

## Cybersecurity Outreach Project: Narrative and Outcomes

On November 26th, 2022, I conducted a successful outreach presentation on cybersecurity awareness. This presentation was hosted by me on Zoom with five other individuals in attendance. The attendees were a collection of former colleagues as well as acquaintances and one family member I invited to participate. None of the attendees have studied or have worked in technology or have any background in cybersecurity. 4 out of 5 attendees do actively work with sensitive information of an organization or of an organization's clients, so I felt this was a good mix of people who would benefit from cybersecurity awareness in both their personal and professional lives.

Using the stock slides provided, I lectured for about 30 minutes with time at the end for questions. I knew the attendees had at least a bit of technical literacy, so I briefly touched upon the first introductory part of the presentation. I chose to emphasize more on the middle and end sections, about typical mistakes people make about cybersecurity and ways to mitigate their vulnerability.

The most productive section of the presentation was discussion about passwords. Almost everyone admitted to reusing passwords often on multiple websites and applications. When I asked why, multiple attendees replied that they knew they shouldn't but did anyway due to the convenience factor. This was a perfect opportunity to discuss the utility of password managers. Only one person in attendance knew what a password manager was, so I lectured on what they were, how they keep you secure, and the major providers such as OnePassword and the locally hosted KeePass. In addition, I shared how I personally used one and best practices for password manager use such as using a brand-new complex password that you don't use anywhere else to gain access to your manager. After my explanation I asked the group if anyone was seriously considering adopting the use of a password manager and more than half said they'd like to start using one.

At the end of the presentation, I asked how many attending felt they benefited from the presentation. Everyone agreed that the presentation was beneficial to them, despite already hearing much of the material previously. A second big takeaway from the presentation for me is that most people must be reminded of cybersecurity awareness topics many times before they internalize it. This tracks with my own cybersecurity awareness journey and is true for a lot of topics. If you hear something once, it's easy to brush it off as unimportant, or not actually directed at you. I'm glad that the class and I performed this outreach project because the more we can put awareness of these topics in the front of people's brains, the more opportunities are created for people to think more critically about their cybersecurity.

Overall, my outreach presentation was a success. I pushed my attendees to think critically about their own cybersecurity and facilitated a productive conversation about the topic. Many attending expressed thanks to me for giving them a refresher on ways to keep their information safe. This project has reminded me that as a cybersecurity professional, part of my job is to

spread the gospel of keeping oneself safe in use of technology both professionally and personally.

The screenshot shows a Zoom meeting with a presentation slide. On the left, there is a vertical stack of four video thumbnails for participants: William Blevins, another William Blevins, Megan Blevins, and Catherine & Ben Young. The main slide content is as follows:

## HOW MANY PEOPLE OWN MORE THAN ONE ELECTRONIC/DIGITAL DEVICE?

- As of 2015, 1 in 3 Americans owned a Smartphone, Tablet, and Computer!
- 1 in 4 Americans own a gaming console/device

**Roughly 1 in 3 Americans Own a Smartphone, Computer and Tablet**  
3 in 4 own at least one of the following: a smartphone, desktop/laptop computer and tablet computer

Category	Percentage
U.S. adults	33%
Men	35%
Women	31%
White	33%
Black	33%
Hispanic	33%
18-29	41%
30-49	35%
50-64	27%
65+	21%
Less than H.S.	21%
High school diploma	33%
Some college	37%
College grad+	39%
Less than \$30k	21%
\$30,000-\$74,999	33%
\$75k or more	39%

Source: Pew Research Center online conducted March 27-April 22, 2015. Smartphone usage includes only non-Hipsters.  
 PEW RESEARCH CENTER

The screenshot shows the same Zoom meeting as above, but the presentation slide has changed to a simple white background with the text:

## Any questions?

The video thumbnails on the left remain the same.