EMPATHY FOR HACKERS – AN IT SECURITY RISK ASSESSMENT ARTIFACT FOR TARGETED HACKER ATTACKS

Research Paper

Abstract

Driven by the emergence of digital business models, targeted hacker attacks are becoming an increasing threat to the business world. Especially for SMEs, these attacks are a top concern within IT Security. Despite growing importance, most companies focus on measures against mass instead of targeted attacks. To ensure effective IT Security, companies must understand hackers and their motivations. So far, academia and practice lack an approach that links business and hacker perspective to address this issue. Consequently, companies struggle to assess and manage the risk of targeted attacks. Based on design science research, we provide an assessment tool that addresses 11 criteria that help companies identify their company-specific risk for targeted attacks. Our academic contribution lies in the amalgamation of the company and hacker perspectives. For practitioners, we offer a starting point to view IT Security through a managerial lens that does not solely focus on technology and vulnerabilities.
Keywords: IT Security, targeted hacker attacks, risk assessment, design science research.