Hossein Bidgoli, PhD, is Professor of Management Information Systems at California State University in Bakersfield. He is Editor-in-Chief of both the Encyclopedia of Information Systems and The Internet Encyclopedia, the latter of which I have just received for review.

This 2635-page, three-volume work is a valuable addition to any network professional’s or corporate library. It includes peer-reviewed contributions from more than 240 authors and more than 840 subject-expert reviewers. It was designed with the needs of both academics and working professionals in mind. A noteworthy feature is that everyone made a special effort to write simply and plainly so that even novices such as young students would be able to understand the articles.

Subject areas include

- Applications
- Design, Implementation, And Management
- Electronic Commerce
- Foundation
- Infrastructure
- Legal, Social, Organizational, International, And Taxation Issues
- Marketing And Advertising On The Web
- Security Issues And Measures
- Supply-Chain Management
- Web Design And Programming
- Wireless Internet And E-Commerce.

In addition to the articles on individual technologies such as Active Server Pages, Bluetooth, computer languages, electronic-commerce modalities, and so on, topics (and their authors) bearing on directly on information assurance include at least the following:

- Authentication (Patrick McDaniel)
- Biometric Authentication (James L. Wayman)
- Computer Security Incident Response Teams (CSIRTs) (Raymond R. Panko)
- Computer Viruses And Worms (Robert Slade)
- Copyright Law (Gerald R. Ferrera)
- Cybercrime and Cyberfaud (Camille Chin)
- Denial Of Service Attacks (E. Eugene Schultz)
- Digital Identity (Drummond Reed and Jerry Kindall)
- Digital Signatures And Electronic Signatures (Raymond R. Panko)
- Disaster Recovery Planning (Marco Cremonini and Pierangela Samarati)
- Encryption (Ari Juels)
- Firewalls (James E. Goldman)
Prof. Camille Chin, LL.M. of West Virginia University College of Law wrote an 11-page overview of cybercrime and cyberfraud. Prof. Chin writes beautifully – clear, assertive prose full of information. Her article reviews cybercrime definitions and statistics (I would have liked a brief warning about the difficulty of trusting non-scientific surveys) and then goes on to a remarkably informative and well structured summary of cybercrime including:

- Cybercrime classifications
- Cybersabotage
  - Trojan horses, viruses and worms
  - Denial-of-service attacks
  - Social engineering
- Cyberfraud
  - Internet auction fraud
  - Internet identity and credit card theft
  - Internet investment fraud.

I very much enjoyed reading this review and learned a good deal from Professor Chin's case studies. I particularly appreciated her succinct recommendations to readers for self protection in each section.

The article on CSIRTs was also especially interesting to me because of the series I am currently writing on that topic. I was pleased to find that the author is Prof. Raymond Panko of the University of Hawaii at Manoa, a well-known author whose texts on data communications I have use for many years. In six pages of tightly written prose, Dr Panko provides an excellent review of key issues and guidelines for computer security incident response teams. Topics include:

- Before the Incident
  - Justifying the CSIRT
  - Organizing the CSIRT
Technology Base
- The Problem Of Communication
- The Decision To Prosecute

- During the Attack
  - Discovery And Escalation
  - Analysis
  - Containment
  - Recovery
  - Protection Against Subsequent Attacks

- After the Attack
  - Sanctions
  - Postmortem Analysis.

Each article in the Encyclopedia includes extensive glossaries, cross-references, and suggestions for further reading. My only complaint is that it doesn't seem to be available (yet?) in CD-ROM. I hope the publisher will provide that option, which would make the work even more useful.

At $750 per set, this is not a casual purchase for most of us, but it is a reasonable investment for organizations with an IT staff and a must for schools, colleges, Universities and public libraries.

[Note: I have no association with the publication reviewed other than gratitude for being given a free set for evaluation. What a perk for being a columnist!]

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References:


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