

# The Art of War in the Digital Age



Think it won't happen to you?  
Think again.

© 78% of people claim to be aware of the risks of unknown links in emails...and click anyway.



© Since the beginning of 2016, more than 4,000 ransomware attacks have occurred per DAY.

Is your organization prepared?

- 52% of organizations that suffered successful cyber attacks in 2016 aren't making any changes to their security in 2017.

**BAD IDEA.**

Cyber crime is not going away

- According to a report by Cybersecurity Ventures, in 2021 cybercrime costs to hit \$6 trillion... **every year.**

“Okay, so cyber crime is a major problem, and cyber security is a huge concern. Who is this Sun Tzu person, and why would we use a 2500 year old text to address today’s problem?”



Sun Tzu was a Chinese General during the Warring States period.

His work, *The Art of War* has been translated into every language to date, and remains THE strategy text when taking on big opponents.

## Why use The Art of War to talk about cyber security?

- ◉ Often cyber security is considered “too technical” and gets shoved off as an “IT” problem.

### WRONG RESPONSE

- ◉ Good cyber security needs **strategy** and technology.
- ◉ Use *The Art of the War* to focus on planning.
- ◉ Effective security practices with the most **basic** understanding of technology.



## Part 1: Preparing for Battle



The art of war teaches us to rely not on the likelihood of the enemy's not coming, but on our own *readiness* to receive him; not on the chance of his attacking, but rather on the fact that we have made our position *unassailable*.

“Advantages”

~ Sun Tzu



It can happen to you.  
Plan as if it will.

- ◉ There's no *start* and *end* date to cyber security.
- ◉ Be prepared for an attack at any time.
- ◉ Get started: if you do not have a plan for handling cyber defense, you need it *yesterday*.
- ◉ Reality check: **62%** of data theft victims are small to mid-size businesses.



If you know neither the enemy nor  
yourself, you will succumb in every  
battle.

“Five Essentials for Victory”  
~Sun Tzu



## What are your Information Assets?

- ◉ Know what data you have and what to protect.
- ◉ How sensitive is the information your business keeps?
- ◉ Risk analysis: identify information vs. cost if attacked, deleted or stolen.
- ◉ Do you collect sensitive data you don't need?



# Training Your Warriors





If in training soldiers commands are habitually enforced, the army will be well-disciplined; if not, it's discipline will be bad.

“Control of Soldiers”  
~Sun Tzu



## How disciplined is your army?

- ◉ Training is critical, and not a one-time occurrence.
- ◉ Think 'drills', not single-session lesson plans.
- ◉ Have written procedures: easier to follow.
- ◉ Develop the team's reflex: stop, think, check.



*“Now in order to kill the enemy, our men must be roused to anger; that there may be advantage from defeating the enemy, they must have their rewards.”*



If a data breach happens when the IT team is away, does anyone hear?

- ◉What are you doing to keep staff alert? How are they held accountable?
- ◉Are there rewards for active involvement, extra training or initiatives?
- ◉Can staff spot problems or potential threats independently?
- ◉Do they know who to report them to?



*A leader leads by example, not by  
force.*

*“Six Calamities”  
~Sun Tzu*



Information in Bloom  
Management Services

## Who is leading the charge in your organization?

- ◉ If management isn't taking their own cyber security practices seriously, you have a BIG problem.
- ◉ Identify your champions, your experts, your cheerleaders.
- ◉ Communicate, communicate, communicate!



## Readying the Dogs of War



The skillful fighter puts himself into a position which makes defeat impossible, and does not miss the moment for defeating the enemy.

*“Excellence”*  
~ *Sun Tzu*



## Strengthen your cyber security with a strong defensive position

- ◉ Make it hard to get in and be hit.
- ◉ Use *Access Controls*: i.e. who can see what?
- ◉ Sensitive data? Need-to know, always.
- ◉ Keep controls up to date by role, status.
- ◉ Audit devices used to access.

## *What is anti-virus or anti-malware?*

Anti-Malware is a computer program that looks at your computer when it runs, and identifies threats. It can then stop the threat from attacking, by deleting the file or blocking its access to your computer and the network.

Just like you need an @ address to send and receive email, you need an anti-malware program to protect your computer.

Against cybercrime, your anti-malware is your shield. Don't leave home or run a PC without it!

Do you *know* you're protected?  
Or do you *assume*?

Questions every company should be able to answer:

- ◉ What anti-malware does your business use?
- ◉ How often are back-ups done?

Remember: hackers look for 'weak points'

- ◉ Make sure EVERY organization-connected PC has up-to-date anti-malware software.



Subtle and insubstantial, the expert leaves  
no trace; divinely mysterious, he is  
inaudible. Thus he is master of his  
enemy's fate....

*“Secrecy”  
~Sun Tzu*



Encryption = a lock for your data

- 2500 and Sun Tzu was recommending making information inaudible by using **encryption!**
- Encryption is an ancient way of protecting information... and more important now than ever!
- Different encryption keeps different ears from listening in.
- Common types include SSL & TLS, End-to-End, and full disk.



*Hold out baits to entice the enemy.  
Feign disorder, and crush him.*

*“Deception”  
~Sun Tzu*



## When basics aren't enough..

- ◉ Apparently, even Ancient China knew the value of the Honey Pot.
- ◉ Honey Pot = decoy computing system that finds weak points.
- ◉ Ask IT team to set up, or hire a service.
- ◉ Bring in a penetrative tester and check for holes.



*Do not repeat the tactics which have gained you one victory, but let your methods be regulated by the infinite variety of circumstances.*

*“Varying Tactics”  
~Sun Tzu*



Cyber security threats change.

**Be ready**

- ◉ Update your business's security settings and antivirus software regularly.
- ◉ Many systems can run checks for new threat warnings and updates automatically: let them.
- ◉ Relax, but stay vigilant.
- ◉ Keep an ear on new challenges; audit, retrain, repeat.



## References & Useful Resources

### Books

- ◉ Sun Tzu. *The Art of War: Illustrated Edition* (2014)
- ◉ Popa, Claudiu. (2009). *The Canadian privacy and data security toolkit for small and medium enterprises.*

### Websites

- ◉ [Schneier on Security](#)
- ◉ [Dark Reading](#)
- ◉ [TaoSecurity](#)
- ◉ [The Hacker News](#)
- ◉ [CIO.com](#)

### Articles

- ◉ [6 Must-Know Cyber Security Statistics for 2017](#)
- ◉ [9 Ways The Art of War Conquered the World](#)
- ◉ [Top 5 cyber security facts, figures, and statistics for 2017](#)



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# Q & A



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