

FRIDAY MORNING: KNOW WHEN TO FIGHT

Sun Tzu said,

“There are five occasions when victory can be foretold: When the general knows the time to fight and when not to fight...”

Fridays are lousy times for fights, eh? Unless it's just for fun.

Speaking of fun...

Oil crash wreaking havoc with MIC

Huh. Who could have guessed when buyers of defense goods suffer deep cuts in income, their suppliers feel the same pinch?

Kolkata-based call center workers arrested for telecom fraud

Some cyberthreats aren't malware or hackers, but human beings with ready access to customers' personal information and banking. In this case, three call center employees at Wipro-India working on UK accounts committed fraud of undisclosed nature, costing thousands of pounds. Seems to me these folks couldn't have been too bright, traceability should have been easy. And being located in India offered no protection for either the criminals or the victims.

Zika virus may be transmitted sexually?

At least two cases so far suggest the virus may be transferred between partners during sex. One case involved a Colorado State University researcher who came down with Zika in 2008 after infection in Senegal. His wife came down with it after he came home from abroad; both tested positive for Zika antibodies. His children in the same household did not get sick, however.

Ukrainian power plant attackers now using

BlackEnergy-infected Word documents

Though earlier attempts to launch BlackEnergy relied on Powerpoint and Excel documents, the

attackers now use Word documents – but all document types contained macros that were enabled. Kaspersky’s SecureList says the entities most at risk for BlackEnergy infection are:

- ICS, Energy, government and media in Ukraine
- ICS/SCADA companies worldwide
- Energy companies worldwide

At some point, this will move beyond energy and government targets. Keep your software patched and updated, run antivirus frequently, don’t open emails or documents you weren’t expecting, and only enable macros after validating the document’s source. This is pretty much standard operating practice for the last decade if you’ve been smart.

If you’re looking for something to read this weekend, you might try comparing two different translations of Sun Tzu’s The Art of War. The quote I used above is from the E. F. Calthrop version; the same bit in the Lionel Giles version renders,

“Thus we may know that there are five essentials for victory: ... He will win who knows when to fight and when not to fight. ...”

The Giles version is both more simplistic – at some points too much so – but filled with supplemental commentators’ content fleshing out interpretation. Relevant to political and business warfare, as much as traditional and asymmetric warfare today.

Save me a seat at the bar at the end of the day!