

Student Security Videos Deserve Awards

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My treasured colleague Gail Poitras, head of the Instructional Technology team at Norwich University, is always on the lookout for innovative teaching materials that we professors can use in our undergraduate and graduate courses.

Recently she pointed out a useful collection of student security-awareness videos at < <http://tinyurl.com/7pr3p> > awarded prizes in January 2006 by EDUCAUSE < <http://www.educause.edu/> >, the “nonprofit association whose mission is to advance higher education by promoting the intelligent use of information technology.”

First prize in the broad-topic category for the student-video contest went to Nathan Blair of the Savannah College of Art and Design for his three-minute surrealistic introductory film about Internet threats. He and his collaborators represented threats as people and other elements encountered during a walk through a city; the effects are represented by increasing disruption of the images.

Second prize for a broad-topic video went to a 30-second public service announcement by Eric Marth of the College of William and Mary and Mark Thyrring of the University of Virginia about how inadequate security leads to the waste of computer resources.

Third prize in this category was awarded to “The McCumber Cube” by Kory Godfrey of Idaho State University. The three-minute effort is a tongue-in-cheek “advertisement” for a Rubik’s Cube-like device that emphasizes the importance of the Classic Triad (confidentiality-integrity-availability) for data during transmission, processing and storage using technology, policy and people. It ends with references to classic papers by John R. McCumber (annex to the NSTISSI 4011 standard < http://www.cnss.gov/Assets/pdf/nstissi_4011.pdf >, p. 18 ff) and by Vic Maconachy, Corey Schou, Dan Ragsdale and Don Welch (although the URL given in the film is truncated; a valid link is < <http://tinyurl.com/8fw3t> >).

The second competition category was single-topic videos. In “Bob, You’ve Been Phished,” Kevin Atef, Johnson Chau, & Michael Wong of Cal Poly Pomona, winners of the first prize, present a charming three-minute informative video about poor Bob, a schlemiel who want to find a date – and gets his credit-card information stolen by responding to a phishing scam.

Second prize in the single-topic category was assigned to part of a series called “Computing in a Community Environment” from Wake Forest University. “Part IV: Back Yo Data Up!” is a 1.75 minute rap video by Rebecca Boswell, Alex Creswick, Drew Crofton, Nick Drader, & Matthew Fetter and is full of colorful graphics and cute snippets of video.

Another series was “Act Now” from James Madison University. “Stay Current” won third prize in the single-topic contest. The video was created by Stephen Hockman, Christina Manikus, John Sease and Erin Shulsinger; it lasts only 1.75 minutes but has an excellent young actress who convincingly projects regret at having ignored her antivirus “UPDATE NOW” warnings.

There are 19 other video in the Honorable Mentions list. All of these files are available in MP4, ReadMedia and WindowsMedia formats.

I think they will be particularly appealing for sheer fun at the high school and possibly university freshman level. I encourage readers to send the reference (or indeed this little review) to local high-school and university computer-security or computer-science teachers for possible applications in their courses.

Great fun all 'round.

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New information assurance journal – Norwich University Journal of Information Assurance (NUJIA). See < <http://nujia.norwich.edu> >.

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