From: Information Security Officer Robert Ridenour
To: OIT Abuse;
Subject: Recent e-mail scams
Date: Thursday, January 17, 2008 4:02:01 PM

To: UT Knoxville Area Faculty, Staff and Students
From: Information Security Officer Robert Ridenour
Subject: Recent e-mail scams

UT Knoxville Area faculty, staff and students have been the target of two e-mail scams this week. Both e-mails attempt to appear as official university communication from the Office of Information Technology and request that the user to reply with their e-mail password. In one case, the e-mail requests the user's date of birth and office location as well.

Please do not respond to these requests. The subject lines of these two scams are as follows:

"Confirm Your E-mail Address"

"VERIFY YOUR UTK EMAIL ACCOUNT NOW"

We recognize that it can be difficult to determine whether an email is legitimate. UT will never request your password by e-mail or by telephone.

It's important to note that the From address of an email can easily be made to appear to come from anyone. Hackers often exploit this characteristic of e-mail to fool users into trusting the origin of the e-mail. When you click Reply to one of these messages, the e-mail address often will change to the real address of the attacker.

In the two cases this week, the From address appeared to come from UT while the Reply-To addresses were non-UT accounts.

Please note that the only official communications you will receive from UT's Office of Information Technology about your accounts are routine prompts to change your NetID password. Those messages, however, will take you to a designated OIT Web page that will require your password information. Exchange users may also be contacted by OIT regarding their e-mail storage quota, but these messages will not ask for any login information.

If you have questions about this information, please call the OIT HelpDesk at 974-9900.

Members of the university community are encouraged to be aware of issues related to phishing and other Internet scams. The Office of Information Technology always will have the latest security information and updates available on the Traffic Center Web site at http://oit.utk.edu/tc. More specific information about phishing scams can be found at http://security.tennessee.edu/phishing.shtml.