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Secrets And Lies: Digital Security In A Networked World



Synopsis

Bestselling author Bruce Schneier offers his expert guidance on achieving security on a network. Internationally recognized computer security expert Bruce Schneier offers a practical, straightforward guide to achieving security throughout computer networks. Schneier uses his extensive field experience with his own clients to dispel the myths that often mislead IT managers as they try to build secure systems. This practical guide provides readers with a better understanding of why protecting information is harder in the digital world, what they need to know to protect digital information, how to assess business and corporate security needs, and much more. * Walks the reader through the real choices they have now for digital security and how to pick and choose the right one to meet their business needs * Explains what cryptography can and can't do in achieving digital security

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Customer Reviews

Whom can you trust? Try Bruce Schneier, whose rare gift for common sense makes his book *Secrets and Lies: Digital Security in a Networked World* both enlightening and practical. He's worked in cryptography and electronic security for years, and has reached the depressing conclusion that even the loveliest code and toughest hardware still will yield to attackers who exploit human weaknesses in the users. The book is neatly divided into three parts, covering the turn-of-the-century landscape of systems and threats, the technologies used to protect and intercept data, and strategies for proper implementation of security systems. Moving away from blind faith in

prevention, Schneier advocates swift detection and response to an attack, while maintaining firewalls and other gateways to keep out the amateurs. Newcomers to the world of Schneier will be surprised at how funny he can be, especially given a subject commonly perceived as quiet and dull. Whether he's analyzing the security issues of the rebels and the Death Star in Star Wars or poking fun at the giant software and e-commerce companies that consistently sacrifice security for sexier features, he's one of the few tech writers who can provoke laughter consistently. While moderately pessimistic on the future of systems vulnerability, he goes on to relieve the reader's tension by comparing our electronic world to the equally insecure paper world we've endured for centuries--a little smart-card fraud doesn't seem so bad after all. Despite his unfortunate (but brief) shill for his consulting company in the book's afterword, you can trust Schneier to dish the dirt in *Secrets and Lies*. --Rob Lightner

“The security technologies available are described in a user-friendly way without going into depth...” (Computer Bulletin, January 2005) “...peppered with lively anecdotes and aphorisms, making it a really accessible read...” (The ISSG Magazine, Autumn, 2004) “...fascinating read...” peppered with lively anecdotes...” (The ISSG Magazine, October 2004) “...make yourself better informed. Read this book.” (CVu, The Journal of the ACCU, Vol 16(3), June 2004)

This was a ten-star book when it came out. It is still 4.5-star relevant as a piece of modern history. I wish the author had been invited to add margin notes or revise material to bring up to 2015. Bruce foresees much of the future and had the editors decided to include an updated errata for this work it would be an essential read.

See full review at my blog: Terebrate “Secrets and Lies: Digital Security in a Networked World” is the perfect book to hand to new bosses or new employees coming in the door who have not been exposed to cyber security in their past lives. It is also the perfect book for seasoned security practitioners who want an overview of the key issues facing our community today. Schneier wrote it more than a decade ago, but its ideas still resonate. He talks about the idea that “security is a process, not a product.” With that one line, Schneier captures the essence of what our cyber security community should be about. He explains that even though we have advanced technology designed to specifically find cyber break-ins, people are the still the weakest link. He describes how cyber risk is not a special category. It is just another risk to

the business. He highlights the ludicrous idea that software vendors have no liability or selling buggy code, and he was one of the first thought leaders to characterize the adversary as something more than just a hacker. He makes the case for things that the cyber security community still needs in order to make the Internet more secure, things like strengthening confidentiality, integrity, and availability (CIA); improving Internet privacy and Internet anonymity; and challenging the idea that security practitioners must make the Sophie's Choice between better security or more privacy in terms of government surveillance. Finally, he anticipates the need for a Bitcoin-like capability long before Bitcoin became popular. The content within *Secrets and Lies* is a good introduction to the cyber security community, and Schneier tells the story well. Because of that, *Secrets and Lies* is candidate for the cyber security canon, and you should have read it by now.

This is an excellent information security book that everyone working in this field should read. Bruce Schneier doesn't go and market specific security products and he actually is against the blatant stance that many companies take towards security, in which they want to have total security but they don't want to see it working. Instead he criticizes how companies rush into buying security products just because they're shiny and trendy instead of thoughtfully thinking about security from the design and planning phase to all phases of production. The author is very specific about the security domains without being too technical but instead focusing on the "philosophy" behind each caveat. In that regards he shows the many way crackers can harm our security and how far we have advanced in combating them. He has a sort of pessimistic view regarding this because as he claims the bad guys are already ahead of governments and other organizations because of their unwillingness to think of security as a process but rather as a product to be installed without proper metrics measurement and capacity planning.

Great breakdown of very technical, computer guru terms! Interesting to learn all the things that happen in cyberspace. Kind of scary to see the lack of security that is actually out there to protect our information on the web. Be careful!

A well written book that covers a very diverse range of topics. I've been in the industry for almost 20 years and there are some points and perspectives that I had not previously considered. There are some topics that are a little dated, but for historical reference are still valuable. Overall if you are in security I would very much recommended this book.

Bruce Schneier offers an excellent 'big picture' overview of the computer security field. From types of attacks, to algorithm security to security in the context of your data center, you get a full overview of the current practices and consequences arising from them. The author argues for security as a process, not a product; security is not something you can add to your product after the fact. Starting from the product specification, down to your last outsourced programmer, security has to permeate your organization for it to work. Building 'attack trees', relying on peer review and enforcing liability are all suggestions advanced by Bruce Schneier. *Secrets and Lies* is a well organized book with plenty of real world examples, problems and solutions. Buy a copy for yourself, and many more for everybody else you know, we will all benefit in the end.

This is a great book for those interested in security. The author does a great job at making the subject understandable and covers covers a great breadth of topics. A lot of the material covered is similar to a high level view of what's in CCISP books. The book's goal is to make you aware and to teach you how to think about security. Many times, companies will come up with a new product that they claim will take care of all your security problems for a stiff price. Understanding how to think about security will make you aware that there is no silver bullet. Instead, you need to follow a process to minimize the risk. This book is definitely worth reading.

Bare technology has never been enough to solve any business, let alone social, problem. The same holds true for security technologies that often create a false sense comfort in today's complex world. This book ruthlessly shatters such notions by exposing the limitations of technology as well as products hyped up by vendors. It portrays what an apocalyptic world we live in, when it comes to digital security. This book does not teach you the technical aspects of security. But it does a superb job of providing you with deep insights about the issues -- mostly non-technical -- surrounding security. Of course, sometimes Mr. Schneier seems to get a bit carried away with anecdotes in explaining certain issues; but such diversions can help stimulate the reader's mind.

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