Ethical Hacking or White Hat Hacking is described as the act of penetrating networks and/or computer systems with the aim of ensuring that vulnerabilities in an organisation’s IT defences are known and can be mitigated. It is a profession that has gained some visibility lately due to high profile cases involving the breach of certain organisations’ security defences, such as the recent leakage of emails and documents belonging to the Climatic Research Unit at the University of East Anglia in Norwich, United Kingdom. This incident caused uproar in the international arena as the leaked emails eluded that climate scientists ‘colluded to withhold climate change data’, deleted raw data, interfered with the peer review process and manipulated data. This was all before the Copenhagen Climate Change conference in December 2010 and was labelled as a ‘smear campaign’.

Another troubling example was in 2000, when a 21 year-old British computer network engineer working for a Dubai construction company was arrested on suspicion of being one of the hackers involved in the disruption into Etisalat’s internet system. The ‘hacker’ was found guilty and sentenced to 10 years in a UAE jail. This case was a landmark in the Middle East as no arrests had previously been made for hacking. It not only highlighted the need for comprehensive security systems to combat such occurrences but also the need for ethical hackers to identify vulnerabilities of companies, both large and small.

The question over the legality of the actions of ethical hackers lies in some of the activities involved in protecting an organisation’s IT security. For example, at the Usenix conference held earlier this year a senior Security Engineer and researcher at the University of Washington noted that to prevent attacks on the University’s systems, he copied files from a host in Canada for which he did not have the authority. Although his intentions were of a ‘white hat’ nature, he in fact committed a crime. To this end, many Internet security specialists have taken it upon themselves to abide by a set of ethical guidelines. This, however, whilst commendable in its intentions, will not protect them from the rule of law. For this reason, governments need to introduce legislation that clearly defines the bounds within which ethical hackers and IT security professionals can act.

The emergence of specific tertiary courses aimed at the industry is evidence that there is a need to have this knowledge formalised. One of the pioneers in offering such education is the University of Albertay in Scotland. Other institutions such as Coventry University and Northumbria University also offer similar courses.

From an industry perspective, professional certifications help to legitimise and standardise individuals working in the field. One of the more prominent certifications available is the International Council of E-commerce Consultants’ Certified Ethical Hacker (CEH) program, which is offered by a number of institutions in Dubai as well including the Dubai Informatics Computer Centre, SitesPower and New Horizons.

As organisations in Dubai recognise the importance of information security and the risks associated with having confidential data compromised, it is hoped that they will act responsibly in ensuring that their networks and systems are secure. This is not limited to just commercial data - organisations have a social responsibility to ensure that any data that they have regarding their employees, customers and other stakeholders is stored securely. Employing white hat or ethical hackers can help in this regard, providing that these employees act within the confines of the law and promote transparency in the often blurred area of technology.
United Nations Global Compact Delists Members

The notion that the world of business can be the drivers of change and provide solutions on how we tackle issues such as corruption, social development and other pressing global issues is the basis of the term ‘corporate citizenship’. The concept of corporate citizenship has been endorsed by the United Nations through the UN Global Compact, a voluntary initiative which provides a framework for socially responsible business practices. The principles include human rights, fair labor practices and reducing environmental impact, all of which have been drawn from United Nations declarations. A organization who wishes to be a part of the Global Compact needs to report annually via Communication on Progress (COP) which is a report setting out the measures the business has taken towards complying with each principle. This report can also be incorporated into a Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) based format on Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) reports. This report must be submitted annually on a regular basis to the Global Compact to retain membership. This policy was introduced in 2005 to ensure that transparency and accountability was present in the process of responsible corporate practices with failure to comply resulting in delisting from the Global Compact database. This process also legitimizes the functions of the Global Compact by ensuring that there are corrective actions taken for organizations on a regular basis and that responsible business practices must be an ongoing process which makes regular progress. As of 2008, the Global Compact Office has delisted over 1000 organizations for failure to comply. These companies have come from a variety of sectors, countries and are a mix of various sizes. According to George Kell, Executive Director of the UN Global Compact, as ‘corporate disclosure of policies and practices become more common, companies joining the Global Compact increasingly enter with a better understanding of the critical value of reporting on environmental, social and governance performance.’ As such, the policy of reporting annually encourages companies to not only track their performance for internal monitoring but also allows an impartial third party to be a part of the progress. Delisted companies are able to re-apply to become Global Compact members by providing new commitment forms from their CEO and submitting a new COP report. To find out more about the UN Global Compact, visit www.unglobalcompact.org

