

COT Security Alert – Oversize Mailbox Phishing Email

Reports of a phishing email arriving in state email inboxes has been reported to the COT Security Administration Branch. The email claims the user needs to send their username and password because their “Mailbox has reached its limit”. The email threatens that users they will not be able to send or receive email until they send the requested information. If a phishing scammer obtains a username and password for a state account, they could potentially access that account and the state network. **Recently, response to emails such as these has resulted in the user’s email account becoming compromised allowing the phisher to send out large amounts of spam emails.**

Users should be aware that the phishing email may change in subtle ways in the future in order to evade any filters put in place and continue to circulate even after steps are taken to block it. These changes could be many things, including the sender’s email address or wording of the subject line.

Users should be aware that they will never receive a request for this kind of information from COT or their administrator under any circumstances and should never respond to these types of emails in any way.

If anyone has received one of these emails and has responded with a username and password, they should **immediately** change their password and contact the Commonwealth Service Desk at (502) 564-7576.

Phishing emails are emails using fake information and social-engineering methods to obtain personal information such as usernames and passwords to use in fraud or other illegal activity. For more information on ‘phishing’, see the November 2007 and October 2008 Newsletters found at <http://technology.ky.gov/security/CyberAwareness.htm>.

Circulation of this alert to all end-users will aid in security awareness and will be effective in mitigation of the threat.

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