

IS Security and Universities: How We Can Fill a Frightening Gap

Michael D. (Mick) Bauer
Technology Counselor, Upstream Solutions Inc.
St. Paul, Minnesota 55106
mick@visi.com

Abstract

Networked computer systems have become so ubiquitous and important that media coverage of IS security topics has graduated from obscure hacker e-zines to national newspapers: computer crime has entered the mainstream. Simultaneously, IS security analysis/administration has evolved from being a mere subset of system administration to become a profession all its own.

This profession is so young that it has yet to arrive at widely-accepted standards for its courses of study, bodies of knowledge, or credentials. Furthermore, the practice of IS/network security demands an eclectic combination of skills, many of which have tended to be most easily obtained in technical schools or through self-study. All of this has resulted in a great deal of ambiguity with regard to the role of universities in preparing students for this brand-new profession (and in preparing students in other fields to deal with the IS security issues they may face).

However, this is an ambiguity we can ill afford: the field is already, in my opinion, at a dangerous crossroads. Among both practitioners and consumers of IS security services, awareness of social and business solutions has lagged too far behind awareness and application of technical solutions. Put another way, we're doing a lot with cardiac surgery and drugs, but almost nothing with nutrition or exercise.

This is where Universities can and should help.

My talk will describe ways in which important IS security needs are currently being addressed in the field, ways in which they **should** be addressed, and ways in which I think Universities can help us fill the frightening gap between the two.

No hackers will be harmed in the production of this event.

About the Presenter

Michael D. (Mick) Bauer is a Technology Counselor and Senior Network Engineer at Upstream Solutions, Inc., a premier provider of data security, software quality assurance, and business process consulting services. He is also a Contributing Editor and security columnist for Linux Journal magazine. His book "Building Secure Servers with Linux" will be published by O'Reilly & Associates later this year.