

Cyber-safety tips vol. 2

Keeping connected

As technology moves along at a blistering pace it's sometimes hard to keep up with all of the advances on what we carry round in our pockets.

NFC (Near Field Communication) has been around for years but has seen a sudden surge with the arrival of contactless payments using credit and debit cards. So what's the issue with leaving it on all the time?

Well aside from draining your battery leaving NFC turned on allows other devices within a short range of around 4cm to make requests for data from your device and allows them to send data to your device.

Now whilst 4cm is a little close for comfort most of the time but on busy trains, buses, queuing at stores, busy nightclubs or even someone bumping into you on the street you can easily find yourself, and your device, within range.

Likewise Bluetooth connections should be switched off when not in use as they offer a back door into your device.

If you have a Bluetooth device such as a headset or smartwatch that requires a constant connection then go into your device settings and make sure your Bluetooth device is "hidden".



Spam, spam, spam, spam...

Many of us will have online accounts for everything from banking to entertainment, club membership to shopping and almost every other aspect of our modern lives. Each of these accounts generally needs an email address and the more you join, the more spam mail you get.

Whilst it might seem pointless marking the junk emails that you get as spam but believe it or not it helps companies that provide your email services to filter a lot more of the junk out of your inbox.

One tip to avoid wading through dozens of useless emails that you didn't sign up for offering you a great deal on a walrus cleaning kit (I've genuinely had that one before) or the last place on that crucial seminar that will change your life forever is simply to have two email addresses.

That way you can have one for your various accounts that need an email address and the other for sending and receiving emails without it getting spammed.

No need to brag

We all love a good bargain, that thoughtful present from someone special and it's so much easier to post our holiday snaps online than show people dozens of photos in person. The problem is that if you're not careful you're posting that photo of your brand new car, that diamond ring or the fact that you're somewhere sunny for a week to the whole world.

Before you post about that shiny new addition to your household just think, do people really need to see it? Do they need to know about it?

As for the holiday snaps the best advice is to post them all in one go when you get back. Besides, doing it over WiFi in the UK will be a lot cheaper...

Neighbourhood News

Who's that girl (or boy)?

Online dating is a huge industry worldwide and with our busy lives it's often the most convenient way to meet new people.

We've all heard the stories of people using somebody else's pictures, shaving a couple of years off their age and massaging their profile information to seem a bit more attractive.

We've also heard the stories of confidence tricksters using these sites to scam thousands of pounds out of people or, in some cases, meet them and do serious harm to them.

Here are a few tips to staying safe online whilst searching for Cupids arrow:

- Don't post personal information. Perhaps more than any other aspect of day to day internet usage you have to be careful about what you post and what you tell people. Do they really need to know where you work or will your job role be enough for now?

SOS! EMERGENCY!

Many of the latest smartphones have an Emergency Mode or SOS Mode for use in an emergency.

Simply press the power button a set number of times and the phone will send a message, complete with your GPS co-ordinates, to a list of people that you have pre-set.

Go into your settings and search for "Emergency" or "SOS".

We hope you'll never need it but if you ever do it may just save someone's life.



- Remember 'ABC' – **A**ssume nothing, **B**elieve nobody, **C**heck everything.
- Before meeting somebody or giving them information about where you live or work make sure they are who they say they are. Check social media sites and add them on there, you are looking to go on a date with them after all
- **Always** tell somebody where you are going, when you are due back and who you are going with before meeting **anybody** offline
- Agree a check-in time with a friend and let them know when you get home.
- **Don't get drunk!** If you meet for drinks then eat well before you go, alternate alcoholic and soft drinks and line your stomach with cheese or something fatty before you go.
- If your plans change and you stay out later than you anticipated, keep your friend updated with where you're going and when you leave.

Where did I put it?

There are hundreds of tracking applications available for smartphones, tablets, laptops, smartwatches and many more internet enabled devices.

The best part is, Many of them are free!!!

If you have any of these devices then it's always worth downloading one of these free tracking applications, after doing an internet search to compare them and pick one that you like. Just remember the tips about spam emails overleaf.

Contacts

Helpful websites

www.thinkuknow.co.uk

<http://www.westyorkshire.police.uk/BlockTheWebMonsters>

<http://www.barclays.co.uk/> - Search "Digital Eagles"

<https://www.getsafeonline.org/>

<https://www.o2.co.uk/nspcc>