

Lessons Learned Recruiting Cybersecurity Students for Human Factors Research

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Introduction

- Many cybersecurity attacks are preventable through preparation or response by individual consumer users.
- Users need to be empowered to protect themselves online, and behaviors that decrease risk are called cyber hygiene.
- Understanding cyber hygiene is key for knowing how to increase cyber hygiene practices, which can limit the impact of digital threats.
- We seek to understand if differences exist among participants' of differing majors, specifically how Computer Science (CS) and Computer Engineering (CE) students compare to other declared majors.
- Because most of our participant pool has come from Psychology introduction courses, recruitment of CS and CE majors has been our main goal.
- This study is an adaptation of Schuster et al. (2009) to the cybersecurity domain.

Methods

- To recruit Computer Science and Computer Engineering participants, we have been recruiting technical cybersecurity majors with faculty help, in addition to using Sona Systems to reach different majors.
- This effort has taken several semesters, and we've encountered both successes and setbacks.

Methods

We provide recommendations for recruiting participants from specific majors on campus.



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Issues

1. Lack of compensation for CS and CE students (Psych 101 students acquire Sona credit participation, this is not the case for CS/students).
2. In-person recruitment strategy was halted due to COVID restrictions - many classes pivoted it from in-person to online, then from online to a hybrid format.
3. Response rates from our email campaign for recruitment (to professors) were not as high as expected.

Lessons Learned

1. Post fliers on campus to increase awareness.
2. Contact student organizations.
3. Reach out through social media. (Discord or LinkedIn).
4. Develop relationships with CS/CE faculty early in the semester.
5. Provide compensation for participation.

References

Schuster, D., Harper-Sciarini, M., Curtis, M., Jentsch, F., & Swanson, R. (2009). The relationship between conceptual understanding and performance. Proceedings of the Human Factors and Ergonomics Society Annual Meeting. Santa Monica, CA: Human Factors and Ergonomics Society. doi:10.1177/154193120905302605

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Poster layout adapted from Morrison (2019).

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