UAE High Flyers Reduce

The airline industry worldwide is taking steps to reduce the climate change impact of its operations through new technology and concerted effort. The International Air Transportation Association (IATA) has introduced a global approach to reducing the industry’s emissions and achieve "(1) A cap on aviation CO2 emissions, plus carbon-neutral growth, from 2020; (2) An average annual improvement in fuel efficiency of 1.5% from 2009 to 2020 ; (3) A goal to reduce CO2 emissions by 50% by 2050, relative to 2005 levels." This bold vision was adopted by all members of IATA, including Etihad Airways and Emirates. IATA members plan to achieve these goals by investing in new technologies that are expected to use 25-35% less fuel compared to older aircraft, efficient operations and infrastructure and encouraging governments to implement economic measures. The new technologies include more efficient airplanes as well as introducing bio-fuels. In the UAE, both Emirates and Etihad are working to reduce CO2 emissions in varying ways. Emirates has tangible actions with rock solid results in their core business to reduce carbon dioxide emissions. Emirates announced that it will purchase 58 new Airbus A380 aircraft. The A380 is the world’s largest passenger plane and according to Emirates "The A380 is more fuel efficient per passenger kilometer than a small family car. Emirates versions will offer fuel economy as low as 3.1 litres per 100 passenger km, better than that of Toyota’s acclaimed Prius hybrid passenger vehicle." Etihad has entered into a partnership with Masdar to develop new carbon management systems to meet the European Union’s cap aviation emissions starting in 2012. The EU will cap annual aviation emissions to 97% of the 2004-2006 average. In addition, airlines will be able to trade for emissions. The aviation industry globally and in the UAE is implementing good CSR practices by focusing on implementing up to date solutions in air transport. By committing itself to reduce its environmental impacts through technology and efficiency, Emirates is showing the difference between CSR and PR and consistently building its responsible business model. It is an important message for other companies in Dubai that would rather offer empty Eco-pledges and posters instead of management.

CRB Discusses Responsible Business in Uncertain Times

On January 20th, 2010, Dubai Chamber Centre for Responsible Business held a public seminar on the challenges facing businesses in practicing responsible business under exceptional uncertainty. The seminar was held to stress the importance of upholding ethical practices, build confidence and maintain trust in the local market. Acknowledging the current uncertainty in global and local business environments, the seminar focused on key areas such as corporate governance, consumer awareness of corporate social responsibility (CSR), and strategies to incorporate responsible business in day to day business management. The event attracted over 200 participants from all strategic economic sectors of Dubai. The diversity in the background of participants provided a solid platform for holistic discussions on contemporary issues and challenges and gave Dubai Chamber a deeper insight into the needs of the business community. The outcomes and discussion points from the seminar will be available soon at www.dubaichamber.ae/crb
CRB research and publications focus on raising awareness of CSR and building knowledge that supports the practice and development of responsible business and sustainable consumption in Dubai. In 2009, CRB expanded its focus to include new areas such as green purchasing, sustainable consumption, and corporate community contribution including corporate volunteering, donation, corporate community partnership, and cause-related marketing. CRB also conducted the largest CSR survey in the UAE covering companies operating in Dubai, Abu Dhabi, Sharjah, and the Northern Emirates.

The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises stand out as a landmark in the world of corporate governance and CSR. The Guidelines were developed as recommendations on several CSR topics, including business ethics, human rights, environment, consumer protection, combating bribery and anti-corruption. The Guidelines were originally developed in 1976. The last revision in 2000 was endorsed by 30 OECD members and 12 non-members.

The OECD Investment Committee is responsible for the review and update of the Guidelines. The consultation process with governments and stakeholders will continue until March 2010. The rationale for updating the guidelines is clear. Since 2000, the whole field of responsible business has changed and evolved. Some examples of the change in business thinking and behaviors and interests of companies are reflected in the start-up of global initiatives and organizations. For example, the Global Compact and the first version of the Global Reporting Initiative Guidelines were both launched in 2000, the U.N. Convention Against Corruption came into force in 2003 and the Dubai Chamber Centre for Responsible Business started in 2004. Another milestone initiative will be completed in 2010 when the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) publishes its new ISO 26000 Guideline on Social Responsibility after a two-year process.

Today, there are numerous if not hundreds of CSR initiatives and organizations with a focus on climate change. While the United Nations brokered summit raised the profile of this issue on a global scale, a workable road map to reduce global emissions and increase the use of green technologies was not made. There was no agreement reached on the roles of developed and developing countries – with developing countries but rapidly developing economies such as India and China expressing that the onus of reducing emissions should fall more so on developed countries.

The Copenhagen Accord is currently only in draft form, is not legally binding, but includes a “desire to keep the rising global temperatures below 2 degree Celsius, support for a US $30 billion fund over the next three years for developing countries and a medium term mechanism to provide US $100 billion dollars every year to developing countries from 2020 onwards. While there is no general consensus as to why the summit failed to produce tangible outcomes, the key outcome that can be derived is that the business communities still have to play a leadership role to keep the pressure on global leaders.

The global business community had already taken the lead before the summit took place in increasing awareness of issues of renewable energy, such as solar and wind. There was also been an increased push to integrate sustainability practices and strategies into the corporate culture to reduce emissions, carbon footprints and waste. Many businesses have prospered using sustainability to push their brand value further as consumers became more discerning and educated about the dangers of a world changing rapidly. Such changes in the way the business community operated are debated to influence the way governments allocate funds and developed policies. A prime example of this is how influential organizations resigned from the US Chambers of Commerce last year to protest their stance on climate change (full story can be found in CRB Al Youm Volume 2, Issue 6).

