

CFM UPDATES

30 MARCH 2010

PROTECT YOURSELF AGAINST SMS SPAM / SCAM

- In 2009, CFM received a total of 1,324 complaints, out of which 97 (7.3%) were on SMS abuse.
- For 2010, the monthly average number of such cases has recorded a 100% increase, from 8 cases a month in 2009 to 16 cases per month in 2010.
- To date, almost half or 47% from total complaints and the No#1 trigger of complaints is caused by charges imposed for unused services.

BREAKDOWN of SMS ABUSE CATEGORY (as of 30 March 2010)			
No.	Sub-category	Total	% from Category Total
1	Unsubscribed SMS	90	65%
2	SMS scam	21	15%
3	SMS spam - promotional SMS	13	10%
TOTAL		137	

TOP 5 SMS TRIGGERS of COMPLAINTS by CoP (as of 28 February 2010)		
No.	Cause of Complaint	% from Total
1	Charged for unused services	47%
2	Received unsubscribed porn video download /obscene messages	12%
3	Not able to terminate or stop unsubscribed messages	8%
4	Received unsubscribed messages fishing for personal information by promising winnings or prizes	7%
5	Ambiguous or unclear charges imposed on sms services	5%

MALAYSIAN UPDATE

News highlight : 25 February 2010, Kuala Lumpur – “Former exec nabbed in multi-million ringgit porn racket”

CFM has monitored the following to be the most common SMS spams at the moment:

1. Unsubscribed SMS offering porn video downloads.
2. Unsubscribed SMS promoting medicine for male virility.
3. Unsubscribed SMS notification of winnings.
4. Unsubscribed promotional SMS enticing voluntary airtime reloads by offering free airtime credits.
5. Ambiguous SMS promoting download services with hidden charges.

SKMM

- As at end-2009 the country had 30.3 million mobile subscribers and mobile penetration rates had reached 106.2%.
- Of this, 24 million and 6.2 million were prepaid and postpaid users respectively, according to the MCMC website.

MINISTER DATUK SERI RAIS YATIM

- Rais stressed that the newly created “ Internet civilization” should come “at a cost that society can afford.”
- Rais noted that “ the expansion of data protection, for example, is an important area that we are currently legislating on.”

INTERNATIONAL TREND

- Grew 4 folds for the past 8 years. An estimated 4.6 billion mobile phone subscriptions at the end of 2009, compared with about one billion in 2002, the International Telecommunication Union said in a report.
- In developing nations, 57% of people were signed up.
- A total of 1.21 billion handsets were sold globally in 2009 led by sales of smartphones and lower-end devices.
- Of that, 483.5 million devices were sold in the Asia-Pacific region, up 6.7% from 453.1 million in 2008.

- Smartphone sales totalled 172.4 million units, a 23.8% increase from 2008, and this was led by compelling device experiences and touch interfaces.

CONCERNS

- CFM is concerned about the impact of the growing number of SMS abuse cases
- Growing number of SMS abuse is in tandem with local and global increased subscription and use of smartphones.
- Growing number also due to increased use abilities for mobile banking transactions and mobile web file sharing as well as sophisticated communication service packages, increased sophistication of communication service packages.
- Eventual phone virus outbreak and hacking

HAZARDS

- Accepting unsubscribed SMS can result in mobile users incurring unwanted charges
- Becoming a target for identity theft
- Prolonged theft of mobile credits
- Subjected to spamming of viruses and hackers

ADVICE

- Verify if SMS is genuine with your telecommunications service provider or the Police.
- Do not reveal any Bank Account information or your Internet Banking TAC number to anyone.
- Do not fall easy prey to any ambiguous SMS or SMS that promises luxurious winnings.
- Do not subscribe to any content services if you are unsure of what are the services offered.
- Always be sure of the total charges that you will incur once you have agreed to subscribe to any SMS services.
- CFM would like to advise consumers not to respond to these unsubscribed SMS.

For those who have responded to them, they should attempt to unsubscribe by using the following steps:

Step 1	The next time you get a text message that you do not want, then simply reply to the message with the text message UNSUBSCRIBE and send the message. That should be all that you need to do. You will receive a text message reply, for example "sorry to see you go".
Step 2	If you continue to get text messages from the same company then attempt to unsubscribe by sending instructions, for example STOP,

	END, QUIT, or CANCEL to the sender.
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