

Google sent 25% fewer phishing warnings last year

In other words, the search giant says its protections against attackers appear to be working. But this isn't the time to lower your guard.

Google sent almost 40,000 warnings about phishing or malware attempts last year, a nearly 25 percent drop from 2018. Attackers, however, appear to be adapting.

The Threat Analysis Group (TAG) at Google reported Thursday on the decline of phishing attempts. Google says one of the reasons for the drop is protections against phishing, such as its Advanced Protection Program. While overall attempts are declining, Google says attacker are being more deliberate in their efforts to deceive targets.



"In 2019, one in five accounts that received a warning was targeted multiple times by attackers," wrote Toni Gidwani, a security engineering manager with TAG. "If at first the attacker does not succeed, they'll try again using a different lure, different account, or trying to compromise an associate of their target."

Google says it's also seeing a rise in attackers, primarily based in North Korean and Iran, impersonating journalists. They reach out to people pretending they're looking to speak to someone about a fake story and once they've built some trust, the attackers send a malware attachment, according to TAG.

In December, Google added phishing protection to its Chrome browser, which offers real-time protection against phishing links and pages.

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