In the UAE, initiatives such as Masdar City and hosting the upcoming World Future Energy Summit highlight the importance that is being placed on renewable energy in this region. Businesses can take a cue from events such as this on the trend and direction that not only the energy sector is taking but the mindset of the local population. As the business case for green energy and green business practices are becoming stronger, it is in the best interest for businesses to take the lead to showcase to the global business community the benefits and opportunities of being a sustainable business in the Middle East before internationally binding agreements are passed. These businesses will be considered leaders, enjoy investor confidence, have a competitive edge and will be the catalysts for change.

The next climate change conference will be held in six months in Bonn, Germany to follow up the work of the Copenhagen Summit.
To contribute or provide feedback, please contact Sabrin Rahman, Editor at sabrin.rahman@dubaichamber.ae

**Key Facts and Figures**

**Green Purchasing in Dubai: Practices, Drivers and Performance**

In an attempt to promote the concept of green supply chains in Dubai—one of the central trends in today’s competitive economy—the first-ever survey in the region to explore green purchasing initiatives and practices, pressures/drivers and performance in Dubai was conducted in 2009. The result indicates that green purchasing is still lagging and some companies have recognized its importance and tried to put it into practice, but most of these companies lack awareness, knowledge as well as necessary tools and management skills. The results show also that 40% of companies were willing to pay more for green products, while 67% had found it difficult to find green products and 75% mentioned lack of public database for green vendors. The survey findings also showed that 31% of companies were willing to pay a premium for green products or services with co-benefits of certification or logo. As a result, there is substantial potential for the development of green purchasing in Dubai, and a comprehensive database of green products and vendors is crucial for practicing and promoting green purchasing. A national eco-label or a green purchasing certification is highly recommended.

**Consumers’ Social Responsibility, Sustainable Consumption, and Green Shopping in the United Arab Emirates**

Following the 2008 first-ever study in the region on Consumer’s View of Corporate Social Responsibility in the UAE which identified consumers’ understanding and awareness of CSR issues and provided, the 2009 survey covered best practices for sustainable consumption and responsible consumers’ buying as well as consumers’ willingness to pay for green products. The survey results revealed that consumer awareness of CSR continues to grow in the UAE. Consumers expect strong involvement in and contribution to society by businesses; improved health and safety conditions, fair employee wages and benefits, and environmental protection are their main concerns, while community-related issues are given less importance. The survey findings show also that consumers are more likely to prefer social and environmental attributes than low price or high quality when making purchase decisions; 65% would buy products from a company that protects the natural environment, 63% would avoid doing so from a company that harms the environment or pollutes the water, and 49% would reward a company for charitable efforts. Consumers prefer to buy green products with 85% of consumers in the UAE preferring to buy green products, 25% of consumers shop at green stores and 30% buy organic foods. The results from the survey show also that consumers in the UAE have become more socially active and aware; 59% have donated money to a cause, and 59% would boycott a company’s products or services in reaction to social irresponsibility. The study’s findings revealed that consumers expect companies to communicate transparently about their CSR achievements in annual reports, on Web pages and in the press.

**Corporate Community Involvement in Dubai**

CRB continues to explore new social research areas. The first ever survey on corporate community involvement revealed companies in Dubai continued relying on traditional aspects of corporate community involvement such as philanthropic donations –cash donations (20%) and in-kind donation (18%)—sponsorship of community (16%) as the dominant mode for contributing to the community. The interest areas allocated the greatest proportion of companies’ total contribution to community includes healthcare (15%), sporting and recreation (15%), education (14%), and environmental issues (13%). The results show also that companies in Dubai are at the early stages of developing comprehensive management approaches to community involvement; 6% of companies have a formal commitment or policy on community involvement activities, 7% of companies have a strategic plan for community involvement, 12% of companies dedicated a department/officer to deal with community involvement programs or activities, and 6% of companies either have a communicate plan for community involvement or report their achievement.

**The State of Corporate Volunteering in Dubai**

The survey results revealed that corporate volunteering in Dubai is in an early stage of development. Few businesses (21%) encouraged or accommodated employee volunteer activities. Companies support employee volunteering in different ways; 44% of all businesses encourage employees to volunteer on their own time, and one quarter (25%) accommodate employee volunteer activities during regular working hours. The results show also that company support for employee volunteer activities tends to be responsive or reactive rather than strategic or proactive; The most common forms of support are adjusting work schedules (29%), providing time off without pay (27%), and allowing access to company facilities and equipment (40%). Companies support different types of organizations and causes; education (26%), health (24%), Overseas aid (24%), and children and youth (19%) are most likely to receive support through corporate volunteer initiatives. The survey findings revealed also that lack of knowledge, time, and awareness are main reasons that keep companies from participating in volunteer activities.

To read full reports visit www.dubaichamber.ae/crb under the ‘Research’ tab.