COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

SIMProctect - EDUCATING THE PUBLIC ON RISKS AND THE PREVENTION OF MOBILE NUMBER PORTING SCAMS

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SIMProtect

Mission Statement & Key Outputs

The Simprotect project improves Australians’ social welfare and financial wellbeing by raising awareness and better protecting consumers and businesses from the risks of fraudulent mobile number porting and sim-swapping. Mobile phones have been adopted as the main solution to verify a customer’s identity through two-factor authentication, e.g. for online banking or resetting passwords. This leaves consumers vulnerable to financial fraud and identity theft through mobile phone porting scams.

Combining multidisciplinary research in cyber security, risk management and behavioural psychology, an innovative website (https://www.simprotect.org.au/), interactive online games (https://phoneportinggame.web.app/), an educational video (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=93DQKy3ZkJ0E), and social media advertisements are used to engage the Australian community about the risks of identity theft.

In just two months, the project has already educated nearly 18,000 Australians about these risks, while the SIMProtect website continues to attract more than 2,000 Australian visitors per week at a cost of ~$0.23/visitor in advertising spend.

‘The implications of fraudulent number porting for consumers can be very serious and include but are not limited to financial loss, negative credit ratings, and emotional stress.’

Australian Communications Consumer Action Network

‘The fact that the scenarios are very realistic and impactful makes the game interesting and captivating.’

Feedback on SIMProtect Game during Focus Group Workshops with Macquarie University Students

‘I can now see the potential benefits of research into identity theft’

Feedback on SIMProtect Social Media Campaign on Facebook

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SIMProtect Website Unique Visitors

![SIMProtect Website Unique Visitors Chart](chart.png)

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NSW Police reminds Australians Last $5m to SIM Hacking in 2018

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How at-risk are you? Play our interactive game and see just how easy it is to be targeted.

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WHAT’S ON A SIM CARD?

Your SIM card contains your mobile number and other contact details. It’s also used to authenticate your mobile device and allow you to access your mobile phone.”

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SIM CARDS UNDERSTOOD

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Top tips to protect yourself

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WHAT’S ON A SIM CARD?
The Educational Video
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=93DQKy3ZkOE

Using the catchphrase “When You are No Longer You”, the promotional video raises awareness about the risks of identity theft and fraudulent mobile number porting by humorously illustrating possible consequences a victim might face when their identity is stolen. The animated main character of the video is 'The Villain', a smooth criminal who steals the identity of different victims, causing them various harms. The consequences (ranging from being locked out of accounts, reputational damage to serious financial loss) become more and more severe, while the villain becomes more and more excited. Used in a social media campaign, the video is intended to drive visitor traffic to the website SIMProtect.org.au, where a wide range of information on the issue of sim-swapping and fraudulent mobile number porting is provided and interactive learning opportunities are provided through an online game. Due to Covid-19 restrictions on filming, animation and Australian voice actors were substituted for live actors in this promotional video.

Identity theft. When YOU are no longer YOU.

Fraudulent mobile number porting can have serious consequences.

Learn more about how to keep your mobile number safe at simprotect.org.au
The SIMProtect Game

https://phoneportinggame.web.app/

In recent years, game-based learning has been identified as a successful tool (also) for adult education, being more effective than e-learning. People like to play, making the fun environment of learning games an excellent training methodology. The SIMProtect game immerses players in different scenarios where they can make realistic choices to educate themselves on the nature and risks of mobile number porting scams, warning signs of identity theft, and steps to minimise these risks. The game provides its players with a final score based upon their choices as well as links to additional resources on how to protect themselves. Two pathways through the game have been developed: one for younger adults and one for seniors.
Policy Change

Awareness raised through SIMProtect media and policy outreach has also contributed to an important change in Australian law. Addressing the problem of unauthorised mobile phone porting by cyber-criminals, the 'Telecommunications Mobile Number Pre-Porting Additional Identity Verification Industry Standard 2020' has been implemented by ACMA, requiring mobile service providers to introduce additional procedures designed to protect Australians from fraud and identity theft. The standard makes it mandatory for those providers to conduct stronger identity checking, including multi-factor authentication, to safeguard against mobile numbers being fraudulently ported or transferred.

Innovation through a Multidisciplinary Team

The project is based on cross-disciplinary research in cyber risk, corporate governance and psychology, and uses innovative web-based technology such as an educational game, a video, and a social media campaign to enhance community engagement.

Stefan Trück is a Professor of Business Analytics, a Co-Director of Macquarie University's Centre for Risk Analytics and an ARC Future Fellow. He is an internationally recognized research leader in financial risk management.

Dr John Selby CISSP, CISM, CIPM is an expert in cyber security and a lawyer. Until recently, he was a full-time academic at Macquarie University and is currently an Adjunct at the Centre for Risk Analytics whilst founding a cyber security start-up.

Dr. Fabiola Barba Ponce is a Research Fellow in the Centre for Risk Analytics with a focus on the psychology of change, skill utilization, and productivity. She is a TEDx speaker and regularly consults on science-based behavioural change adoption.

A/Prof Christophe Doche is a cyber security expert in the School of Computing & Information Technology at the University of Wollongong and the former Executive Director of the Optus Macquarie University Cyber Security Hub.