viruses typically intend to either cause chaos or make a profit. However, there are some specific instances where hacking and introducing viruses can be viewed as an ethical practice; such as the example given above.

Works Cited

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