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Online Banking Fraud Prevention Best Practices

June 14, 2017

User ID and Password Guidelines

- Create a “strong” password with at least 8 characters that includes a combination of mixed case letters, numbers and special characters (ie. $, #, *, !).
- Change your password frequently.
- Never share username and password information with third-party providers.
- Avoid using an electronic login feature that saves usernames and passwords.

General Guidelines

- Do not use public or other unsecured computers for logging into Online Banking.
- Check your last login date/time every time you log in.
- Review account balances and detail transactions regularly to confirm payment and other transaction data and immediately report any suspicious transactions to the Bank.
- View transfer history available through viewing account activity information.
- Whenever possible, use ePay instead of checks to limit account number dissemination exposure and obtain better electronic record keeping.
- Take advantage of and regularly view system alerts; examples include:
  - Balance alerts
  - Transfer alerts
  - Password change alerts
  - ACH Alerts (Business Banking)
- Do not use account numbers, your social security number, or other account or personal information when creating account nicknames or other titles.
- Whenever possible, register your computer to avoid having to re-enter challenge questions and other authentication information with each login.
- Review historical reporting features of your online banking application on a regular basis to confirm payment and other transaction data.
- Never leave a computer unattended while using Online Banking.
- Never conduct banking transactions while multiple browsers are open on your computer.

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Tips to Protect online Payments and Account Data

- Take advantage of transaction limits.
- When you have completed a transaction, ensure you log off to close the connection with the Bank's computer system.
- Use separate accounts for electronic and paper transactions to simplify monitoring and tracking any discrepancies.
- Reconcile by carefully monitoring account activity and reviewing all transactions initiated by your company on a daily basis.

Account Transfer

- Establish limits for monetary transactions.
- Review historical and audit reports regularly to confirm transaction activity.
- Utilize available alerts for funds transfer activity.

ACH – Automated Clearing House (Business Banking)

- Use pre-notification transactions to verify that account numbers within your ACH payments are correct.
- Establish limits for monetary transactions.
- Review transaction reporting regularly to confirm transaction activity.
- Utilize available alerts for ACH activity.

Administrative Users Practices

- Limit administrative rights on computers to help prevent the inadvertent downloading of malware or viruses.
- Dedicate and limit the number of computers used to complete Online Banking transactions; do not allow Internet browsing or e-mail exchange and ensure these computers are equipped with the latest versions and patches of both anti-virus and anti-spyware software.
- The Windows Firewall should be activated, or another software firewall should be used on the computer along with Intrusion Prevention or Intrusion Detection.

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Business Banking:

- Request that the Bank delete online user IDs as a part of the exit procedure when employees leave your company.
- Use multiple approvals for monetary transactions and require separate entry and approval users.
- Establish transaction dollar limits for employees who initiate and approve online payments such as ACH batches, wire transfers, and account transfers.

Tips to Avoid Phishing, Spyware, and Malware

- Do not open e-mail from unknown sources. Be suspicious of e-mails purporting to be from a financial institution, government department, or other agency requesting account information, account verification, or banking access credentials such as usernames, password, PIN codes, and similar personal or account information. Opening file attachments or clicking on web links in suspicious e-mails could expose your system to malicious code that could hijack your computer.
- Never respond to as suspicious e-mail or click on any hyperlink embedded in a suspicious e-mail. Call the purported source if you are unsure of whom sent the e-mail.
- If an e-mail claiming to be from Mars Bank seems suspicious, checking with the Bank may be appropriate.
- Install anti-virus and spyware detection software on all computer systems. Free software may not provide protection against the latest threats compared with an industry standard product.
- Update all of your computers regularly with the latest versions and patches of both anti-virus and anti-spyware software.
- Ensure computers are patched regularly, particularly the operating system and key applications with security patches.
- Install a dedicated, actively managed firewall, especially if using a broadband or dedicated connection to the Internet, such as DSL or cable. A firewall limits the potential for unauthorized access to your network and computers.
- Ensure that you are using a secure browser program. Check you settings and select, at least, a medium level of security for your browsers.

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- Clear the browser cache before starting an online banking session in order to eliminate copies of web pages that have been stored on the hard drive. How the cache is cleared depends on the browser and version you are using. This function is generally found in the browser's preferences menu.

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June 14, 2017

Tips for Wireless Network Management

- Wireless networks can provide an unintended open door to your business network. Unless a valid reason exists for wireless network use, it is recommended that all wireless networks be disabled. If a wireless network is to be used for legitimate purposes, it is recommended that wireless networks be secured as follows:
- Change the wireless network hardware (router / access point) administrative password from the factory default to a complex password. Save the password in a secure location as it will be needed to make future changes to the device.
- Disable remote administration of the wireless network hardware (router / access point).
- If possible, disable broadcasting the network SSID.
- If your device offers WPA or WPA-2 PSK encryption, secure your wireless network by enabling WPA or WPA-2 PSK encryption of the wireless network. If your device does not support WPA encryption, enable WEP encryption.
- If only known computers will access the wireless network, consider enabling MAC filtering on the network hardware. Every computer network card is assigned a unique MAC address. MAC filtering will only allow computers with permitted MAC addresses access to the wireless network.