Computer 1 Associates, Inc.

Cybercrime & Social Media Scams

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Cybercrime in Hawaii

- According to the Island Insurance Advisor, "Honolulu now ranks as one of the nation's most vulnerable cities to cyber-crime, ranking eleventh…in the nation for cybercrime risk."

- On average, Honolulu residents access the Internet 5 times a day. That's almost 34% higher than the national average.

- Because Honolulu residents spend such a large amount of time online, they often fall victim to cybercrime.

- To ensure you aren't a victim of cybercrime, keep the following considerations in mind when using your computer:

  - Update software applications as often as possible and be sure to configure your operating system to check for updates automatically
  - Create strong, unique passwords and store them in a safe place
  - Never respond to emails requesting private information
  - Install credible security software and be sure to keep your definitions current (Computer 1 recommends AVG and Avira anti-virus products)
  - Verify URL's (web addresses) when browsing online to ensure you are visiting the site you originally intended to visit
  - Beware of "too good to be true" offers and avoid clicking on pop-up and side-bar advertisements

- If you have any questions about safe computing practices, do not hesitate to contact us at (808)-524-6700

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Social Media Scams

- There are a number of social media scams out there. Below is a list of the top 5 scams that you should be aware of:

1. **Hidden URL's**: Beware of blindly clicking on URL's. You see them everywhere on social media sites, but many people don't know what site these links point to until its too late. Clicking on unfamiliar links may take you to the intended site, but they often run malicious scripts and install malware on your computer on the way.

2. **Phishing Requests**: A phishing request is an attempt to capture personal information from someone you already know through requests such as, "Somebody just posted these pictures of you! Check them out!" Once you click on the attached link and enter your login information, the hackers have both your username and password.

3. **Hidden Charges**: Hidden charges are behind many of those "free, fun services" that tend to thrive on social media sites. A fun quiz that appears to be free could really be a bait-and-switch game. Many curious people respond with cell phone numbers, only to later find out that they unknowingly subscribed to a dubious monthly service that automatically adds charges to their cell phone bill.

4. **Cash Grabs**: Think twice before responding to any requests from friends or family members for money. Chances are it may be a cybercriminal looking for easy cash and an opportunity to infect your computer with malware.

5. **Chain Letters**: Chain letters such as "Send this tweet to five of your friends!" are often passed on by well-meaning people who are unaware that the message originally came from spammers who are trying to add email accounts to their spam lists.

Hints & Other Resources

- Additional tips for staying safe online:

  - Turn on your spam blocker. Most internet and email clients provide a spam blocking feature that blocks unwanted messages.

  - Ensure that your computer's firewall is turned on. Most anti-virus programs come bundled with firewalls and Windows even features a built-in firewall for basic protection (However, Computer 1 recommends using a third-party firewall for more advanced protection).

  - Encrypt important data you don't want compromised. There are a number of third-party applications that can "garble" data to ensure that it can't be read by someone trying to hack into your system.

  - Monitor the activities of your children or anyone else who uses your computer. Be sure to only grant them access to websites that you trust.

- Resources

  - AVG Free - Basic anti-virus and anti-spyware protection
  - Avira - Comprehensive security products including anti-virus & firewalls
  - Microsoft Online Safety - An excellent resource for online safety and privacy education
  - Microsoft Security - The latest in security fixes from Microsoft
  - Symantec - Featuring Norton Internet Security and anti-virus products

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