

Safer Internet Day

9th February 2010

Safer Internet Day is organised by INSAFE each year in February to promote safer and more responsible use of online technology and mobile phones, especially amongst children and young people across the world.

The Business Crime Reduction Centre (BCRC), funded by Yorkshire Forward, the region's development agency is committed to help raise awareness of security issues with businesses in Yorkshire and Humberside. BCRC offers free bespoke advice to small and medium sized businesses as well as running free to access events to the business community. This invaluable initiative which provides crime reduction advice for small businesses is working with South Yorkshire Police to help reduce crime against business.

With regard to the initiative, Chief Inspector David Fortune, Police Seconded to Yorkshire Forward stated 'We fully support the initiative as we want to encourage businesses and citizens in maximising the benefits of the internet, and doing this safely and securely'.

To raise e-crime awareness, the following list of hot topics and tips for businesses are provided to compliment Safer Internet Day.

Internet Safety Tips

1. Protect Against Drive-by Viruses

Hundreds of thousands of active web pages are infected with viruses often designed to exploit vulnerabilities in software applications such as Adobe and Internet Explorer.

- Install anti-virus software and keep up to date
- Ensure that applications are up to date and delete unused software
- Take care where you surf

2. E-Commerce- Phishing

Phishing emails aim to gather sensitive logon and password details. The most dominant type refers to online banking details, usually requesting the user to follow a link to update security details.

- Organisations which take Internet Security seriously will never request security details by email
- Only ever update security details by typing the web address directly into your web browser

3. Spam

Unsolicited email is a nuisance at the very least

- Block the sender and domain using the spam filter within most anti-virus software packages
- Never reply to Spam. This will identify your email address as valid and open the floodgates

4. File Sharing

File sharing borders on illegal at the best of times. It often includes Malware. If your staff use file sharing at work, they open up business networks to threats and potentially legal ramifications should the content owner take action.

- Ban file sharing at work via an 'Acceptable Use Policy' linked to employment contract
- Train staff to understand the risks

5. Social Networking

Wastes employee time and can be used as a medium to carry sensitive information out of the company.

- Ban social networking at work via an Acceptable Use Policy linked to employment contract
- Physically block social networking sites

6. Instant Messaging

Constitutes a threat to intellectual property. Content uploaded to services such as MSN Messenger bypasses the company firewall.

- Ban Instant Messaging at work via an Acceptable Use Policy linked to employment contract
- Institute a data management/monitoring system within the network if necessary

7. Encryption

In knowledge driven economies, data is extremely valuable.

- Restrict access to data
- Encrypt data so it is rendered useless to a third party if lost or stolen

8. Backup

Should the worst happen, and data is lost, a backup will ensure business continuity

- Backup accounts and other important files, but don't forget to backup business contacts in Outlook for example
- Backup to hard and/or compact disc, or tape
- Backup offsite, preferably to 2 different locations.
- Plan for the worst and be prepared

9. Security Risk Management

Businesses undertake risk assessments on a daily basis. Computer security is a key part of this and not an isolated issue.

- Security risk management must take a holistic approach if it is to be successful
- Apply a security risk management methodology across the whole business

10. Computer Support

Businesses face many challenges including increased competition and the financial impact in a tough economic environment.

- Technical support is invaluable to ensure businesses can get on with their core function

For more advice on the issues above, or to book your free security visit, please contact BCRC on 01142751283, or email info@bcrc-uk.org