

# SNOSOFT RESEARCH TEAM

"THE SPECIALIST IN ANTI-HACKING"

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## Social Engineering - It's Nothing New

With all the recent hype about Social Engineering we figured that we'd chime in and tell people what's really going on. The fact is that Social Engineering is nothing more than a Confidence Trick being carried out by a Con Artist. The only difference between the term Social Engineering and Confidence Trick is that Social Engineering is predominately used with relation to technology.

So what is it really? Social Engineering is the act of exploiting a person's natural tendency to trust another person or entity. Because the vulnerability exists within people, there is no truly effective method for remediation. That is not to say that you cannot protect your sensitive data, but it is to say that you cannot always prevent your people or even yourself from being successfully conned.

The core ingredients required to perform a successful confidence trick are no different today then they were before the advent of the Internet. The con artist must have the victim's trust, and then trick the victim into performing an action or divulging information. The Internet certainly didn't create the risk but it does make it easier for the threat to align with the risk.

Before the advent of the Internet the con artist (threat) needed to contact the victim (risk) via telephone, in person, via snail mail, etc. Once contact was made a good story needed to be put into place and the victim's trust needed to be earned. That process could take months or even years and even then success isn't guaranteed.

The advent of the Internet provided the threat with many more avenues' through which it could successfully align with the risk. Specifically, the Internet enables the threat to align with hundreds or even thousands of risks simultaneously. That sort of shotgun approach couldn't be done before and significantly increases an attackers chances of success. One of the most elementary examples of this shotgun approach is the email based phishing attack.



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**DISSECTING THE HACK: THE FORBIDDEN NETWORK**



