

Anti-Phishing Protection of popular Web Browsers



December 2012

Language: English

December 2012

Last revision: 6th January 2013

www.av-comparatives.org

Introduction

What is Phishing?

“Phishing is a way of attempting to acquire sensitive information such as usernames, passwords and credit card details by masquerading as a trustworthy entity in an electronic communication. This is similar to Fishing, where the fisherman puts a bait at the hook, thus, pretending to be a genuine food for fish. But the hook inside it takes the complete fish out of the lake. Communications purporting to be from popular social web sites, auction sites, online payment processors or IT administrators are commonly used to lure the unsuspecting public. Phishing is typically carried out by e-mail spoofing or instant messaging and it often directs users to enter details at a fake website whose look and feel are almost identical to the legitimate one. Phishing is an example of social engineering techniques used to deceive users, and exploits the poor usability of current web security technologies.”¹

For more information about how not to get hooked by a phishing scam, please have a look at e.g. the Consumer Alert of the FTC: <http://www.ftc.gov/bcp/edu/pubs/consumer/alerts/alt127.shtm>

Test procedure

In this test, we simulate a user that relies only on the Anti-Phishing protection provided by its web browser while browsing the web. The aim of this test was only to evaluate the Anti-Phishing protection provided by Web browsers in the tested time period. The test was done on real machines, using Windows 7 SP1 64-Bit. All browsers were tested with default settings and in parallel at the same time on the same URLs. In July 2012, we did a similar test to evaluate the Anti-Phishing protection provided by Internet Security products².

Test Set

Phishing URLs were taken from phishing mails received in the pre-Christmas time and immediately tested from the 11th to 19th December 2012. All used phishing URLs were active/online and attempted to get personal information. In total, 294 different phishing URLs were used for this test.

Tested products

The following up-to-date popular web browsers were evaluated in this Anti-Phishing test:

- Apple Safari 5.1.7.7534.57.2
- Google Chrome 23.0.1271.97 m
- Microsoft Internet Explorer 9.0.9112.16421 / 9.0.12
- Mozilla Firefox 17.0.1
- Opera 12.11.1661

¹ <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Phishing>

² The test reports can be found here: <http://www.av-comparatives.org/comparativesreviews/anti-phishing-test>

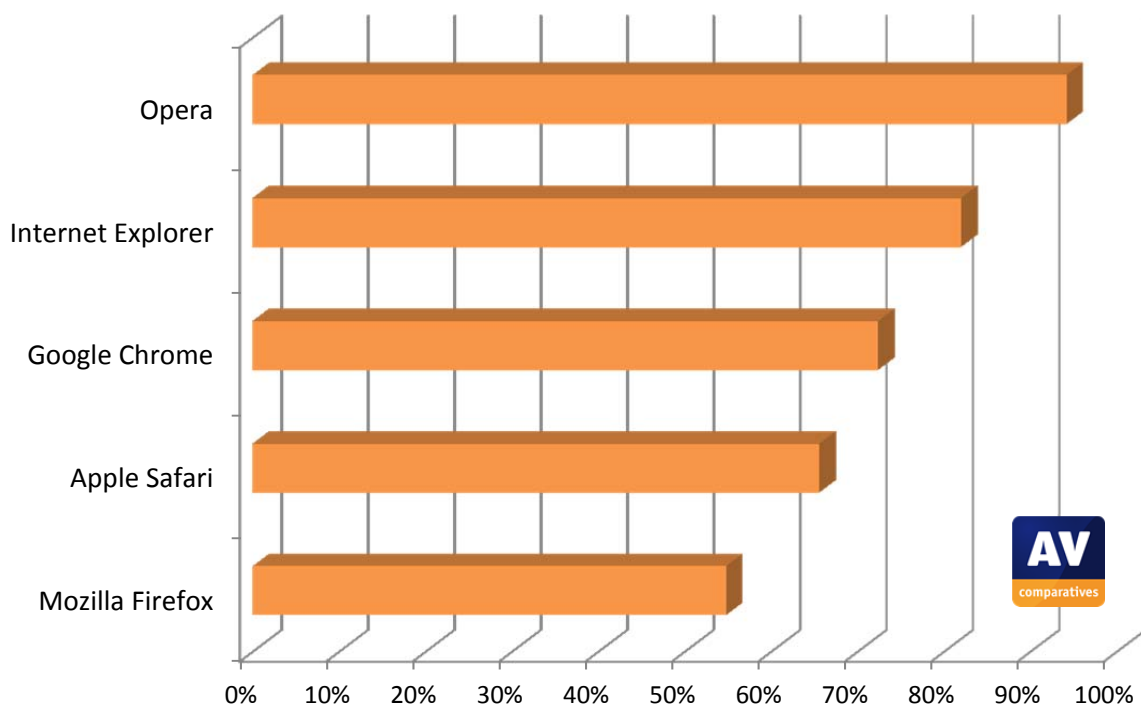
Anti-Phishing “False Alarm” Test

For the Anti-Phishing False Alarm Test we selected 100 different popular banking sites (all of them using HTTPS and showing a login form) from all over the world and checked if any of the various browsers blocked those legitimate online banking sites. Wrongly blocking such sites is a serious mistake. From the tested browsers, none showed a false alarm.

Test Results

Below you see the percentages of blocked phishing websites (size of test set: 294 phishing URLs) by the various web browsers.

1. Opera 94,2%
2. Internet Explorer 82,0%
3. Google Chrome 72,4%
4. Apple Safari 65,6%
5. Mozilla Firefox 54,8%



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AV-Comparatives e.V. (January 2013)