

Knowledge and Capabilities that Non-Expert Users Bring to Phishing Detection

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Survey Method

300 Non-expert email users

Demographically matched to US population

Identify “a suspicious or potentially harmful email message”

Answer questions about that experience

Expert Process (Wash 2020)

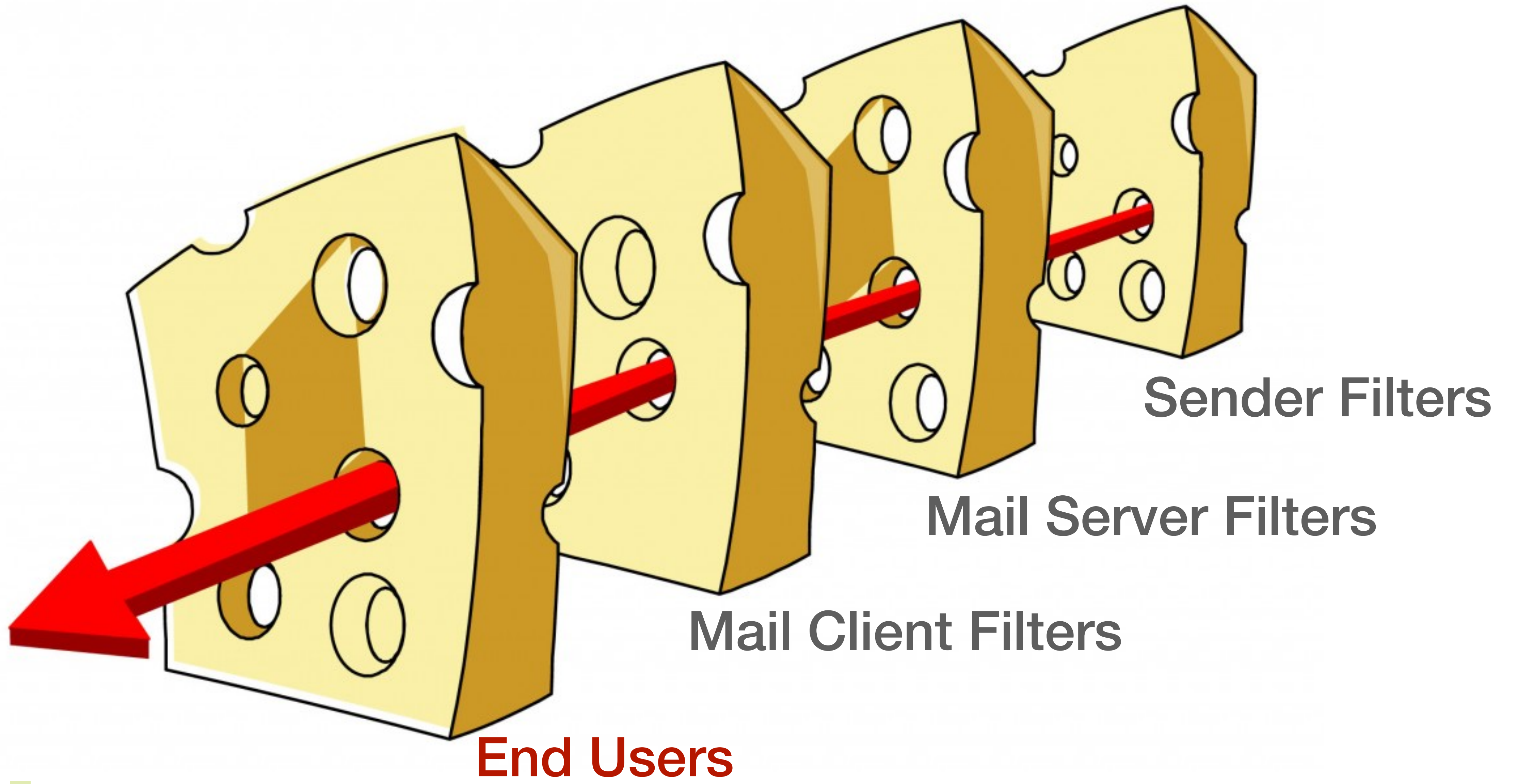
- Noticing* Identifying relevant aspects of email
- Expecting* Comparing with past, similar emails
- Suspecting* What feels “off” about the email
- Investigating* Looking for evidence
- Deciding* Is this email legitimate or phishing?
- Acting* Do something with the email

Unique Knowledge Used

- 72% Familiarity with past related emails
- 95% Expectations of incoming emails
- 86% Not typical contents of email
- 78% Nature of email (personal, work, etc.)

Unique Capabilities Used

- 94% Identify actions requested
- 76% Requested action “stood out” to user
- 73% Take additional time to decide
- 18% Asked others for help



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