

You Are The Target

Approaching Personal Security With Knowledge

Criminals who target you will study your routines and behaviour before they strike. Gaining insight into the adversary's methods of operation and way of thinking allows us to make sound and cost effective investments in security. **Amotz Brandes**, the Managing Partner of Chameleon Associates, an international security consulting, corporate due diligence and investigation company, writes for *MillionaireAsia*.

Security is a top concern for high net worth individuals who are spending increasing sums to protect themselves, their families and their assets. Affluent individuals feel – and rightly so – that their wealth makes them a target for crime of all kinds. This has become an urgent priority as we see a rise in: kidnapping, extortion, robbery, industrial espionage, identity theft, vandalism, and terrorism.

Too often, however, an individual's efforts to create a secure infrastructure fall short of the goal – and not for lack of spending. This vulnerability relates to not fully understanding the methods by which criminals and adversaries work. Gaining insight into their methods of operation and way of thinking allows us to make sound and cost effective investments in security.

A good example of this misallocation of resources is

the way VIP protection services are commissioned. Many security companies exaggerate the amount of people needed to provide effective security to a VIP. After all, their profits lie in the amount of service hours they provide the client. Having a large and obvious security detail tends to bring attention to the client and thus attract trouble. Depending on the environment and on the VIP, the most effective approach is to lower the public profile and exposure of security staff. The adversary will find it harder to assess a situation with unknown parameters, for example: undercover security. A good Aussie friend of mine puts it this way: "When walking through a swamp, you are more afraid of the crocodiles you can't see than the ones you can."

A lot of VIPs spend a huge amount of resources protecting their residences. However, the areas with the biggest vulnerability for physical attack be it robbery, kidnapping,



Amotz Brandes – Managing Partner,
Chameleon Associates

battery are while on the move. The most effective way to secure yourself while in transit is by adopting awareness to situations around you and preventive behaviour. VIPs who have adopted such awareness and behaviour have become

“When walking through a swamp, you are more afraid of the crocodiles you can't see than the ones you can.”

easy targets for potential criminals and terrorists.

Criminals who target you will carefully study your routines and behaviour through surveillance and will establish the best possible time to strike and attack. Taking different routes or stopping for breakfast at different locations on your way to work every day will significantly reduce the potential for you becoming a target of theft, robbery, harassment, violence and significantly reduce your risks.

Also, be aware of people and things around you. For example, take a look in the rear view mirror every once in a while to see if you are being followed by the same car for an extended period of time. If feel that you are being followed, change your route, reduce speed below traffic flow to see if the suspected vehicle is mimicking your behaviour.

If you still feel you are being followed, memorise and take note of the description of the person and car that follows you and drive towards the nearest police station for assistance and reporting.

Another area of security concern is privacy, reputation and personal information. Modern

“The areas with the biggest vulnerability for a physical attack, be it a robbery, kidnapping or battery are while on the move.”

communications and the Internet expose each and every one of us to exploitation by hackers and criminals. Those of us who are not IT professionals are mostly unaware of the dangers we expose ourselves to by simply browsing the Internet or using emails. By exploiting malware, spam, social networks and through social engineering schemes, criminals and hackers have the ability to gather very sensitive information about our business, our family and us.

The old adage – know thy enemy applies to understand and lower the risks of IT exploitation as it would be very embarrassing if sensitive or private information such as emails or banking accounts get compromised by these hackers.

For example, many do not realise the danger of using social networks such as facebook or myspace as an effective tool to gather information about you, your friends, family and businesses. In order to know where you live, a perpetrator could build an online identity and establish a connection with your kids, friends, or anyone in your social or business network.

Through this network, he could then slowly and patiently find information about what you do or did and what you like or dislike – information that could jeopardize your reputation, personal safety and overall security.

As in anything in business, a smart security decision is made only after carefully understanding and realising the security problem and vulnerability you want to solve. You must understand how the

adversary works in order to know how to prevent him from meeting his objectives. You should also remember that the best security solutions often don't cost any money but rather involve a change in mindset, in behaviour and in attitude. ■



LEARN TO PROTECT YOURSELF AND YOUR LOVED ONES

This coming March 18th in Singapore, *MillionaireAsia* in collaboration with Chameleon Associates, an international security consulting and corporate due diligence and investigations company, will host the first workshop tailored for high-net worth individuals. This workshop will equip you with the tools to protect against personal harm, intrusions of privacy and also information theft.

It will be delivered by Chameleon Associates' top international expert with over three decades of actual operational experience in prestigious services including the British special forces, where he was shot three times whilst fighting the IRA terrorists, and also in the famous M15 for over 22 years. He specialised in conducting sensitive covert operations and in personal security (where he was once the personal security manager for the Saudi ambassador to the USA).

The risk of becoming an intelligence target or victim of crime, terrorism, kidnap or natural disasters as we travel in this increasingly dangerous and volatile world is real – act now to protect your loved ones and yourselves.

For more enquiries or registration, please contact info@millionaireasia.com or Alex Khalil at +65 6838 5010

