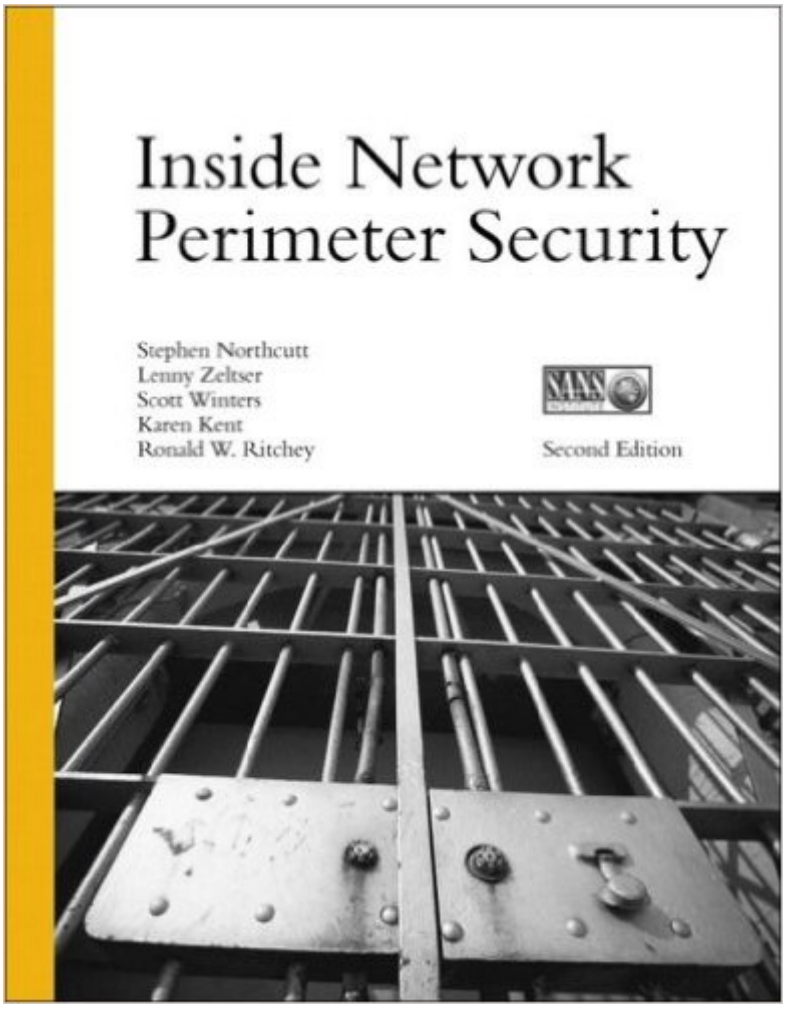
Inside Network Perimeter Security (2nd Edition)



Synopsis

Security professionals and administrators now have access to one of the most valuable resources for learning best practices for network perimeter security. Inside Network Perimeter Security, Second Edition is your guide to preventing network intrusions and defending against any intrusions that do manage to slip through your perimeter. This acclaimed resource has been updated to reflect changes in the security landscape, both in terms of vulnerabilities and defensive tools. Coverage also includes intrusion prevention systems and wireless security. You will work your way through fortifying the perimeter, designing a secure network, and maintaining and monitoring the security of the network. Additionally, discussion of tools such as firewalls, virtual private networks, routers and intrusion detection systems make Inside Network Perimeter Security, Second Edition a valuable resource for both security professionals and GIAC Certified Firewall Analyst certification exam candidates.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This review is for the 2nd edition of this book."Inside Network Perimeter Security" (INPS) by Northcutt, Zeltser, Winters, Kent, and Ritchey suitably covers the broad topic of securing a network’s edge. The book is based, on part, from various SANS Institute training material (Northcutt is the CEO of the SANS Institute). Most of the items documented in INPS are honed from years of discussions in classes (and is mentioned an `excellent supplementary resource" for the GIAC Certified Firewall Analyst (GCFW)).The book first focuses on perimeter fundamentals - including

dedicating about 100 pages to the three main types of firewalls (Packet, Stateful & Proxy). The second section discusses how to fortify other areas of the perimeter - by implementing hardened routers and hosts, VPNs, IDSs, and IPS. The third section discusses designing a secure perimeter from the ground up (consider it best practices). This includes a much-needed chapter on wireless security. The last section is how to monitor and maintain the perimeter.It is hard to characterize who this book should be aimed at. While configurations examples are given for many different platforms and OSs, the configs cannot be considered complete. I feel this book would serve network admins well as a starting point and as introduction to concepts that they might not be familiar with.Some items I like from Inside Network Perimeter Security:-Chapter 6 gives a great discussion on Cisco routers. What really impresses me is, since the documentation is from someone besides CiscoPress, you get an idea of other ways to harden Cisco routers (see the telnet trick on page 142). The first appendix also gives a great collection of different ACLs (consider it an update of the NSA's list).

I first looked at Inside Network Perimeter Security, 2nd Ed (INPS:2E) for my blog, in May 2005. I decided to try reading it this week because I've been reading books on related topics. Individually, the INPS:2E authors largely know their craft. Unfortunately, the book is so poorly organized and diffused that I don't know why other reviewers rate it so highly. Furthermore, the choice of material covered and certain recommendations drag the book down. A third edition might be promising, but I recommend avoiding INPS:2E.On the macro level, I question the ordering of the book's parts. It's best to lead with definitions, policy, and design, but that doesn't happen here. Part I is mostly about firewalls, with a chapter about policy at the end (Ch 5). Fundamentals of Secure Perimeter Design (Ch 12) appears in Part III (Designing a Secure Network Perimeter). Another design chapter (Ch 23) pops up in Part IV. This makes no sense. The book should have been divided into Theory / Implementation / Processes or some other rational system, with all related material in the proper place.For example, the operation of FTP (control vs data channels, active vs passive FTP, etc.) is separated into three chapters (2, 3, and 4). FTP should have been explained early in one place, then referenced later. Host IPS appears as part of Ch 11, when it should have been in Ch 10 (Host Defense Components). VPNs appear in Ch 7 and again in Ch 16. TCP state is explained in Ch 3 (Stateful Firewalls), when it should have been covered in Ch 2 (Packeting Filtering) or in a different and earlier section. Yet another firewall -- Pf -- isn't shown until Ch 10 (which covers host defense). Ch 6 (The Role of a Router) covers routers, but Ch 2 mostly covered using routers for filtering.

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